



**REVISITING TRAUMA IN POSTMODERN  
THEATER: A STUDY OF HAROLD PINTER'S  
THE BIRTHDAY PARTY, EDWARD BOND'S  
SAVED, BRYONY LAVERY'S FROZEN AND  
SARAH KANE'S BLASTED**

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BRYONY LAVERY'S FROZEN AND SARAH KANE'S BLASTED**

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## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Merve Feryal ASHMAWY titled “REVISITING TRAUMA IN POSTMODERN THEATER: A STUDY OF HAROLD PINTER’S THE BIRTHDAY PARTY, EDWARD BOND’S SAVED, BRYONY LAVERY’S FROZEN AND SARAH KANE’S BLASTED ” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of PhD.

Assoc.Prof.Dr. Harith Ismael Turki .....

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a PhD thesis. July 20, 2022.

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Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

**Name Surname: Merve Feryal ASHMAWY**

**Signature :**

## FOREWORD

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze the trauma and trauma representations in Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Edward Bond's *Saved*, Bryony Lavery's *Frozen* and Sarah Kane's *Blasted* which are the prominent examples of theater movements emerged in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century; Theater of Menace, Rational Theater, Horror Theater and In-Yer-Face Theater. These four playwrights are the leading names of the English Theater and the mentioned theater movements. In these plays, which were written in the period after the Second World War, taking into account the historical, cultural and sociological background of England, how the individual and collective traumas experienced in the society took place in the leading theater movements and plays will be examined in the context of trauma theory. The study has been revealed by considering that tragic events and past experiences provide the most appropriate means to make sense of the traces left in the souls of individuals and societies. The characters are in problematic relationships with each other due to the traumatic traces of their past experiences and the radical changes in the society they live in. This situation puts the characters in the position of victims, on the one hand, and on the other hand, they become victimizers. Depending on all these, the claim that traumatic elements are concentrated in the plays will be emphasized.

**Keywords:** Trauma, English Literature, Theater of Menace, Rational Theater, Horror Theater and In-Yer-Face Theater

## ÖZ (ABSTRACT IN TURKISH)

Bu çalışmanın amacı 20.yüzyılın ikinci yarısında ortaya çıkan Tehdit Tiyatrosu, Akılcı Tiyatro, Korku Tiyatrosu ve Suratına Tiyatro akımlarının önde gelen örnekleri olan Harold Pinter'ın *Doğumgünü Partisi*, Edward Bond'un *Kurtarılmış*, Bryony Lavery'nin *Donmuş* ve Sarah Kane'in *Kutsanmış* oyunlarında travmanın ve travma temsillerinin incelenmesidir. Bu dört oyun yazarı İngiliz Tiyatrosunun ve belirtilen tiyatro akımlarının önde gelen isimleridir. İkinci Dünya Savaşından sonraki dönemde yazılan bu oyunlarda İngiltere'nin tarihi, kültürel ve sosyolojik arka planı da dikkate alınarak toplumda yaşanan bireysel ve kolektif travmaların önde gelen tiyatro akımlarında ve oyunlarda nasıl yer aldığı travma teorisi bağlamında incelenecektir. Çalışma, trajik olayların ve geçmiş yaşantıların, bireylerin ve toplumların ruhlarında bıraktığı izlerin incelenmesine anlam vermedeki en uygun araç oldukları düşünülerek ortaya konmuştur. Geçmiş yaşantılarının bireyler üzerinde bıraktığı travmatik izler ve yaşadıkları toplumun uğradığı köklü değişiklikler nedeniyle karakterler birbirleriyle sorunlu ilişkiler içerisindedir. Bu durum karakterleri bir yandan acı çeken konumuna sokarken diğer yandan da başkalarına acı veren kişiler haline getirmiştir. Tüm bunlara bağlı olarak oyunlarda travmatik öğelerin yoğunlaştığı iddiası üzerinde durulacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Travma, İngiliz Edebiyatı, Tehdit Tiyatrosu, Akılcı Tiyatro, Korku Tiyatrosu ve Suratına Tiyatro

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## ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

<b>Tezin Adı</b>	Postmodern Tiyatroda Travmayı Yeniden Değerlendirmek: Harold Pinter'in The Birthday Party, Edward Bond'un Saved, Bryony Lavery'nin Frozen ve Sarah Kane'in Blasted Adlı Oyunları
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**APA** : American Psychiatric Association

**PTSD** : Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

**RTS** : Rape Trauma Syndrome

**DID** : Dissociative Identity Disorder

## **SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH**

The subject of this study is to examine four different plays belonging to different theater movements within the framework of trauma theory. Personal and interpersonal traumas will be examined in the samples of Harold Pinter's *Birthday Party* which belongs to the Theater of Menace, Edward Bond's *Saved* which belongs to the Rationalist Theater, Bryony Lavery's *Frozen* which belongs to the Horror Theater, and Sarah Kane's *Blasted* which belongs to the In-Yer-Face Theater.

All of these playwrights are prominent figures of the British Theater. They wrote their plays in the years that could not stand out from the bad effects of the past. Consequently, the traumatic effects of the past and a desperate view of the future stand out in these plays. It would be convenient to say that the movements to which the plays belong are similar somehow. When we think based on this point of view, first of all, the ties of these movements will be examined and placed in the theater tradition. While the extent to which the new understanding of the society and culture emerged in England after the Second World War reflected on the lives of individuals in this society was included in the plays of the period, the idea of intensifying traumatic effects will be emphasized. The past of all the characters in the plays is troubled and they suffer from severe traumas due to problematic and social destruction. The narrative of trauma is based on the play. While this narrative triggers trauma in some cases, in other cases, it shows hope for a better recovery.

## **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study will consider the plays of four different playwrights, which have an important position in the English Theater, within the context of the theory of trauma: Harold Pinter's *Birthday Party*, Edward Bond's *Saved*, Bryony Lavery's *Frozen*, and Sarah Kane's *Blasted*. In these plays, traumatic elements are observed intensely in the psychology of the characters as of the period they are written.

The purpose of this study is to examine how a culture that attempts to be reborn from its ashes in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and how individual and cultural traumas experienced by those living in this culture were included in the leading theater movements and plays in the context of trauma theory.

Harold Pinter uses his Theater of Menace to show how characters are entangled by the fear of the unknown. The sense of theater is obsessing the characters and makes them live a traumatic life.

Edward Bond uses his Rationalist Theater to show how characters are under a severe sense of trauma.

Bryony Lavery also uses her Horror Theater to confront the audience with the horrible act of child abuse that traumatizes families, individuals, and society.

Besides, Sarah Kane uses her In-Yer-Face theater to show the relationship between the war in Bosnia and the rest of the World. Her aim in doing this is to draw attention to the reality of war and war itself. In other words, the geographical distance is ignored and it is emphasized that violence and rape can be everywhere. She presents the unrepresentable to show how the characters are traumatized and show how this sense of trauma is transported to the audience.

In this study, it will be argued that trauma causes deep wounds in the soul of a society that experiences it, and it is possible to follow it through its post-traumatic traces. Such a follow-up reminds us of the possibility that even the events that we consider separate can be actually a result. Thus, this study, which aims to analyze the British History and British Drama from a different perspective, namely through traumatic elements, has been revealed by considering that the tragic events provide the most appropriate means of giving meaning to examining the traces left in the soul of societies. Moreover, throughout the study, the following questions will be addressed:

- How individuals and the society are portrayed as traumatic entities in the related theater movements?
- How does the historical and cultural background of the past affect the productivity of the playwrights?
- Does the trauma analyzed in the plays affect the audience as well as the characters? If so, How?

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

All plays will be read and examined deeply. While reading and analyzing these plays, some literary tools, such as related books, articles, journals, online studies, and analyses will be used. Since the historical and cultural backgrounds of the characters in the plays will guide the reader to understand their psychological status, the plays will be examined within the context of the Psychoanalytic Approach and Trauma Theory. The Second World War and the problems that accompanied it were reflected in the theater of the British society in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, as in every field. Since the traumatic elements started to come to the fore in the plays that emerged after this period, studying the plays within the context of trauma theory and studies will enable us to evaluate the psychology of individuals and society in a deeper and meaningful way. Also, the traumas, fears, excitements, and emotional states and shocks that the characters in the plays experienced both in the past and present will be examined in depth within the context of the theory of trauma.

## **HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This study will show that the historical and cultural background of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century caused playwrights to portray individuals and society as traumatic entities in their plays. It is hypothesized that the characters in those plays suffer from trauma and depression.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES**

All the selected plays belong to the British Theater. However, these four playwrights who showed the relationship between culture, trauma, and drama in England both physically and psychologically in their plays followed different theater movements. Although the movements are different, their main focus is the same. It may be difficult to understand the language while reading Edward Bond's *Saved* since the play is written in authentic lower-class London dialect. As the trauma and depression situations that the characters suffer from may vary depending on the cultural and historical background, the extent to which the traumas experienced by the British community reflect on the plays and characters of this culture will be emphasized.



# 1. CHAPTER ONE: Trauma

## 1.1. Evolution of Trauma Theory

Trauma is derived from the Greek word “*trauma*” for wound. Today, the concept of trauma is used for events that affect and injure individuals both mentally and physically. However, it was not considered till the late nineteenth century that trauma is thought to have a psychological effect. It is used to be referred as a medical term, a physical condition of the individual; “Originally referred to an injury inflicting on on the body” (Caruth, 1996, p.3). The term “Trauma” is not used except to mean physical trauma till the nineteenth century (Herman, 1992, p.6). In the eighteenth century and before it was believed that people who had post-traumatic psychological problems had a mental illness, the psychological effects of trauma were disregarded (Özen, 2017, p.106). However, with the developments in psychoanalysis in the late nineteenth century, the connotation of the term shifted to include mental wounds (Leys, 2000, pp.3-4). The first research on the psychological effects of trauma was done with patients with hysteria. The first person to do these studies was the French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot (Herman, 1992, p.6). The fact that Charcot does not attribute the symptoms of hysterical women to supernatural forces and tries to explain the causes of the symptoms has been an important step in the handling of trauma in psychiatry (Özen, 2017, p.107).

Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud, and Joseph Breuer are other leading researchers on hysteria. The studies of these researchers, who focused on the causes of hysteria, show that trauma is a condition with psychiatric consequences. Although they continued their studies in different places, they reached very similar findings in terms of their results. According to these results, the situation that caused hysteria was psychological trauma and highly emotional reactions to traumatic events, and these reactions affected the change of the state of consciousness, thus resulting in hysterical symptoms. While Janet called this change in consciousness “dissolution”, Breuer and Freud called it “double consciousness” (Herman, 1992, p.7).

The dissociation or hypnotic trance capacity, according to Janet, was a sign of psychological weakness and suggestibility although Freud and Janet agreed, based on the similarities they obtained as a result of their work, that the altered state of consciousness caused by psychological trauma had an intrinsic similarity with those

caused by hypnosis. However, Herman points out that according to Breuer and Freud (1895), it was possible that hysteria could be seen among “the people of the clearest intellect, strongest will, greatest character and highest critical power” in relation to changes in consciousness. According to Freud and Janet, the somatic symptoms of hysteria are the disguises of extremely distressing events that have been erased from memory. According to Janet, “subconscious fixed ideas”, that is, memories of traumatic events, are in the foreground in hysterical patients. Freud and Breuer argue that these patients mainly suffer from memories. In the mid-19th century, these researchers concluded that the symptoms of hysteria could be alleviated by putting traumatic memories and intense emotions from trauma into words. The foundations of modern psychotherapy are based on this method, which was discovered in this period. Janet called this method “psychological analysis”, while Breuer and Freud called it “catharsis” (Herman, 1992, p. 8). Afterwards, Freud’s findings, who continued his work with hysterical patients, were quite horrifying. All these patients have repeatedly stated that they have been subjected to harassment, incest, and sexual assault in the past. In line with these examinations and findings, Freud argues that experiences that often seem relatively insignificant actually result from major traumatic events in childhood. He published the results of these studies in his article titled “The Aetiology of Hysteria” in 1896. According to him, there is more than one case of early sexual experience at the root of hysterical cases. However, the hypothesis that Freud claimed in this article was totally unacceptable and beyond convincing, since it also included the respectable bourgeois families of Vienna and the women in the Paris Proletariat. Therefore, Freud abandoned this hypothesis a year later and rejected the claim that early sexual experiences were the basis of hysteria.

The existence of psychological trauma reminded itself again with the First World War. Millions of people died in this long-running war, and many others were injured. This war, which affected the whole world, took place in world history as an international trauma and led to a more detailed study of the psychiatric effects of trauma (Özen, 2017, p.108). The soldiers fought in harsh conditions and witnessed the injuries and deaths of their comrades with whom they were together. This situation had a negative effect on the soldiers and various psychiatric symptoms were observed in many of them (Norman, 1989, p.140). Those symptoms included fatigue, tremor, confusion, nightmares, and impaired sight and hearing, etc. However, at first, it was thought that these mental

symptoms were due to physical trauma and it was named “Shell Shock” by the soldiers. This diagnosis was made when a soldier could not perform the military duties that were supposed to be done, and there was not a concrete reason for it. In order to understand the situation better and develop a treatment, the British Army appointed a well-trained psychiatrist Charles S. Myers to offer an opinion on shell shock cases in detail, deal with them, and find solutions by gathering relevant data. After examining the first cases, Myers concluded that they were mental traumas rather than physical ones (APA, 1980). In the traditional understanding, it was believed that a soldier should be proud of war and should not react emotionally, so soldiers with traumatic neurosis were described as “morally disabled” by the medical writers of the period (Lifton, 1973, p. 30). Additionally, according to Jones (2012), some people consider the shell shock as cowardice or malingering and as a situation that soldiers willingly do to escape from the front (p.18). “However, the emotional stress of prolonged exposure to war and death was sufficient for a Neurotic syndrome reminiscent of hysteria in males” (Herman, 1992, p. 14). Since Myers also concluded that this is the result of the shell shock cases he examined, he convinced the British military to take the situation seriously and developed approaches that still guide treatment today (Jones, 2012, p.18).

A few years after the war ended, interest in psychological trauma diminished again. Few people carried out scientific trauma research. One of them is psychiatrist Abraham Kardiner, namely his work *The Traumatic Neuroses of War*, published in 1941. Despite this early interest in trauma studies, trauma was officially accepted as a psychiatric disorder, in the diagnostic manual (DSM-III), as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder only in 1980 by the American Psychiatric Association. After this acceptance, trauma studies have gained more importance and kept developing.

Another period in which trauma studies gained momentum was when traumatic experiences such as violence and sexual abuse against women emerged with the influence of feminist movements in Western Europe and North America at the end of the 20th century. The fact that women came together to prevent domestic violence and to have equal rights with men, in a way, revealed that trauma affects human psychology in daily life and this should be investigated. Before this, domestic violence remained hidden, women could not tell anyone about their experiences, and they were subjected to an ongoing trauma. (Avina, 2002, p.70). The research of women, who were the pioneers of the feminist movement, was first on rape. Studies revealed that more women

than known were subjected to violence and rape, and studies were conducted on the psychological effects of these events (Russell, 1984, pp.245-262).

After conducting deeper research on the history of trauma, it would be appropriate to argue that thoughts and discourses about the concept of trauma are fundamentally unstable among people using different assumptions, basic concepts, and vocabulary. More specifically, Ruth Leys, in *Trauma: A Genealogy* (2000) conducted an in-depth study on some of the most complex common features of psychological, psychoanalytic, psychiatric, and literary critical writings in this context. Leys identified some of these complex problems in modern trauma theories, namely pre-Freudian writings, van der Kolk, and Cathy Caruth's recent reconceptualization of the nature of traumatic experiences. She argues that the basis of the trauma that has been unbalanced since its arise in the late nineteenth century is actually between two paradigms. These are mimesis and antimimesis. According to the mimetic theory, the experience of the trauma or traumatized subject involves some forms of hypnotic imitation or identification. Hence, since the victim cannot remember the actual traumatic event, she just imitates it. Comparing mimesis to post-hypnotic forgetting, Leys bases the mimetic hypothesis on the traditional method of hypnosis involving an altered state of consciousness. Therefore, she states that the actual hypnosis practice plays an important role to treat trauma victims. On the other hand, she also mentions that in the mimetic theory, the victim's testimony cannot be fully trusted, because the victim may not have the traumatic event in her ordinary memory in the way she testified. In other words, the victim is thought to incorporate and share the feeling of hostility towards her, since she has an identification with the aggressor.

Fundamentally, the studies of Ruth Leys's are based on the views of Rene Girard. In *Violence and the Sacred* (1972), Girard explored a tragic dynamic of violence just like actors' experience by imitating each other on the one hand and rejecting on the other hand, as in a cycle of revenge. According to him, these people are "mimetic rivals". In fact, we can see such identities in many different individuals and societies. Borch-Jacobsen (1982) also explained the mimetic rivalry of the early Freudian movement's most violent theoretical and interpersonal struggles with a similar explanation, but later changed this idea and stated that conscious simulation is more effective in hysterical animation rather than unconscious imitation (Jacobsen, 1996). Girard and Borch-Jacobsen expressed mimesis or imitation as a situation in which there is no distinction

between self and other, or is erased. Accordingly, imitation equals the destruction of the self, while mimesis is simply sameness or identification. The first of the consequences of this complex situation is the assumption that such experiences are not available for later representation and recall since the hypnotically possessed subject is unaware of the subject-object distinction. The other is that all forms of imitation are reduced to one (Leys, 2000, p.9). In summary, it can be said that the mimetic paradigm does not allow any mental hierarchy or mental transition states.

Another paradigm is “antimimesis”; the antimimetic state is actually the mirror reflection of the mimetic state, but it views the imitation in different ways. Leys (2000) explains “a strict dichotomy between the autonomous subject and the external trauma” for antimimetic (p.38). In the antimimetic paradigm, the hypnotized person fulfills the hypnotist’s suggestions fully consciously and voluntarily. Like the reflection in the mirror, the antimimetic paradigm is both the opposite and the mimetic state itself. In fact, this opposite situation is not completely ignoring the subject; it is the imagination of the subject as a fully autonomous self, facing an external reality. However, the “antimimetic” position remains the same as the “mimetic” position, with the subject disappearing again and becoming completely “act”. Hence, hypnotic imitation becomes simulation and lies (Schwartz, 2002, p.371).

In her research, Leys compares the approach of Sandor Ferenczi and Abraham Kardiner to Freud’s drive-defense model, and clearly states that they are “corrosive and subversive”. Claiming that Ferenczi oscillates between two different identities, she calls it “originary” and “postoriginary”. In the originary model, at the beginning of life, the subject and the world are not different from each other yet, they are a whole. The ego emerges when this unity is divided into subject-object opposition. This model fits with the mimetic situation because no ego emerges before traumatic mimicry; the ego emerges when the world imposes a universe that is full of objects on the unprotected subject. When we look at the postoriginary model, we see that the ego has been there from the very beginning.

What accelerated these developments in the 1990s was that Furtunoff’s video recordings encouraged academics to do research on topics, such as trauma and memory. These records are the archival collection of filmed testimonies voluntarily given by Holocaust survivors; most of them are professional psychotherapists and

psychoanalysts. In these interviews, most of the Holocaust survivors actually told their stories this much for the first time. In doing so, they lived through the past once more, and they explained this experience to others openly for the first time, and at least, there were people who heard them (Caruth, 1995, p.11). In the light of these studies, it was the works of Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Geoffrey Hartmann, and Dori Laub that took trauma studies forward. In her book *Unclaimed Experience* (1996), Cathy Caruth defines trauma in its most general definition:

*“... 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 (p.11).”*

Based on this definition, it can be argued that the basis of the trauma is an unexpected and catastrophic event that happens outside the control of the individual. The event is recorded instead of experienced, and then, it is repressed and thrown to the unconscious to emerge in a similar situation. So there is a delay. In *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud calls this process “incubation period” or “latency”, and he explains it as follows:

*“It may happen that someone gets away, apparently unharmed, from the spot where he has suffered a shocking accident, for instance a train collision. In the course of the following weeks, however, he develops a series of grave psychical and motor symptoms, which can be ascribed only to his shock or whatever else happened at the time of the accident. He has developed a ‘traumatic neurosis’. ... The time that elapsed between the accident and the first appearance of the symptom is called the “incubation period”, a transparent allusion to the pathology of infectious disease.... It is the feature one might term latency (p.109).”*

Freud’s theories, based on the fact that traumatic experiences affect memory differently from other experiences and that they are repeated impulsively, even re-emerge as a result of an external rather than an internal trigger, are actually the key ideas of the studies that form the traditional trauma model led by Cathy Caruth. Accordingly, trauma affects memory and personality and fragments consciousness. In fact, the event is not in normal consciousness; it is in the timelessness of the unconscious and keeps inflicting pain on the psyche. In this timelessness, trauma re-enters the person, but during this time, it participates in the process as dreams, nightmares or flashback states. In other words, trauma, obliterating the distinction between the past and present, emerges with experiences that repeat themselves in different forms (Onega & Gantenau, 2011, p.11). The traumatic experiences thought to have been forgotten by the traumatized subject are

actually suppressed and as such await sneaking in the mind. At this point, the traumatized subject unconsciously repeats the traumatic experience while trying to bridge the gap in the mind. Caruth describes it as “absolute inability of the mind to avoid an unpleasurable event that has not been given psychic meaning in any way” (Caruth, 1996, p.59). Similarly, Freud (1920) uses the following expressions:

*“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 past (p.12).”*

According to Freud, in this delayed remembering, the traumatized subject acts out his suppressed memories as if he were living in the present, instead of remembering the past event. In other words, it is not understood exactly what happened when the incident occurred, but if it is experienced as a delayed repetition, this is possible. These thoughts of Freud are based on his theory of traumatic dreams (Caruth, 1996, p.59). However, this delayed remembering and acting out does not mean recovery (Onega & Gantenau, 2011, p.11). What is vital for recovery is the narrative of the event. According to Freud, the self does not remember the actual event; there are only “reproductions” of the traumatic experience that occurs in a dream or flashback. Although Freud’s thoughts remain uncertain about this remembering process, he argues that through abreaction and speech therapy, the traumatized subject will gain a better understanding of his past. When we consider trauma as a survival trauma and traumatic experience as a pattern that gives information about the past, the most important element that connects the traumatized subject to its traumatic history is “testimony”. That is why when the traumatized subject talks to others about the traumatic event, it will be a better way to relieve trauma since he/she needs this to escape his / her unpleasant memories. This narrative gives a new identity and a new world to the traumatized subject (Laub, 1995, pp. 61-68).

Besides this function, testimony also allows survivors from different cultures to talk to each other about their unknown traumatic past and listen to each other. Telling others about the traumatic event or the traumatic consequences is one of the ways to alleviate the trauma (Caruth, 1995). Caruth shows that although there are some difficult situations to understand when shared with others, they can become meaningful in many ways. Felman (1995) emphasizes the necessity of the survivor to testify and states that

if the trauma is not transmitted, it will be a situation that cannot be healed because recovery cannot occur in isolation (Herman, 1992). People who have nothing in common other than the traumatic experience can develop a kind of friendship with the strength of this common bond. For instance, veterans who cannot get out of the darkness of war, adults who were exposed to childhood abuse and cannot face it, and those who have traumatic experiences such as Holocaust victims, gather in groups. These people understand and know each other better than anyone else, even their closest relatives. It is their common wounds that bring them together. This situation helps heal as it is a kind of emotional dissolution (Erikson, 1995, p.187). In this case, testifying is necessary for the survivor as it brings clarification to the issue of historical truth.

Since its inception, the concept of trauma has confronted us not only with a simple pathology but also with a fundamental enigma of the psyche's relationship to reality. The emergence of trauma, which Caruth defines as "an unexpected or overwhelmingly violent event" in response to nightmares and repetitive events, is a subject Freud also studied. According to Freud, who works on dreams, these are the way the "external reality" is perceived by the individual. In burning child dream, which is a work that exemplifies this, the events are as follows:

*"A father had been watching beside his child's sick-bed for days and nights on end. After the child had died, he went into the next room to lie down, but left the door open so that he could see from his bedroom into the room in which his child's body was laid out, with tall candles standing round it. An old man had been engaged to keep watch over it, and sat beside the body murmuring prayers. After a few hours' sleep, the father had a dream that his child was standing beside his bed, caught him by the arm and whispered to him reproachfully: 'Father, don't you see I'm burning?' He woke up, noticed a bright glare of light from the next room, hurried into it and found that the old watchman had dropped off to sleep and that the wrappings and one of the arms of his beloved child's dead body had been burned by a lighted candle that had fallen on them." (Freud, 2010, p.513).*

Freud distinguishes this dream from other dreams because he interprets the situation here as a result of external stimuli rather than internal. This dream has a very simple explanation within the framework of the notion that dreams are satisfied with an unconscious desire: The sleeper is suddenly exposed to external intervention, a stimulus from reality (temperature rise, the glow of the fire, the smell of smoke) and has built a dream scene containing these stimuli to both continue his sleep and see his child alive for a while, and thus he prolonged his sleep instead of waking up to reality. Finally, the subject woke up when the external stimuli that initially triggered the dream reached a



certain intensity. It turns out that a powerful stimulus waking us up at any given moment is proof that even asleep the soul is in a constant relationship with the extracorporeal world. Sensory stimuli that reach us during sleep may be good sources of dreams (Freud, 2010, p.514). Instead of running into the room where the child is, the father continues to dream, because it is the only possible place where he can see his child alive again. Caruth (1996) states that the subject that Freud emphasizes here is the dreaming of an event that did not occur in reality. Why is the father dreaming instead of waking up? Freud answers this question by basing it on the wish-fulfillment theory. What indicated in the dream is the reality of the burning of the child. This reality is reflected by turning the dead child into a living one (p. 94). This father's behavior is explained by Freud's theory of dreams as wish-fulfillments:

*“The dead child behaved in the dream like a living one: he himself warned his father, came to his bed, and caught him by the arm, just as he had probably done on the occasion from the memory of which the first part of the child's words in the dream were derived. For the sake of the fulfillment of this wish the father prolonged his sleep by one moment. The dream was preferred to a waking reflection because it was able to show the child as once more alive. If the father had woken up first and then made the inference that led him to go into the next room, he would, as it were, have shortened his child's life by that moment of time (Freud, 2010, p.514).”*

Freud suggests that, as Caruth points out, although the dream seems to show the burning outside, it actually conceals the fact that the child is dead. Thus, death turns into life in a dream. The father knows the reality of death, but the “desire” to see his child alive once again comes true in the dream. Freud states that this is the same for not only the father in the burning child dream, but for all other dreamers; *“but more profoundly and more enigmatically, the wish fulfillment of consciousness itself”* (Caruth, 1996, p.96).

According to Freud, while the father sees this dream as a desire to escape from the trauma of his child's death, that is, from external reality, for Lacan, it is the opposite. He interprets this dream from a different perspective. In the *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, in the chapter “Tukhe and Automaton”, when he reconsiders this dream, he points out that what is really interesting is the father's “awakening” at the end. Even if the consciousness wants to sleep, it is disregarded at all. In the end, the father wakes up. He cannot escape from the fire outside (pp.53-67). As Caruth points out, for Lacan, the father's awakening is an attempt to respond to a cry that can only be heard in sleep. This is something that happens when the child grabs his father by the arm and whispers

(“Father, don’t you see I’m burning?”). So, the reality of the child’s accusation of “don’t you see I’m burning” by implying that the father is guilty is more terrifying than the so-called external reality. So, what awakens him is his desire not to face this message of the child’s death to deny it. Caruth (1996) argues that the “awakening” here is an experience based on a command given to the father by a child who is no longer alive. A dead child awakens his father in a dream and cries *“wake up, leave me, survive; survive to tell the story of my burning”* is a command to his father to survive to transmit the truth told by the child himself. According to Freud, while the father’s wish to escape from the traumatic reality witnessed here causes him have this dream, according to Lacan, the dream is for awakening because *“it turns between a traumatic repetition and ethical burden of survival”* to the witness of trauma (pp.105-108).

Considering the relationship between trauma and testimony from a psychopathological perspective, the structure of the mind and the effect of past memories are focused. Caruth (1996) argues that witnessing a savagery does not allow it to be truly grasped, but it indicates a belated attempt to make sense. We can see that other critics and authors such as La Capra, Bessel van der Kolk, and Judith Herman also support Caruth’s idea in their articles, focusing on the alienating effect of trauma and noticeable problems of influence and representation. La Capra (2001) comments on this as follows: *“Trauma brings about a dissociation of affect and representation: one disorientingly feels what one cannot represent; one numbingly represents what one cannot feel”*(p.42). The possibility or impossibility of witnessing the savagery and cruelty of the individual in this complexity causes deep wounds in him.

## **1.2. Historical Background**

The outbreak of the Second World War which was just 20 years after the first one caused various economic, cultural, and political changes to take place in many countries of the world. Historical events experienced due to the political policies carried out by governments have led to changes and innovations in areas, such as technological developments, cinema, literature, and music.

The first of these is the Holocaust which took place in Europe between 1941 and 1945 and is called the biggest genocide in history. This event takes place in the minds as a shame not only in the 20th century but also in the past and future of humanity. The atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the ascension of Queen Elizabeth II,

the literary works written by Angry Young Men, the television and television culture that even middle-class families started to have thanks to technological developments are some of these developments. If it is necessary to mention the other events that followed them from a historical perspective, namely the assassination of Kennedy in 1963, the Vietnam War in 1965, the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989, Gulf War in 1990, the Dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Bosnian War in 1992, the bombing of Serbia by NATO in 1995, 9/11 attack in the United States, the wars in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003.

Although it is separate from continental Europe, these developments affected Britain, which had colonies in various parts of the world, had relations with the European countries and was a NATO member, at least as much as other countries. The power of Britain, known as “the country where the sun does not set on its land”, weakened over its colonies and the Empire started to decline. When we think about it in this way, it is inevitable that these events would revive the trauma. Particularly, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 made this even clearer. Because what was claimed as the reason for this invasion was to protect the world from terror and an unbalanced power and an authoritarian regime. However, in this process, good and evil, victim and victimizer were intermingled with one another and it was not possible to distinguish them from each other. Moreover, this war, which was basically justified as against terrorism, has actually been a crime against humanity (Karadağ, 2013, p.10).

England was seriously suffered from the Second World War and lost many of its soldiers and citizens in the war. Most of the soldiers could not return to their hometowns or they did it with emotional or physical wounds. After the war, the country had a great destruction. Most of the people living in England suffered from this war physically and emotionally, and they lost the possibilities that they had before the war. Health, education, unemployment and housing were priority areas that needed improvement in society. Therefore, social and economic reforms had to be carried out. However, although improvements were made in these areas, the changes in the society became the source of unrest and brought many problems with it. These changes in the society and years of depression brought the concept of alienation to the fore with it (Aydoğan & Uygur, 2017, pp.111-112). Ege (2000) points out that people who are irrelevant to their roots, lost their trust, were alienated from society, were desperate and unhappy, especially in the first half of the century, continued the discourse of alienation to express

their existence and they adopted the 19th century philosophy. This uncertainty, war, terror, fear, violence, anger, and racism made a place for itself in the British theater of the 20th century, and the characters acted out as victims on the one hand and victimizers on the other hand.

While the British Theater was recovering after the war, it took on a unique character. One of the pioneers of this was the “angry young man” movement that developed as a literary movement. These were young writers who took an angry and rebellious attitude towards this new order in the British society and the post-war living conditions. This movement found its reflections in literature in England in the 1950s, and these writers, who told about the rebellion of the youth, led this trend. Writers such as John Wain and John Osborne were among the prominent ones. The characters in the works of these writers reflected the movement they were in with their angry attitudes, being among the classes, alienation from society, and their anger towards the world. This movement, in which these young people who alienated from the society they live in and who moved away from their roots, expressed their anger and rebellion, was one of the main movements that describes the social life and the alienation seen in the society in Britain after the Second World War (Aydoğan & Uygur, 2017, p.120).

In particular, three different plays staged in 1958 developed the theatrical territory: Shelagh Delaney’s *A Taste of Honey* with its account of a pregnant young girl befriended by a homosexual; John Arden’s *Live Like Pigs* set in a Northern housing estate, and Harold Pinter’s *Birthday Party* (Smart, 2001) which is one of the plays selected in this study. Bernard Kops, a playwright and a critic noted the sea-change that occurred in the theatre and spoke for the whole group when he summarized their achievements in *Jewish Chronicle*, 1956:

*“Theatre in England was no longer the precious inner sanctum for the precious few. Writers such as Shelagh Delaney, John Arden, Alun Owen, Robert Bolt, Willis Hall and myself have changed the face of things and we hope for all time. We write about the problems of the world today because we live in the world of today. We write about the young, because we are young. We write about Council flats and the H-bomb and racial discrimination because these things concern us and concern the young people of our country, so that if and when they come to the theatre, they will see that it is for them, and they will feel at home. (qtd. in Smart, 2001)”*

The development of this new featured theater was not only due to historical events of the period, but also due to changes in the living conditions of the society. The policies of “Iron Lady” Margaret Thatcher, who served as the first female prime minister for 11 years between 1979 and 1990, completely changed the life in the country. Compared to the past, a more consuming society emerged in the country. In this new understanding of the society where individuality came to the fore, real problems were ignored, while other situations were criticized and paid attention. The family structure deteriorated and a very individual and reckless society emerged. Every change brought with it a new one, and eventually, everything including people’s eating habits and their cultural interests such as literature and music changed. This new lifestyle and society were of course the subject of literary works (Karadağ, 2013, p.10-11). In the following chapters, in this study, the playwrights, by creating characters that are the subject of these works, treat individuals and society as entities suffering from trauma and depression in their works due to the historical and cultural background of the period, and traumatic elements in the theater plays that emerged, and after this period emerging hypothesis will be emphasized.

### **1.3. Trauma, Witnessing, and Literature**

The conscious recall of our past lives and what we have learned are attributed to the memory we have. Memory, which has been the subject of many other fields including psychoanalysis, has gradually found its place in literature, especially after the 20th century. Destructive events such as disasters, atomic bombs, and genocides in this century are highly traumatic for individuals and the society. These extraordinary events have alienated the individuals from themselves, the environment they live in, and the world. These experiences, acquired sometimes individually and socially, are mostly traumatic.

Caruth (1995) indicates that literature is a matchless field in terms of representing and exemplifying the traumatic events. The traumatic situations that people fall into have started to come to the fore in literary works and have been studied. The livings such as memory, experiences, and recollection that make up the identity of the individual have become frequently used in literature. Since the authors and playwrights both directly witnessed these experiences of themselves and indirectly to the lives of others from the past, they could not create characters independent from these experiences and could not

remain insensitive to social events. It is an undeniable fact that they are nourished by the spirit of the period in which they live, and they shed a small light on history. This situation closely linked literature and memory, especially after the catastrophes in the 20th century, and writers who think that the traumatic situations of the individual and society should not be forgotten, have given literature a memory task through literary works. As a result, the traumatic events of the period are the subject of literary works by authors, poets, playwrights and other artists. Thus, literature conveys the identity and history of the period to which it belongs, thanks to these works.

The events that took place and the pain and destruction caused by these events are so big and deep that they can not be told by ordinary people's narratives. The destruction of the society is reflected in the literary works, and the characters created help transmit this psychological state. These allow us to analyze the psychological effects of traumatic events on people. At the same time, the more people the transmission of social events such as genocide and war reaches, the more universal it becomes. It confronts humanity and provides empathy with the reality of how these painful traumatic events make people feel, how they shake a society from its roots and destroy so much life. In this case, literature makes individuals aware of the traumas experienced in different cultures and allows different people to share their traumatic experiences with each other. Such a connection may be considered an important improvement for recovery.

Felman (1995) also states that literature is a unique field in terms of representation of traumatic experiences and unclaimed moment of trauma. In Caruth's book, in her article titled *Education and Crisis, or The Vicissitudes of Teaching*, she evaluates the relationship between trauma and pedagogy. In fact, she discusses and exemplifies the connection between psychoanalysis and literature with testimony, what kind of interaction these two will have in pedagogical experience, whether the testimony process can be applied in the classroom, and what the consequences will be if it is. To examine these in detail, she designs a course called "Literature and Testimony" and includes 30 students from various fields, such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, history and medicine to reveal the interdisciplinary interaction. She selects the literary texts in which the testimony is exemplified in different ways with various inferences and brings them to class.

She aims to show the class how common testimony actually is, how it is sometimes deliberately and sometimes unexpectedly included in different types of works, and expects students to discover this by feeling. Felman's case studies worked on the relationship between testimony and narrative, psychoanalysis, confession, and poetry in these courses with the students through the relevant texts (from Celan and Camus to Malarme). On the other hand, another pedagogical objective that she wants to bring to the class is as follows:

*".....to make the class feel —there again—progressively discover, how the testimony cannot be subsumed by its familiar notion, how the texts that testify do not simply report facts but, in different ways, encounter—and make us encounter—strangeness, how the concept of the testimony, speaking from a stance of superimposition of literature, psychoanalysis, and history, is in fact quite unfamiliar and estranging, and how—the more we look closely at texts, the more they show us that, unwittingly, we do not even know what testimony is, and that, in any case, it is not simply what we thought we knew it was."*

What is striking in this study of Felman is the final stage of the course. At this stage, she has students who watch two testimonial videotapes of Holocaust Testimonies which she borrowed from Furtunoff Video recordings at Yale. They are the testimonies of one woman and one man. The story of the woman is a disastrous loss story about the need for testimony. The testimony here is "the experience of the narrator over and over again crossing the line that separates life from death." When she was only 15 years old, she had to witness the deaths of almost all of her family in a row. What makes her story different is her persistent desire to survive, despite being so faced with death. Her determination to survive is actually for her brother who drowned in the transport wagon at the age of 13, where she witnessed his death closest:

*"He was going to be thirteen.... And you know, when my brother died in my arms, I said to myself, "I'm going to live." I made up my mind to defy Hitler. I'm not going to give in. Because he wants me to die, I'm going to live. This was our way of fighting back."*

*"After I was liberated... a Russian doctor examined me and said, "Under normal circumstances you would not have survived\_\_\_It s just a medical miracle that you survived." But I told you, I really wanted to live, I said to myself, "I want to live one day after Hitler, one day after the end of the war.... And we are here to tell you the story." (qtd. in Felman, 1995)."*

The other videotape testimony is the story of a 35-year-old man who was a child survivor at that time. Of the four thousand children imprisoned in the Plashow concentration camp, he is one of only two survivors. When he was four years old, his family wants him to be abducted from this camp and send him to a hospital-like institution known as a refugee place. Contrary to the popular belief, this is not a hospital where refugees are protected. After staying there for a while, he escapes from this place that becomes dangerous for him and gets involved in the street children gang and continues the rest of his life by stealing and begging. He was looking at the picture his mother gave him when he was scared and in pain, remembering her promise that they would find him and be together again, no matter what happened when the war was over. Interestingly enough, he really finds his family after all this is over, but they are now a stranger to him, contrary to what he had dreamed of for years. Even when he was with them, he could not sleep at night, had nightmares, and for 35 years, he had not spoken about his experiences. Although he does not want to give testimony at first, he wants to liberate the silence he has kept, and although it is difficult, he is finally able to do so.

After screening these videotape testimonies in the classroom, Felman stated that the eloquence of life and literature carried the class beyond her estimates, realizing that an unexpected crisis situation she experienced in the course once again confirmed the unpredictability of the testimony. This awareness created a determination to write about it. After class, Felman receives questions and calls from students, colleagues, and even many students who are not part of the class. The extent of the crisis situation experienced in the course is reflected in almost all other students. The students who attended the course completely cut off their communication with the outside world, and they could not talk about anything other than this subject just by talking to each other.

In order to find a solution to this crisis situation that got out of control, Felman gathers all the students who attended the class together and with the idea of “.....*the unpredicted outcome of the screening was itself a psychoanalytical enhancement of the way in which the class felt actively addressed not only by the videotape but by the intensity and intimacy of the testimonial encounter throughout the course*” (Felman, 1995, p.50). Then, she asks them to write about what the videotape testimonies they watched in the last part of the course evokes in them, considering the texts they examined in the first part of the course, and write about this experience. Because most of the



students state that after the first session they had a split within them and if they had been in those camps, they would have died.

It may be important for them to witness these experiences in writing about what they feel, perhaps for recovery. Past experiences and memories embedded in the individual and collective memory wait to enter the healing process by being witnessed and becoming a narrative. The theory of trauma, which came to the fore, especially in the 90s, aims to bring light to the traumas that become silent and forgotten, but it demolishes the individual and society by expressing the painful events experienced by individuals and society and witnessing them.

This situation can be attributed to the abreaction that Freud and Janet focused on for a while. Felman aims to make the students realize what this experience adds to them by making them think about the videotapes they watched in relation to the other texts they have studied. Now, after this experience, the students have also become witnesses. When reassessing the texts in the first part of the lesson, it is important to observe what changes in perceptions. This writing situation is actually the testimonies of the students for this lesson.

After a few weeks, after the evaluation of the last article from the students, it is understood that the crisis situation has disappeared and has been overcome. These works surprisingly express the profound and clear importance of students' trauma and having the place of witnesses.

#### **1.4. The Frame of the Study**

This study examines the depiction of characters with a traumatic history in plays, their reactions to trauma, and the possibilities of survival, resistance, and healing these reactions. It argues that characters affected by similar traumas are attracted to each other and create alternative communities that are formed or nurtured by physical intimacy. According to Caruth, trauma occurs when the individual experiences extraordinary events, such as accident, disaster, or genocide, and the survivor reacts to them with frequent uncontrolled symptoms. Since the events in question are beyond the comprehension capacity of the human mind, the experience of these events is considered beyond experience rather than experience. The traumatic event, which is an incomprehensible beyond-experience, is registered by passing directly into the

survivor's unconscious, but this recording does not carry any conscious knowledge or conceivable meaning. For this reason, the mind repeats the event in different ways to comprehend this meaning. This repetition state, in which the individual unconsciously reproduces the traumatic event, is seen as a symptomatic and unconscious action in which the individual is trapped and the meaning of the trauma can never be reached.

The playwrights in this study repeat the disturbing images of the past in their plays and these images are dominant. In plays, mostly, young people struggle with their traumatic past. These characters' past negative experiences and individual or collective traumatic events have shattered their identities. However, in an effort to survive, they tend to create a world for themselves, sometimes forgetting, remembering, adapting, and ignoring these experiences. This trend reminds us of Freud's Defense Mechanisms and the individual's reasons for using them. The characters in the selected plays illustrate the changes in the social structure of England in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century, built by the Second World War, and the problems that accompanied it. Although the playwrights and theatre movements are different, the characters have similar problems and traumatic histories because the period and events are similar. The atmosphere and characters displayed in the plays are desperate; they continue their existence in the society they live in, thinking that a disaster at any moment can turn their lives upside down. They are involved in this strange new world through the traumatic events that happened to them. In the study, the excitements, traumas, the moods that trigger these characters, and their past traumatic experiences will be examined. Wars and natural disasters are some collective factors that traumatize the person. The characters in the selected plays are claimed to be subjected to individual or collective trauma. The study also aims to evaluate the emotional development of the characters, family ties, social relations, and all these are according to the social and cultural characteristics of the period in which they live.

On the other hand, the conditions of the period in which the society lived are undoubtedly reflected in the literary works of that period. Although these works do not reflect the exact same economic, political, and social conditions of the society, they contain the historical background and realities of it. By analyzing the metaphors and repetitive words in these works, signs of unconscious feelings and thoughts are sought (De Mause, 1982). Analyzing the period in which the plays were written and the conditions of that period from the perspective of psychology will allow us to understand

the traumas experienced by the characters and the effect of their behavior and motivation on the current events.

Harold Pinter's *Birthday Party*, like other works to be examined, reflects the psychological state as well as the social and political characteristics of the period in which it was written. The play is almost a reflection of the fragmentation of the individual. Stanley, who escaped from his past and lived in Meg and Petey's house for about a year, leads a calm life. However, when he finds out that two strangers will come to the house, we see that he behaves nervously and strangely. Such behavior is the result of the insecurity and suspicion experienced in individuals and society after the Second World War. When the men come home, the disintegration of Stanley's personality and character gives us the impression that he has traumatic experiences from his past. We know that the name Stanley is a Jewish name. This makes us think that the absurd and incriminating questions asked to him, the dominance and oppression attempted to be established over Stanley, and the reason why he is increasingly strained because of them is actually related to his traumatic past. Although it has been a long time since the Second World War, the shock of the genocide against the Jews that is still continuing in the West is tried to be overcome and the wounds are healed. However, as the play progresses, and at the end we realize that Stanley could not escape from his past and returned to his old life.

In *Saved*, that is another play emphasizing violence and individuality in society and whose characters have different traumatic experiences, Edward Bond reveals people's relations with a violent environment and the destructive effects of living in such an environment on the human psyche. The human figure in the play is actually innately good and innocent. We understand this from the baby who is unaware of anything in the play. However, the difficult socio-economic conditions that people live in, emotional emptiness and disappointments, and the inability to meet the expectations in many aspects lead to despair, thus worsening and making them victims of a violent culture. We observe this in the young characters in the play. As a result, by becoming a victim of such a culture, the man himself seeks other victims. These are the vulnerable characters of *Saved*, especially woman and child figures. On the other hand, the reasons that lead these people to violence are also discussed. The characters grew up in a violent culture, became used to violence, became part of a loveless and uncommunicative society, and they made their own existential efforts accordingly. All the characters are

insensitive and indifferent to each other; they ignore each other's cries for help, cry, loneliness, or even listen to each other. The difficult times that the characters pass through and the years of experience in those lands give visibility to the social effects of individual traumas, and this requires us to rethink of the individual and collective trauma in a psychoanalytic context.

According to the psychoanalytic theory, the individual is born with two innate tendencies. These are the life instinct and the death instinct. The life instinct increases the vitality and love of people, whereas the death instinct includes devastating and destructive tendencies in humans. According to Freud, aggression is the orientation of the death instinct to people and objects other than the individual. In this context, the traumatic effect is individual, but this effect is experienced in a social framework. This is shaped by experience and maintains its effect. The recent increase in violence in human history has caused areas such as psychoanalysis and psychiatry to focus on emotional disorders as a direct result of external violence that causes people to suffer. Freud developed thoughts that there must be a reason for this. Freud's theoretical background shows us that he linked this situation to the structure and way of working of the unconscious. According to him, the origin of this situation is related to the unconsciousness of individuals, and here it finds a hidden expression for itself. He mentions the possibility of the existence of a kind of collective unconsciousness that is transmitted between generations (Freud, 1995). Another reason for his emphasis on this issue is Freud's thought that this can not be possible independently of environmental factors while evaluating the individual psychology. He emphasized that this situation, which is formed by the combination of individual psychology and social psychology, is also very important for the mental health of individuals and stated that individual psychology cannot be separated from the environment and the social effects of this environment (Freud, 1975).

Considering the relationship between violence and trauma, the direct or indirect effects of trauma on the individual, just like violence, should be considered in the context of social processes. Although the ongoing interaction between the society and the individual through violence was only a physiological trauma in the past, today it has turned into a psychological trauma. Painful and terrifying traumatic situations, increasingly pronounced violence and destruction in the selected plays give the

impression that the characters are suffering from emotional disorders and also show how individual traumas are reflected in social terms.

While examining *Frozen*, we will discuss the emotional states of the protagonists, namely Ralph, Agneta, and Nancy. The answer to the question of what were the causes and consequences of Ralph's traumatic experience as a child will help us move forward at this point. We will try to show what the traumatic experiences of Ralph, who was sexually victimized by a negligent mother and her lovers in childhood, costed him in adulthood. Like many other victims of trauma, he remained attached to his past, living his present according to his past experiences, and harming himself and others. Unfortunately, he is not aware of this; the past experiences that he was stuck with made him what he is today. In fact, his attempt to revenge his mother is futile, and this thought eventually leads to his own death. As a traumatized subject, Ralph is afraid, hopeless, and desperate. Therefore, he has led to different situations.

Collins (2005) states that there are two types of traumatic events. Some of these are short-term and simple. They are relatively short but unconscionable threats, such as rape, assault, or natural disasters. Some are long-term which happen over time and are subject to the repetition of excessive threat. These are childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence, and some technological disasters (p.5). Ralph's trauma also stems from childhood sexual abuse. This past life affected his point of view towards the female characters he encountered very differently than normal and how much it dulled his decision-making ability. To what extent do these reflect on his adult thinking and behavior? The answer to these questions is one of the main issues we will focus on in relation to Ralph.

The other two main characters, Agneta, an American psychologist, and Nancy, the mother of Rhona who went missing at the age of ten and was raped and killed, are also traumatized subjects just like Ralph. All of them were stuck in their past and were almost frozen. The playwright allows the characters to face their traumas and literally guides them in order to save them from this situation. As Agneta learns to admit the loss of her friend, colleague and lover, Nancy relieves her painful sense of revenge, finally accepting and forgiving what happened to her. Thus, the study aims to investigate how the concept of trauma is represented in the play, to show how the past life of the characters affects their present and how survivors respond to these traumas.

The effects of both individual and collective traumas on characters will be investigated in Sarah Kane's *Blasted* play, which will be examined. Kane's description of sexuality and violence in the play as a manifestation of the deplorable nature of society was understood differently among the audience. While some conservative critics see only sexuality in the play, others actually understand but ignore the message. Here I would like to point out that the traumatic past of the characters not only affected their present, but also had a similar traumatic effect on the audience. Due to the nature of the relationship of the individual with his social environment, traumas such as war and genocide experienced collectively may affect the psychology of individuals indirectly (De Mause, 2002).

Collective trauma refers to the psychological consequences of a traumatic event experienced by many people living in a society, not only individually but also collectively. In this case, massive traumatic events affect the collective memory in a way that individual experienced traumas affect the individual memory. However, unlike individual traumas, this collective memory of trauma affects a wider mass of people more than only those who experienced the event (Hirschberger, 2018).

Child abuse trauma appears here as well. In one scene of the play, Cate is overwhelmed by Ian's desire for sexual intercourse and suddenly faints on the stage. When she awakes, she starts talking to herself after a hysterical smile. While Cate interprets her loss of consciousness and fainting as a painless transition to a different elongation involuntarily, she explains that she had fainted hysterically before, at certain intervals with her father's return. These crises, the birth of his childhood and close relationship with her father give us the impression of her being sexually abused by her father. The conversations between Cate and Ian, the daily language used, and whatever happened between them seem to be between the two, but in fact, it is a mirror that reflects the violence and similar events in the outside world. Ian's rape of Cate by force is not only a reflection of the discrimination and violence existing in the outside world, but it is also important in terms of directly emphasizing similar events in Bosnia and Britain.

The traumatic effects of great destruction such as war on people are very difficult to erase from the self and memories of the whole world, both individually and socially. Kane tries to create an emotional intensity in the play, not only between the characters,

but also between the characters and the audience. Therefore, how the audience responds to these traumas is as important as the characters.

Various studies have been carried out with different theories and perspectives on Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Edward Bond's *Saved*, Bryony Lavery's *Frozen* and Sarah Kane's *Blasted* plays. The element that stands out and emphasizes throughout these studies is "violence". Those studies will be briefly mentioned below. To begin with Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Yılmaz (2011) discusses how the elements of comedy are blended with threat, violence, and fear, and that characters who live under threat but who do not have the power to eliminate this threat and prevent this violence reflect the feelings of anxiety, fear and uncertainty experienced by today's people. Besides, Tutaş and Azak (2014) reveal that the language used in Pinter's *The Birthday Party* contains distinct "rudeness" to gain power and superiority, and examine the domination race between characters that develops accordingly. In another study, Ayyıldız (2017) examined the play in terms of "power relations", which is a concept used by the 20th century French Philosopher Michel Foucault. Further, Mir and Mohindra (2018) analyzed *The Birthday Party* in terms of Pinter's humanistic-existential approach towards post-war societies by focusing on the ontological dilemma that compelled these societies to an absolute isolation dragging their life toward chaos, fear, threat, and absurdity.

Moreover, Biçer (2008) analyzed how dialectical thinking and historical materialist understanding are used and interpreted in Edward Bond's *Saved*. He deals with Bond's way of bringing reality and real events to the stage within the framework of dialectical thinking. Also, Pena (2009) studied the testimony issue in *Saved*. He emphasizes two dimensions of testimony in the play. The first of these is testimony in terms of characters; they become part of the cycle of violence lasting on stage, suffer, and witness brutality. The second one is testimony for the audience; the bear witnesses the plays and the cruelty is depicted directly and silently. Raju (2017) aims to show the element of irrationality in *Saved* in his article titled *Irrationality in The Plays of Edward Bond*. He exemplifies this claim through the characters, namely Pam and Fred. Pam's indifferent and insignificant attitude towards both her own life and her family, her baby and those around her is a complete example of irrational attitude. Another example for irrationality is Fred who is the father of Pam's baby. Despite being the father of the baby, not preventing his friends from throwing stones at the baby and taking part in the murder

of his own baby are the irrational attitude that causes the welfare and peace in the society to deteriorate. In this regard, Ünal (2018) studied in detail the causes of violence, how the related theories are reflected in the work, how the playwright handles violence in the work, and how he pursues the solution of this violence. She interpreted the modern violence in this work within the framework of social learning theory. Furthermore, Almansoori (2019) evaluates *Saved* from the perspective of Agitprop. “*Agitprop theatre is one of the theatrical movements used by some playwrights and intellectuals in order to provoke the public against the corrupted political figures and systems in addition to the current miserable social conditions*”. How this movement affects the characters in the play and how it is handled in the play were examined, whereby the researcher focused on how the agitprop theater is used to reveal the depth in the work.

Castellitto (2010), in his article titled *Connections Between Modern American Drama and Contemporary Drama: Sociological and Metaphysical Correlations*, mentions the indiscriminate violence in Bryony Lavery’s *Frozen* and the superficially emotionless stances the characters respond to them. For instance, Agneta, who ascribes a lot of emotions on the death of her lover at the beginning of the play, remains silent and almost “frozen” as the play progresses. Or, such as Nancy’s gradually declining reaction to missing of her daughter and the news of her death. Zerenler (2014) analyzed *Frozen* in terms of pedophilia victims and society by focusing on childhood pedophilia. In another study, Sedehi (2016) focused on the character Ralph from *Frozen* and studied the play in terms of his psyche and the child abuse trauma in his past. Ögütçü (2018) discussed the psychological and social causes of sexual abuse while presenting the psychosexual history of a sexual abuser in *Frozen*. He also argues about Lavery’s unconventional anti-pedophilia poetics.

In another study, Elaine Aston (2010) interprets Sarah Kane’s highly controversial play *Blasted* as a seminal reference point for contemporary female playwriting in the British stage in terms of a feminist perspective. Further, Ian Ward (2013) compares the rape and rape myths in the play and explores Kane’s representation of rape and sexual violence. Besides, Sarah Ablett (2014) investigated the instances of abjection in *Blasted* based on the psychoanalytical point of view. In order to show how *Blasted* can be regarded as an example of theatrical disgust, she examined the effect of hatred on content and form in the work. In doing so, one of her purposes is the idea that the play provides a potential catharsis on its audience. Uğur Ada (2014) analyzed the



element of violence in *Blasted* in the context of the effects of modern war on humanity. Paula Barba Guerrero (2016) focused on the reconstruction of the traditional identity problem in the play and Wei Cen (2017) explored the existential crisis that men encounter in *Blasted*. Wei Cen studied the play based on the perspective of a gender study focusing on the masculinity crisis. Nilay Erdem Ayyıldız (2019) studied *Blasted*, which includes all the features of the in-her-face theater, and shows how the in-her-face theater confronts the audience with these features. While doing these, she emphasizes the elements, such as slang language, violence, and sexuality. In another study, Samet Güven (2019) revisits violence in *Blasted* based on the Foucauldian perspective and understanding.

Within the framework of the research, it has been concluded that the number of studies in which the selected plays are discussed together or separately within the scope of trauma theory is quite limited. Although the traumatic experiences of the characters and some traumatic elements were mentioned in studies where the plays were examined with different perspectives and theories, they were not examined in sufficient detail within the scope of trauma theory. Consequently, it is also important to evaluate and examine the selected plays within the framework of the trauma theory, as it will increase the number of sources in this field. Besides, studies that have been trying to explain the recent history of England with new ways of thinking that trauma studies will show are few in number and are qualitatively superficial; therefore, this study may be a step in addressing this research gap.

The disturbing effects of the past are evident on the selected playwrights and plays. Both the atmosphere created and the life styles reflected by the characters to their present due to their past traumas are in fact an indication that the playwrights have produced such works through difficult times. Although the main focus of this study is the past traumatic experiences, pains, excitement, disasters, and shocks that the characters have experienced, in fact, the playwrights are also not indifferent to the negative conditions of the period they lived in, and the exemplary situations they brought from the past will be mentioned.

This study consists of six chapters including the conclusion part. In the first chapter, detailed information about the background of the trauma theory and how the term trauma has developed from the past to the present, how the interest in trauma

studies started and continues, respectively are presented. Also, in this chapter, the reader is provided with information about the history of the study and the theoretical background. The political events and disasters of the period are mentioned. The end of the first chapter focuses on some important aspects that will be analyzed in the plays selected.

The second chapter will analyze Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1958). Pinter uses the distinguishing elements of Theater of Menace to show how characters are entangled by the fear of the unknown. This chapter will display the reflections of the fragmentation in the individual and the society is portrayed as traumatic entities in the play and also the features of Theater of Menace will be mentioned.

The third chapter will discuss Edward Bond's *Saved* (1965). He was the most revolutionary playwright in the British Theatre of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The play is a deliberate attempt to shock the audience and make them leave the theater with a sense of awakening to the things happening around. Bond uses his Rationalist Theater to show how characters are under a severe sense of trauma. Advocating that individuals living in the society are emotionally repressed and that the purpose of the theater is to get them out of this repression, Bond has removed the barrier between the audience and the stage in this play with the screams, groans, and violence. In this way, the destructive effects of living in such a society on the human psyche will be revealed through the characters in the play. Also, the features of Rationalist Theater will be mentioned.

The fourth chapter will examine Bryony Lavery's *Frozen* (1998) in the way that it represents the trauma and recovery. Lavery uses her Horror Theater to confront the audience with the horrible act of child abuse that traumatizes families, individuals, as well as the society. This chapter will discuss how the playwright attempts to represent the trauma concept in the play, and the features of Horror Theater will be mentioned.

The fifth chapter will analyze Sarah Kane's *Blasted* (1995). In the play, where sexuality and violence are described as the manifestation of the deplorable nature of the society, the traumatic experiences of individuals and societies are pointed out through the characters. Kane presents the unrepresentable to show how the characters are traumatized and reveal how this sense of trauma is transported to the audience. In this play, the playwright expresses that the disagreements in society can be solved

individually and socially by going to the root of the problems in the society. Besides, the features of In-Yer-Face Theater will be mentioned.

## **2. CHAPTER TWO: THE BIRTHDAY PARTY**

### **2.1. Harold Pinter and His Theater of Menace**

Harold Pinter was born in 1930 in East End of London. The time of his birth was an upheaval period. Pinter, the only child of a Jewish family, was evacuated like many children from his hometown due to the events that took place during the Second World War. He lived in a castle by the sea in Cornwall for a long time, with twenty-six other children, and was able to return to his family at the age of twelve. This situation, like millions of children and people who lived in that period, caused Pinter to feel the fear and insecurity brought about by being taken from an environment he knew and being placed in somewhere he did not know. He focused on his own feelings and thoughts that were shaped during his evacuation and his years that he spent far from his family in his plays. Like other playwrights, authors, and poets of the period, Pinter witnessed the Second World War and the destruction it brought. He was nine when he was taken to Cornwall for security, so it was a deep feeling of fear and insecurity for a nine-year-old child. Being taken away from his family and witnessing the destruction of the war caused Pinter to show the feeling of insecurity in many of his plays.

The Second World War disappointed people and alienated them from concepts like love, trust, friendship, compassion, and harmony. Man now looked at the world as a stranger, far from all these feelings. A society that lived aimlessly had come into being. This absurdity and the trauma of modern humans are the themes that shape the plays of writers, such as Beckett, Ionesco, Osborne, and Pinter. They try to express this sense of absurdity of humanity by explicitly moving away from rational devices and discursive thinking (Chandra, 2012, p.11).

This absurdity is prominently seen in Pinter's plays. In his plays, he principally creates an insecure environment, leaving both the characters and the audience with a sense of alienation in distrust. Communication among characters consists of short and cut speech. The characters hide themselves in a shelter, escaping from the evil of the outside world. Pinter deals with the economic difficulties experienced by the working class in his early plays and their reflection on their souls, and their disappointments. He develops a unique style in his plays; it is called Pinteresque. The plays usually take place in a room, and he creates an atmosphere of tension and threat by using silence, short

conversations, and ambiguity. A house or a room is a boundary between the characters and the outside world. Meaningless conversations, feelings of pressure, and despair continue throughout the play. It stands out that language is used as an element of violence. The words used are the most important devices to establish pressure, violence, and domination. Visitors coming from the outside to the house where the protagonist shelters for security purposes are perceived as threats. Thus, the threat is carried to an ominous and traumatic dimension.

Pinter's early plays are called "Comedy of Menace" and the later ones are "Memory Plays". Behind what seems normal in the Comedy of Menace is actually a hidden threat and a sign of a future disaster. Communication is almost impossible, and the characters stay away from communication. With those coming from outside, the peace in the indoor area is disturbed. Fear arises as a result of this unidentified threat. In this environment where the facts are uncertain, the next event cannot be predicted. Conversations arising from this obscurity and the characters' reactions to events with fear of the threat lead to the appearance of comic elements in the plays. Comedy of Menace was masterfully used in Pinter's early plays, such as *The Room*, *The Birthday Party*, and *The Dumb Waiter* (Yılmaz, 2011, p. 29).

He wrote his first play, *The Room*, for the Bristol University theater department at the request of a friend in 1957. Then, he wrote his first long play *The Birthday Party*. His other plays are as follows: *The Dumb Waiter* (1957), *A light Ache* (1958), *The Hothouse* (1958), *The Caretaker* (1959), *A Night Out* (1959), *The Dwarfs* (1960), *The Collection* (1961), *The Lover* (1962), *Tea Party* (1964), *The Homecoming* (1964), *The Basement* (1966), *Landscape* (1967), *Silence* (1968), *Old Times* (1970), *Monologue* (1972), *No Man's Land* (1974), *Betrayal* (1978), *Family Voices* (1980), *Other Places* (1982), *A Kind of Alaska* (1982), *Victoria Station* (1982), *One for the Road* (1984), *Mountain Language* (1988), *The New World Order* (1991), *Party Time* (1991), *Moonlight* (1993), *Ashes to Ashes* (1996) and *Celebration* (1999).

Harold Pinter, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005, died on December 24, 2008, because of cancer.

Pinter is influenced by the negativities he was exposed to in his past, and he addresses his own life in *The Birthday Party*. The play takes place in a seaside town, just like Cornwall, where Pinter has to live far from his family. Stanley, like Pinter, has to

live here (although this may seem like Stanley's own choice, the circumstances he was in actually forced him to do so). Due to this traumatic event that Pinter experienced, it would be appropriate to describe the sense of insecurity of the character, Stanley, he created as the traumatic result of the events he experienced in his childhood.

## **2.2. The Birthday Party**

*The Birthday Party* is a mysterious black comedy about pressure and threat. The play was disliked when it was first staged and even removed from the show a week later. However, after a while, it suddenly became the agenda and subsequently one of the most staged and most popular plays. The technique called Pinteresque specific to Pinter is also used extensively in this play. The play, which contains the elements of threat clearly, tells about the lives of ordinary people who are trapped in an environment of fear and pressure. Featuring all the elements of the Comedy of Menace, the play also contains ridiculous elements. The atmosphere at the beginning of the play, which we can see in comedy plays, gradually becomes dark, violent, and scary. The characters are ordinary people with ordinary lives. The life of these ordinary people begins to deteriorate one day in a meaningless and inexplicable way. This negative change comes into their lives from the outside. The main person the threat is directed to is Stanley in the play. There is nothing he can do against this threat. Although he tries to appear strong at first to protect himself, he gives up easily. He is powerless and cannot do anything against this threat and pressure, for which he cannot even understand. This state of weakness and helplessness is the main reason why fear prevails in the play.

The main focus of this chapter is Harold Pinter's early play, which is the first long one, *The Birthday Party*, and the trauma representation through characters, especially the protagonist Stanley, and their responses to trauma. The play reveals the representation of the insidious traumas experienced by the postwar society in daily life through the character Stanley, and in some ways through other characters, too. Pinter represents Stanley as a desperate and depressed man because of his traumatic past which is triggered by the arrival of two strangers to the boarding house. As a young man, Stanley suffers from internal trauma which reveals itself from the first moment he appears on stage "..... Stanley enters, he is unshaven, in his pyjama jacket and wears glasses, he sits at the table" (Pinter, 1958, p.6). His physical appearance gives a hint

about his inner world. It seems that Stanley is depicted as an alienated man who needs to fit into the society, but apparently he denies it because of his own will. He has imprisoned himself in a boarding house for a year far from any possibility of connection with people.

It is difficult to follow Stanley's trauma since it is only implied and can be observed in his behaviors. He does not seem to suffer from the common traumatic symptoms, such as flashbacks or repetition compulsion. He seems suffering from fragmentation. He is fragmented between his own desires, the reality he is in, and his traumatic experiences in his past. For him, his new life in the boarding house with Petey and Meg is his comfort zone, whereby he considers himself as a part of it. Also, it is like a reality he wants to be in; he cannot escape from it even if he implies that he wants to. He does not have any place to go. However, Stanley is desperate and unhappy although the daily life routine seems alright. When he learns about Goldberg and McCann's visit, Stanley gets angry and loses his temper. He perceives them as an external threat. This situation makes the audience think that he has memories he wants to leave in his past; maybe he committed a crime, or maybe someone hurt him. Either way, strangers coming home are a threat to Stanley. He is traumatized by their arrival. The traumas he left in the past, hidden in his memory, are triggered and reappeared. However, it seems that Stanley is not yet ready to face this. He suspects that something bad will happen and wants to continue his normal life. He asks for his tea again, as if it was not he who did not like it. He wants to continue his daily routine so that the conversation keeps as if nothing has ever happened:

**MEG** Two gentlemen asked Petey if they could come and stay for a couple of nights. I'm expecting them. (She picks up the duster and begins to wipe the cloth on the table.)

**STANLEY** I don't believe it.

**MEG** It's true.

**STANLEY** (moving to her.) You're saying it on purpose.

**MEG** Petey told me this morning.

**STANLEY** (grinding his cigarette.) When was it? When did he see them?

**MEG** Last night.

**STANLEY** Who are they?

**MEG** I don't know.

**STANLEY** Didn't he tell you their names?

**MEG** No.

**STANLEY** (pacing the room.) here? They wanted to come here?

**MEG** Yes, they did. (She takes the curlers out of her hair.)

**STANLEY** Why?

**MEG** This house is on the list.

STANLEY But who are they?

MEG You'll see when they come.

STANLEY (decisively) They won't come.

MEG Why not.

STANLEY (quickly.) I tell you they won't come. Why didn't they come last night, if they were coming?

MEG Perhaps they couldn't find the place in the dark. It's not easy to find in the dark.

STANLEY They won't come. Someone's taking the Michael. Forget all about it. It's a false alarm; a false alarm. (He sits at the table.) Where's my tea?

MEG I took it away. You didn't want it.

STANLEY What do you mean, you took it away?

MEG I took it away.

STANLEY What did you take it away for?

MEG You didn't want it!

STANLEY Who said I didn't want it?

MEG You did!

STANLEY Who gave you the right to take away my tea?

It is quite normal and harmless for individuals to resort to defense mechanisms to protect their mental health in an environment that is full of destruction and crisis. However, if the individual makes it permanent and comes into conflict with himself and the society, then mental disorders occur. Here, Stanley refers to the “denial” mechanism of Freud’s defense mechanisms. In Freud’s most general definition, when the ego encounters a threat or anxiety about itself, it can deny the existence of events by ignoring them (Freud, 1937). Thus, it tries to get rid of the anxiety, the traumas, adaptation difficulties and prevent anxiety that may arise. Stanley tries to balance his longstanding traumatic tendencies until he finds out that two strangers were coming to the boarding house. However, the arrival of Goldberg and McCann awakens his anxieties and reveals fear that the audience does not (and will never) know why. The new way of life and rules that emerged in Western societies after the Second World War, being questioned by Goldberg and McCann, and the identity confusion he has experienced, reveal his suppressed feelings. There are things that Stanley experienced in his past and these things caused him to be bound in trauma in his relationship with people around him. He is silent and desperate, and does not seem to belong anywhere, but he is rude and disrespectful towards Meg. It can be clearly observed that the trauma he experienced because of his departure from where he belonged before is bigger than the one he experiences in the boarding house till Goldberg and McCann arrive.

Emotional states, such as trust, doubt, and positive and negative expectations are inherent feelings of the individual under normal conditions. However, when these



feelings are re-triggered in individuals with a traumatic past, the individual now experiences these emotions exaggeratedly and continuously. It can be easily observed that Stanley is a traumatized individual based on his behaviors when his insecure, uneasy and variable attitudes are triggered by different events throughout the play. He seems to be caught between the reality he is in now and his traumatic past. The audience witness him suddenly getting angry, acting strange behaviors and odd conversations while talking to Meg even at the breakfast, which is part of his daily life:

**STANLEY** (absently) I don't know what I'd do without you.

**MEG** You don't deserve it though.

**STANLEY** Why not?

**MEG** (pouring the tea, coyly.) Go on. Calling me that.

**STANLEY** How long has that tea been in the pot?

**MEG** It's good tea. Good strong tea.

**STANLEY** This isn't tea. It's gravy!

**MEG** It's not.

**STANLEY** Get out of it. You succulent old washing bag.

**MEG** I am not. And it isn't your place to tell me if I am!

**STANLEY** And it isn't your place to come into a man's bedroom and wake him up.

**MEG** Stanny! Don't you like your cup of tea of a morning the one I bring you?

**STANLEY** I can't drink this muck. Didn't anyone ever tell you to warm the pot, at least?

Pinter does not engage the audience through the clear presentation of trauma but through the dominant sense of ambiguity and the display of the necessity for people as witnesses. He intentionally creates this ambiguity and this sense of menace to show that people live in an insecure world, where a man cannot be safe no matter where he goes or hides. The audience witness traumatized characters on stage, especially the post-traumatic process Stanley goes through. In the play, different traumatic experiences such as physical and psychological are observed. Stanley suffers from both psychological and physical trauma with the arrival of Goldberg and McCann. He experiences psychological trauma when his memories are triggered by different drives. His repressed feelings and the violence he was subjected to by Goldberg and McCann caused him to reflect traumatic behaviors such as getting silent and unresponsive or committing terrible acts of violence against Lulu. His repressed aggression is exposed. Accordingly, Stanley seems to repeat what has been done to him; therefore, he reperforms his traumatic past physically.

Freud indicates that unlike other experiences, traumatic experiences affect memory differently and they reemerge as a result of external rather than internal trigger. Stanley feels intense feeling of insecurity for Goldberg and McCann. This feeling was inherited to people after the Second World War. The psychological trauma that Stanley experiences reveals when these two strangers enter the boarding house

*....Enter, by the back door, Goldberg and McCann. McCann carries two suitcases, Goldberg a briefcase. They halt inside the door, then walk downstage. Stanley, wiping his face, glimpses their backs through the hatch. Goldberg and McCann look round the room. Stanley slips on his glasses, sidles through the kitchen door and out of the back door (Pinter, 1958, p.20).*

Actually, in the beginning of the play, Stanley shows up living in a boarding house for nearly a year. Apparently, he aimed at a new beginning here; however, it is understood that he is possessed by his traumatic past. His conflicting desires to leave and not to leave the boarding house shows how Stanley finds himself in a vicious circle of trauma:

**STANLEY** (abruptly.) How would you like to go away with me?

**LULU** Where?

**STANLEY** Nowhere. Still, we could go.

**LULU** But where could we go?

**STANLEY** Nowhere. There's nowhere to go. So we could just go. It wouldn't matter.

**LULU** We might as well stay here.

**STANLEY** No. It's no good here.

**LULU** Well, where else is there?

**STANLEY** Nowhere.

This conversation between Stanley and Lulu shows that Stanley is someone who does not know what to do or where to go, even though he does not want to live in that house anymore, because he has no place to go, he is aware that there is no solution to it, and does not feel safe. This gives the audience the impression that Stanley is under intense stress that they do not know its reason. In this boarding house where he has lived for a year, Stanley has an ordinary life though he still feels threatened even in this ordinariness. All these worries and fear are due to this feeling; consequently, he behaves strangely. While doing these, he tries to protect himself from within; however, neither Stanley nor other characters suffer from their own mistakes. It is this fragmented world in which they are that makes them like this.

As of the time, it was written, *The Birthday Party* reflects the atmosphere of violence and oppression in a society that is full of suspicion and insecurity after the Second World War. This is a period when people's expectations from life are exhausted, they live in fear, and their only goal is to find a safe shelter for themselves. The silence of the characters is to protect and hide themselves because they do not know where the threat will come from. The traumatic experiences of Stanley in the past have also led him to this path. Stanley trapped himself in darkness; he is not brave enough to dare to get out of there. After the war, the new order in Western societies created a way of life that people did not get used to and caused them to experience new traumas accordingly. Stanley questions his existence as an individual of that society; he is in search of identity, but this search has been inconclusive.

In Caruth's book, *Trauma Explorations in Memory* (1995), Van der Kolk and van der Hart mention in their article titled "*The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma*" Pierre Janet's contributions to the effects of traumatic memories on consciousness. Janet observes, as Van der Kolk and Van der Hart point out, that traumatic memory is triggered under particular conditions and it occurs by itself in circumstances that are evocative of the original traumatic state. These situations trigger the traumatic memory. The collective traumas of the twentieth century particularly affect the characters. In this regard, Pinter considers the existence issue of modern man after the war. Somewhere in the past, life was excellent, but it is no longer now, and will never return. Meg has fantasies about the lovely room of hers but in the present, the room is described as "pigsty". Stanley recalls his past as a pianist but he has imprisoned himself in this boarding house and isolates himself from people. Similarly, Goldberg expresses his memories with a longing for the past, but he is totally a different person now:

**GOLDBERG** Right. Now Stanley's sat down. [Taking the stage.] Well, I want to say first that I've never been so touched to the heart as by the toast you've just heard. How often, in this day and age, do you come across real, true warmth? Once in a lifetime. Until a few minutes ago, ladies and gentlemen, I, like all of you, was asking the same question. What's happened to the love, the bonhomie, the unashamed expression of affection of the day before yesterday, that our mums taught us in the nursery?

Goldberg reminds not only the characters in the room but also the audience of the traumatic situation that they are having now. This makes the audience think of the vicious circle of life. Pinter highlights the identity crisis people experience during the act of remembering since it serves to bring back their traumatic past. Their sense of identity is destroyed; it is seen that even the individual names lost their meanings. Goldberg is Nat, Benny, Simey and McCann are Seamus and Dermot at the same time:

**GOLDBERG** (settling in the armchair.) You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me? Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough. That's why, when I had to go away on business I never carried any money. One of my sons used to come with me. He used to carry a few coppers. For a paper, perhaps, to see how the M.C.C. was getting on overseas. Otherwise my name was good. Besides, I was a very busy man.

**MCCANN** I didn't know you had any sons.

**GOLDBERG** But of course. I've been a family man.

**MCCANN** How many did you have?

**GOLDBERG** I lost my last two – in an accident. But the first, the first grew up to be a fine boy.

**MCCANN** What's he doing now?

**GOLDBERG** I often wonder that myself. Yes. Emanuel. A quiet fellow. He never said much. Timmy I used to call him.

**MCCANN** Emanuel?

**GOLDBERG** That's right. Manny.

**MCCANN** Manny?

**GOLDBERG** Sure. It's short for Emanuel.

**MCCANN** I thought you called him Timmy.

**GOLDBERG** I did.

**MCCANN** What about this, Nat? Isn't it about time someone came in?

More specifically, Stanley shows signs of memory problems and amnesia. He is haunted by his traumatic recollections. It seems that these memories have left traumatic effects on him. Instead of answering Meg's questions, he only focuses on "that" moment in the past. This refers to his memory problems that affect the change of the state of consciousness.

**STANLEY** I've.. er... I've been offered a job, as a matter of fact.

**MEG** What?

**STANLEY** Yes. I'm considering a job at the moment.

**MEG** You're not.

**STANLEY** A good one too. A night club. In Berlin.

**MEG** Berlin?

**STANLEY** Berlin. A night club. Playing the piano. A fabulous salary. And all found.

**MEG** How long for?

**STANLEY** We don't stay in Berlin. Then we go to Athens.

**MEG** How long for?

**STANLEY** Yes. Then we pay a flying visit to ... er...  
whatsisname?

**MEG** Where?

**STANLEY** Constantinople. Zagreb. Vladivostok. It's a round  
the world tour.

**MEG** (sitting at the table.) Have you played the piano in those  
places before?

**STANLEY** Played the piano? I've played the piano all over the  
world. All over the country. (Pause.) I once gave a concert.

**MEG** A concert?

**STANLEY** (reflectively.) Yes. It was a good one, too. They  
were all there that night. Every single one of them. It was a  
great success. Yes. A concert. At Lower Edmonton.

Throughout the play's narrative, Pinter hints that the traumas of the characters are caused by the effects of the new society that emerged after the Second World War. The traumatic impacts of the war on people haunt the play but remain hidden on stage, and the audience become aware of it. The trauma is manifested in the characters of Goldberg and McCann, and Stanley's interactions with them illustrate his experience with PTSD symptoms. Pinter's unspoken words and pauses develop the trauma in the play. Stanley's cry during the interrogation scene and voices such as "uuhhh" give the impression of his experiencing trauma. His behaviors at the beginning of the play indicates that Stanley is already under stress, and someone who has had traumatic experiences. With the effect of the psychological and verbal violence inflicted on him, his trauma progresses and even worsens. He transforms into a completely silent and unresponsive victim. This makes the audience aware that there is something traumatic which makes him suffer, but they do not know its source.

It is through the questions of Goldberg and McCann that the audience become aware of pressure on people in the twentieth century. Stanley's reactions to these questions convey the depth of his emotional numbing caused by the pressure he is in. Although it is not directly mentioned, the psychological effects caused by the Second World War are given as background of the characters own emotional states. Pinter uses Stanley to highlight the legacy of individual suffering. With this, he makes the audience part of drama, as collective memories are awakened. The audience witness the pain and trauma that humans experience, so the traumatic side of the twentieth century is revealed somehow.

The narrative reveals that Stanley is not the only traumatized person in the play. The unbalanced and strange attitudes of the characters give the impression that they are

actually not psychologically healthy. It can be clearly observed that the traumatic experiences of the characters have destroyed their identities and this makes them victims as much as victimizers in some circumstances. It is obvious that the boarding house is a comfort zone not only for Stanley but also for Meg and Petey. Meg's reactions are striking when Stanley tells her that "they" are coming in a van and that van has a wheelbarrow. It seems like she has an experience in the past that she does not want to remember anymore. It can be thought that Stanley knows this situation, and Meg has shared it with him before. In the rest of the conversation, it is seen that Stanley uses this situation against her and although Meg is uncomfortable about it, he persistently continues. Meg's being breathless and hoarsely in her speech and her abnormal reactions such as "*No, Not, You are a liar*" against the pressure exerted by Stanley are her traumatic reactions.

Another traumatic event which Meg is exposed to is verbal abuse of Stanley because of her attitudes in the house. He accuses her of being a bad wife and not cleaning the house, even not making a good breakfast and tea. Also, she is ignored by her husband, Petey. Petey seems alright in letting her live with her own fantasies since he wants to escape from the complications of their life. Therefore, this causes her to become an interpersonally traumatized person. Christiane Sanderson describes the types of abuses in her book *Introduction to Counselling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma*. She claims that verbal abuse should be considered an abuse type which causes interpersonal trauma (Sanderson, 2010, p. 28). Considering Meg's situation of being ignored and exposed to verbal abuse in the house, it would not be wrong to say that she is also a traumatized individual.

Meg and Petey do not have a child; therefore, Stanley has been the focus of Meg's attention and thus meets the needs of being loved and intimacy to some extent. This allows Meg to meet her need of being realized. Although not as much as Meg, Petey also considers Stanley as his son:

**MEG** I like listening to the piano. i used to like watching Stanley play the piano. Of course, he didn't sing. (Looking at the door.) i'm going to call that boy.

**PETEY** Didn't you take him up his cup of tea?

**MEG** I always take him up his cup of tea. But that was a long time ago.

**PETEY** Did he drink it?

**MEG** I made him. I stood there till he did. i'm going to call him. (She goes to the door.) Stan! Stanny! (She

listens.) Stan! I'm coming up to fetch you if you don't come down! I'm coming up! I'm going to count three! One! Two! Three! I'm coming to get you! (She exits and goes up stairs. In a moment, shouts from STANLEY, wild laughter from MEG. PETEY takes his plate to the hatch. Shouts. Laughter.

PETEY sits at the table. Silence. She returns.) He's coming down. (She is panting and arranges her hair.) i told him if he didn't hurry up he'd get no breakfast.

**PETEY** That did it, eh?

**MEG** I'll get his cornflakes.

As seen in the above quote, Meg and Petey treat Stanley like a little boy. Stanley also, unconsciously, reacts like a little boy demanding attention and affection from his mother. The main reason of Stanley's unkind attitudes towards Meg may stem from his disappointing relationship with his mother. Even though his past is not mentioned in the play, he recalls his memories from his past. His father is in his memory, but there is not even any reference to his mother which supports the thought that his relationship with his mother has an effect on his rude behavior towards Meg.

John Niba Ndongmanji mentions the oedipal relationship between Meg and Stanley in his article titled *The Quest Of Identity: A Study Of The Characters Of Stanley, Goldberg And McCann In Harold Pinter's The Birthday Party*. He draws the attention to the oedipal tendency in Meg and Petey's speech in the first scene of the play. He claims that as a father figure, Petey expresses his oedipal longing to a daughter by saying "a little girl is alright", while Meg as a mother figure expresses her unconscious desire to a boy by saying "I'd much rather have a little boy". Considering this oedipal relationship from Stanley's point of view, the situation is not very clear. While making a pointless accusation or approaching violently towards Meg, he may suddenly experience a regression to his childhood: "I don't know what I would do without you". He is inwardly aware that he behaves like a child. He has no idea how to survive without Meg. On the other hand, in the conversation between Meg and Stanley at the end of the first act of the play, it is seen that the oedipal relationship between them creates a trigger in Stanley's mental state. He uses regression, one of the defense mechanisms, to protect his mental health in this situation (Ndongmanji,....., pp.3-7). As he hangs the drum around his neck and plays, obviously this action triggers his deeper traumas and hits the drum stronger and harder. He cannot hold his temper, loses consciousness, and he

becomes a savage. He expresses the feeling of violence he has suppressed in the following way:

**STANLEY** What's this?

**MEG** It's your present.

**STANLEY** This isn't my birthday, Meg.

**MEG** Of course it is. Open your present.

He stares at the parcel, slowly stands, and opens it. He takes out a boy's drum.

**STANLEY** (flatly) It's a drum. A boy's drum.

**MEG** (tenderly.) It's because you haven't got a piano. (He stares at her, then turns and walks towards the door, left.) Aren't you going to give me a kiss? (He turns sharply, and stops. He walks back towards her slowly. He stops at her chair, looking down upon her. Pause. His shoulders sag, he bends and kisses her on the cheek.) There are some sticks in there. (STANLEY looks into the parcel. He takes out two drumsticks. He taps them together. He looks at her.)

**STANLEY** Shall I put it round my neck?

She watches him, uncertainly. He hangs the drum around his neck, taps it gently with the sticks, then marches round the table, beating it regularly. MEG, pleased, watches him. Still beating it regularly, he begins to go round the table a second time. Halfway round the beat becomes erratic, uncontrolled. MEG expresses dismay. He arrives at her chair, banging the drum, his face and the drumbeat now savage and possessed.

Besides, John Niba Ndongmanji considers the oedipal relationship between Meg and Stanley based on Petey's perspective as a father figure, claiming that Goldberg and McCann are Petey's tyrannical and castrating halves. Stanley came home as an outsider and changed the balance between Petey and Meg. Petey's authority and identity have been damaged. Goldberg and McCann are the unconscious reflection of Petey's personality. Petey, unconsciously, wants to punish Stanley, so he allows men to come home. Therefore, subconsciously, there is a repressed feeling of hatred towards Stanley, originating from the thought that he has been supplanted by him. On the day after the birthday party, his conversation with Meg supports the thought that he is conscious of the torture inflicted on Stanley all night (Ndongmanji,....., pp.3-7). In his book *Pinter the Playwright*, Martin Esslin (1984), indicates that Petey witnesses this torture, and the trauma Stanley experiences; however, he does not tell Meg about it deliberately (p.83). Repression is one of the most common concepts in trauma theory. It is a process that certain recollections or thoughts are excluded from consciousness and are restrained to



unconsciousness. Obviously, Petey unconsciously has suppressed the fear and anxiety he experienced with Stanley's arrival. This is a traumatic situation he experiences, but he is not aware at the moment. As Caruth argues, trauma is not only a shock at the time it is experienced, but also a belated effect attached to the real event (Caruth, 1995, p. 9). The feeling that is suppressed is not erased or forgotten; it is simply thrown into the unconscious for later use. In this context, the following dialogue supports Niba's claim about the oedipal relationship between them:

**PETEY** [reading.] You slept like a log last night.

**MEG** Did I?

**PETEY** Why don't you have a walk down to the shops? It's fresh out. It'll clear your head.

**MEG** Will it?

**PETEY** Bound to.

**MEG** I will then. Did I sleep like a log?

**PETEY** Dead out.

**MEG** I must have been tired. [She looks about the room and sees the broken drum in the fireplace.] Oh, look. [She rises and picks it up.] The drum's broken. [PETEY looks up.] Why is it broken?

**PETEY** I don't know.

[She hits it with her hand.]

**MEG** It still makes a noise.

**PETEY** You can always get another one.

**MEG** [sadly.] It was probably broken in the party. I don't remember it being broken though, in the party. [She puts it down.] What a shame.

**PETEY** You can always get another one, Meg.

**MEG** Well, at least he did have it on his birthday, didn't he? Like I wanted him to.

**PETEY** [reading.] Yes.

**MEG** Have you seen him down yet? [PETEY does not answer.] Petey.

**PETEY** What?

**MEG** Have you seen him down?

**PETEY** Who?

**MEG** Stanley.

**PETEY** No.

**MEG** Nor have I. That boy should be up. He's late for his breakfast.

**PETEY** There isn't any breakfast.

**MEG** Yes, but he doesn't know that. I'm going to call him.

**PETEY** [quickly.] No, don't do that, Meg. Let him sleep.

**MEG** But you say he stays in bed too much.

**PETEY** Let him sleep... this morning. Leave him.

**MEG** I've been up once with his cup of tea. But Mr McCann opened the door. He said they were talking. He said he'd made him one. He must have been up early. I don't know what they were talking about. I was surprised. Because Stanley's usually fast asleep when I wake him. But he wasn't this morning. I heard him talking. [Pause.] Do you think they know each other? I think they're old friends. I know he did. [Pause.] I didn't give him his tea. He'd already had one. I came down

again and went on with my work. Then, after a bit, they came down to breakfast. Stanley must have gone to sleep again.  
[Pause.]

Another example of repression is observed on Stanley. Until the arrival of Goldberg and McCann, his traumas have been suppressed and become a kind of unresponsiveness. In this house where he has been living for a year, he has not talked to anyone about his past and hide his past experiences somewhere in his memory. This state of suppression, with the effect of the negativities inherited from the past, is perceived as a trigger for the arrival of outsiders and comes to light again. According to Janet, Stanley is on the verge of dissolution as a typical symptom. Consciousness, memory, and identity are interrupted. Henry Krystal (1970) indicates that the intensity of stimuli is not the reason for psychic trauma in adults. For him, it is the recognition of inevitable danger and surrendering to it which actually initiates the adult traumatic state. Stanley recognizes two outsiders as an inevitable danger.

According to Shoshana Felman, the term “witness” might be the person who witnesses the truth through the speech of the survivor’s testimony (Felman, 1995, p. 24). Once Stanley recalls his memories of his days as a pianist and shares that with Meg, she becomes a kind of “witness”, because what Stanley tells here brings Meg to a secondary state of witness. This conversation is Stanley’s breaking point. His regression to his childhood and his isolation from the outside world begins with his father’s inability to attend the concert because he lost his address. Throughout the play, it is clear that the power of his subconscious and deep-rooted psychological motives beyond his control have a strong bearing on Stanley’s being a traumatic individual suffering from PTSD:

**MEG** ( sitting at the table.) Have you played the piano in those places before?

**STANLEY** Played the piano? I've played the piano all over the world. All over the country. (Pause.) I once gave a concert.

**MEG** A concert?

**STANLEY** ( reflectively.) Yes. It was a good one, too. They were all there that night. Every single one of them. It was a great success. Yes. A concert. At Lower Edmonton.

**MEG** What did you wear?

**STANLEY** ( to himself.) I had a unique touch. Absolutely unique. They came up to me. They came up to me and said they were grateful. Champagne we had that night, the lot. ( Pause.) My father nearly came down to hear me. Well, I dropped him a card anyway. But I don't think he could make it. No, I - I lost the address, that was it. (Pause.) Yes? Lower Edmonton. Then, after that, you know what they

did? They carved me up. Carved me up. It was all arranged, it was all worked out. My next concert. Somewhere else it was. In winter. i went down there to play. Then, when I got there, the hall was closed, the place was shuttered up, not even a caretaker. They'd locked it up. (Takes off his glasses and wipes them on his pyjama jacket.) A fast one. They pulled a fast one. I'd like to know who was responsible for that. (Bitterly.) All right, Jack, i can take a tip. They want me to crawl down on my bended knees. Well, I can take a tip... any day of the week. (He replaces his glasses, then looks at MEG.) Look at her. You're just an old piece of rock cake, aren't you? (he rises and leans across the table to her.) That's what you are, aren't you?

The only sane character in the play seems to be Petey; he does not care much about what is happening around him to keep his order. Worrying about Stanley is a sign that he actually cares for him. As Stanley is being taken, Petey is aware of something. The existence of the individual has changed and this change has brought traumatic consequences. Although he has a desire to intervene in this change in Stanley, he ignores it after the implicit threat received by Goldberg. It is aware that it cannot keep up with change. Although ignoring this traumatic effect is not a solution, Petey has thus become the character that is least affected by the trauma of social change. On the other hand, this situation can be evaluated as “An event without a witness”, which is an expression Dori Laub uses for Holocaust (Laub, 1995, p.65). Laub uses this expression based on the Holocaust testimonies he has listened to. He argues that the Nazis sought to destroy not only the physical witnesses of their crimes but also the inherently incomprehensible and deceptive psychological nature of the incident that prevented its own testimony even by its victims. According to Laub, “A witness is a witness to the truth of what happens during an event” (Laub, 1995, p.65). In brief, a witness can be sometimes a neighbor, a friend, a business partner, the police, or even allies in other countries. In the play, Goldberg’s implicit threat exterminates Petey as a witness of their crime. Although Petey witnesses the removal of Stanley at the end of the play, he remains silent. He just suffices to say “*Stan, don't let them tell you what to do!*” When Meg arrives, Petey does not say anything to her, letting her think Stanley is upstairs. Stanley’s departure also remains an event without a witness.

Based on a broader perspective, Stanley is also an outsider. He also came to the safe place of Meg and Petey a while ago and intervened in their domestic lives. Pluto Ohanze Panes indicates in the *Book Review* he wrote for *The Birthday Party* that

Stanley is a “parasite” in Meg and Petey’s domestic household. He expresses that the struggle for power is essential in the harmony of their relationship, and this struggle makes their existence meaningful, but the arrival of Stanley deteriorate this power relationship. In this case, at this time, it is Petey who feels pressured. For this reason, he bounds to the play of chess as a new safe space that makes him feel that he has regained his strength. In this relationship that has been problematized by the arrival of Stanley, Petey has to create a private space for himself to keep his identity alive, and this is the play of chess (Panes, .... p.2). Another reason for his being calmer, normal and passive character compared to others is the possibility of accepting his traumatic past. Henry Kyrystal explains that if one accepts his self and his inevitable past he achieves integrity. Petey also seems to have kept up with the circumstances he is in.

Perceived as danger from outside, two strangers, namely Goldberg and McCann are also in a state of fear and suspicion. The source of this fear is uncertain in the play. However, this fear and suspicion are seen in his behavior and some of his statements, whereby the invisible fear prevails in both of their behaviors. The source of these may be “the institution”. McCann draws attention with his skeptical attitude even from the first appearance on the stage. He is nervous and introverted, and wants to make sure they come to the right house. He questions exactly what they do, and why they are there. Goldberg’s reactions and answers to the questions give the impression that he is also agitated and anxious. Whatever he is doing, and why he is doing, it is obviously a situation that puts pressure on Goldberg. It is obvious that he is trying to adapt to a place in the society. As Jamil and Alvi (2012) state “.... *human beings are required to repress themselves in order to have better adaptation to society so that they may be called the so-called civilized people.*” (p.143). At the same time, he is someone who longs for his past, is sure that those days cannot be experienced again, and does not have any hope for the future. As a result, he has been in search of an identity. In this pursuit, he is sometimes aggressive, understanding, angry, and oppressive. Considering that he has done similar things before, it will be a straight expression to say that he is in a constant search for recognition and identity. Somehow, their arrival brings an atmosphere of menace and suspense. The same is true for McCann, the second villain in the play. Both have become a tool of violence and threat by the institution and society they work for. Hasina Wahida (2013) states that they are not inherently bad; they are individuals who

have lost their true selves by serving this purpose because they are trying to keep up with the society they live in and to be a part of that society (p.92).

As observed in the play, the society Goldberg and McCann come from is violent and chaotic, and unfortunately, they are products of this society. This chaos and violence created a prison in their mind, and they are determined to take Stanley through physical and mental torture. It becomes clear as the play progresses that they achieve their duty as they have done many times before. For Stanley, another psychological imprisonment, namely trauma comes after the interrogation and the party. Hence, trauma is not just a wound inflicted not only on the body but also upon the mind as Caruth indicates.

The most prominent features of a paranoid state are the individual's feeling of insecurity, perceiving behaviors and words towards himself as danger, and doubting everything. Throughout the play, it is observed that Stanley has a paranoid tendency. He does not even want to meet Goldberg and McCann. He avoids contacting them with any concern of harm. When he has to, he develops a defensive attitude and approaches them very carefully. In addition to trying to be in control, he even tries to gain domination over them. He is skeptical of them because outsiders are unreliable and dangerous. This arouses fear in him and he is therefore in a paranoid state. For Pinter, Stanley is a small representation of individuals forced to move against their will and pushed out of society as a victim of the new system that emerged after the war. By making this choice, Stanley has isolated himself from the society, and his freedom is limited to his position as a pianist in his past.

Judith Herman describes the symptoms of PTSD in her book, *Trauma and Recovery*, which fall into three main categories. Hyperarousal is seen as the first symptom of PTSD, and the individual is constantly on the alert to protect himself in this situation. He is easily startled by the slightest thing, has sleep disturbances, and reacts nervously to small mundane events. Another category is "Intrusion". Here, even though a long time has passed since the traumatic event, the individual relives it as if the event was repeating at that moment. This negatively affects the normal routine of his life. Some seemingly small and important things, according to Herman, can be a reminder for the traumatized individual. These may cause a person to be remembered in full vividness of the actual event most of the time. After some time, even normally safe environments may make feel dangerous because no one can guarantee that the

traumatized person will never come across things that remind him of their trauma. In the last category, “Constriction”, the person is lethargic and weak and does not resist anything. He is aware of the events around him, but events seem to break from their usual meanings (Herman, 1992, p.25).

When the symptoms of PTSD are considered in this way, it is obvious that Stanley is undoubtedly a traumatic individual suffering from PTSD. In this sense, Stanley’s struggle to protect himself against external danger has turned into an existential effort. With this effort described on the stage, not only the existentialist thought is expressed, but also the fear, pains and desires of the ordinary person living in a complex world cannot be expressed. Even Stanley’s seemingly normal behavior actually carries traces of his traumatic past. He is disturbed by everything that reminds him of his past, even his own face. In his conversation with Lulu, she makes statements about his appearance. However, this finds no meaning in Stanley. Because he is desperate, he sends the message that his look cannot change the facts. The real meaning of this is much deeper than it seems, because it is obvious that Stanley has more important problems to be solved. This indicates the trauma he is in and that it would not be possible to get rid of it. As a result of his traumatic experiences, Stanley feels desperate and helpless about the future, and in a way, this is one of the reasons for his fragmentation:

**LULU** (offering him the compact.) Do you want to have a look at your face? (STANLEY withdraws from the table.) You could do with a shave, do you know that? (STANLEY sits, right at the table.) Don't you ever go out? (He does not answer.) I mean, what do you do, just sit around the house like this all day long? (Pause.) Hasn't Mrs Boles got enough to do without having you under her feet all day long?

**STANLEY** I always stand on the table when she sweeps the floor.

**LULU** Why don't you have a wash? you look terrible.

**STANLEY** A wash wouldn't make any difference.

**LULU** (rising) Come out and get a bit of air. You depress me, looking like that.

**STANLEY** Air? Oh, I don't know about that.

Being far from his hometown creates a gap inside Stanley which is also a traumatic experience for him. Stanley is indifferent towards the society. He wants to live his own separate peace by leaving his past behind and living in this house; however, the

society does not allow him to sustain his individuality. Having no communication with the outside world for a year, Stanley will reconnect with it through two strangers who include his life after a long time. His suspicious and abnormal behaviors and his perceptions of men as threats are signs of triggering the recollections that Stanley's memory threw back. Despite the fact that his approach to the men with constant anticipation and his suspicious and anxious mood arouse curiosity in the audience, it is not possible to find the answer throughout the play. For a while, Goldberg and McCann become the object of Stanley's inherently suspicious feelings. Of course, this situation will reverse in the following sections:

**STANLEY** Where the hell are they? [Stubbing his cigarette.] Why don't they come in? What are they doing out there?

**MCCANN** You want to steady yourself. [STANLEY crosses to him and grips his arm.]

**STANLEY** [urgently.] Look-

**MCCANN** Don't touch me.

**STANLEY** Look. Listen a minute.

**MCCANN** Let go my arm.

**STANLEY** Look. Sit down a minute.

**MCCANN** [savagely, hitting his arm.] Don't do that! [STANLEY backs across the stage, holding his arm.]

**STANLEY** Listen. You knew what I was talking about before, didn't you?

**MCCANN** I don't know what you're at all.

**STANLEY** It's a mistake! Do you understand?

**MCCANN** You're in a bad state, man.

**STANLEY** [whispering, advancing.] Has he told you anything? Do you know what you're here for? Tell me. You needn't be frightened of me. Or hasn't he told you?

With the effect of the traumas they have experienced, it is obvious that other characters are also mentally disturbed besides the protagonist Stanley. Considering the perception of the concept of time in the play, it is seen that the characters are not very interested in the time they are in. For instance, Meg seems to have forgotten even the simplest things about time. Surprisingly, she does not know that the weather is still dark in the early morning hours in winter. She is also not sure when the drum was broken; "*It was probably broken in the party. I don't remember it being broken though, in the party*" (Pinter, 1958, p.55). The most prominent example of temporal memory distortion in the play is actually "The birthday Party", which gives the play its name. Birthdays are special days that are never forgotten for individuals. It is also quite interesting and ambiguous that Stanley does not remember his birthday, which is once a year and is

always at the same time. Stanley argues that his birthday is not till next month, but Meg insists that it is today. Goldberg also insists on celebrating, so he does not let Stanley out. This argument is quite absurd from the outside, *“but it shows how even such supposedly important points in time are forgotten and not taken into consideration by the mentally ill”* (Konecna, 2020, p.52).

Another remarkable point is that Goldberg diagnoses Stanley, in his own way, with PTSD. Considering that Goldberg, who himself is observed to have traumatic experiences from his behaviors and that they come to light in different ways when triggered, makes such a diagnosis and promises to heal him while taking Stanley in the final scene of the play. One more time it raises the question of who really exactly Goldberg is, why he is there, and whether he is really going to help Stanley:

**PETEY** What came over him?

**GOLDBERG** [sharply.] What came over him? Breakdown, Mr Boles. Pure and simple. Nervous breakdown.

**PETEY** But what brought it on so suddenly?

**GOLDBERG** [rising, and moving upstage.] Well, Mr Boles, it can happen in all sorts of ways. A friend of mine was telling me about it only the other day. We'd both been concerned with another case-not entirely similar, of course, but... quite alike. [He pauses.] Anyway, he was telling me, you see, this friend of mine, that sometimes it happens gradual-day by day it grows and grows and grows... day by day. And then other times it happens all at once. Poof! Like that! The nerves break. There's no guarantee how it's going to happen, but with certain people... it's a foregone conclusion.

Stanley's psychological state from the beginning is actually felt by the audience. Stanley is alone in this world. The fact that he comes and settles in the boarding house alone, has no visitors during his stay, and that even the Boles he lives with does not know anything about him also support this idea. While everyone is having fun at the party, it does not go unnoticed that he remains silent, and no one cares about it. This confirms that Stanley suffers from PTSD. His past experiences cause him to have communication problems now. It is very difficult for individuals who have been tortured in the community to establish healthy relationships and communication with others later on. So it would not be wrong to say that Stanley is a trauma victim left alone in the crowd.



Focusing on the belatedness of the trauma, Caruth points out that the traumatic experience coexists with the individual throughout his life. In *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, she says that the after-effects of the traumatic event are not understood at the moment of the event, but they are ready to occur at any time and will emerge immediately when triggered by a similar event (Caruth, 1995, p. 9). She expresses a similar expression in her another work *Unclaimed Experience* as “the impact of the traumatic event lies precisely in its belatedness, in its refusal to be simply located” (Caruth, 1996, p.8). Considering this perspective, his reaction to the torture inflicted on Stanley during his birthday can be called “belatedness of a traumatic experience”. They were two strangers who tortured Stanley. Instead of tormenting Goldberg and McCann in response to this torture, he responds only with the instinct of self-defense, but attacks against Meg and Lulu. He tries to strangle Meg and has a sexual attack on Lulu. This scene, which can be evaluated as black humor in a black comedy from the theatrical framework, has a much deeper meaning within the scope of trauma theory. It can be argued that Stanley’s attack on two female characters who are weaker than himself instead of the ones who inflicted violence on him, triggers his past traumatic experiences at this point and the belated effect of trauma comes to light. There is an impression that Stanley has anger towards females from the past. This brings to mind the possibility that in the scene where Goldberg and McCann question Stanley with questions that are thought to be strange and meaningless, what happened to his wife, or if he had a wife, he might have actually killed her:

**GOLDBERG** What have you done with your wife?

**MCCANN** He's killed his wife!

**GOLDBERG** Why did you kill your wife?

**STANLEY** [sitting, his back to the audience.] What wife?

**MCCANN** How did he kill her?

**GOLDBERG** How did you kill her?

**MCCANN** You throttled her.

**GOLDBERG** with arsenic.

Things do not go well in the boarding house, where he comes to make a new start in his life far from his past. Stanley’s settling here seems like the most rational way to stand up to the traumatic conditions brought about by change. He has established his own order; however, according to Goldberg and McCann, who symbolize the society, the provision of social order depends primarily on the provision of the order of individuals. Goldberg and McCann achieve their goals, although the price for this is to

alienate himself from Stanley. He, in his own opinion, is not a supporter or representative of this new social structure; however, at the end of the play, his departure with Goldberg and McCann is a striking indicator of how the social structure has changed completely. This experience on and after the birthday party converts him a traumatic individual who now needs treatment completely. Because of all what happened to him, Stanley experiences emotional numbing and at the end he becomes silent and unresponsive. This approves that he suffers from a mental disorder and a new trauma now. Whether the birthday is a real birthday for Stanley or the day of the destruction, the answer is left to the audience's interpretation.

It can be argued that the end of *The Birthday Party* does not give hope for the future society. By placing this responsibility on his audience, Pinter not only reveals the current state of the society, but also shows that the individuals living in this society and the established systems constantly traumatize each other.

Konecna (2020) claims that Stanley is mentally ill and all the characters are in his mind. Accordingly, when the play is considered within the scope of the trauma theory, there is no doubt that an interesting evaluation will emerge. The wounds of a society left over from a severe disaster like the Second World War are still very fresh. Considering that Stanley, who wants to survive in a town far from his past and everyone else, is actually mentally ill, the first question that comes to mind is why and how he has come to be. The pressure, pain, violence, and losses caused by war on individuals and society are actually enough for him to lose his sanity. He may have been unable to cope with his past traumas and have come to this. Although he wants to escape, his past has come with him and it continues to disturb him.

If the characters are in Stanley's head, they must all have a connection to someone from his past. Considering his relationship with Meg for the first time, it can be said that Meg is the embodiment of the traumas Stanley experienced with his mother. It is observed that the relationship, which seems to be a mother-son relationship, sometimes passes into a seductive dimension by Meg. Thus, it can be said that Stanley was subjected to such a behavior by his mother or a female who raised him, and these feelings that he suppressed subconsciously appeared in his brain like Meg.

It seems that there is a similar traumatic experience for Goldberg and McCann. It can be thought that Stanley was subjected to violence by his bosses or colleagues in

his past workplace. Obviously, this is one of the reasons why Stanley wants to get away from everyone and everything. Unable to cry out his pain and feelings to his real interlocutors, he is traumatized over and over again without realizing it, perhaps trying to release his trauma by assigning a mission to the representative characters he creates in his mind. All the life that he has escaped and wanted to forget actually has come with him in his head, and continues to traumatize him.

In fact, all this is Stanley's inner voice. The feelings that he did not tell anyone, that he suppressed subconsciously, come into being in the voices in his head, as he has lost his mental health. Konecna (2020) admits that Stanley has some sanity and it is represented by Petey. Stanley occasionally becomes aware of his problems, which is allegedly voiced by Petey. His sanity side, Petey, sends him a warning in the final act of the play: "*Stan, do not let them tell you what to do!*" It seems as if he realized that he has to silence the voices in his head. When a general evaluation is made about all these, it can be claimed that Stanley has been traumatized in trauma. If his trauma made him like this, he may have lost his mind. However, even when he is out of his mind, he still hears inner voices, argues with them, tries to ignore them, and still fails to deal with them again, thereby eventually succumbing to his past traumas once again. In this context, it will not be wrong to state that he is in a vicious cycle of trauma in any way.

### 3. CHAPTER THREE: *SAVED*

#### 3.1. Edward Bond and His Rational Theater

Edward Bond was born in 1934 in Holloway, North London. He was the son of a lower working-class family. The world he was born into was a complete catastrophe and destruction. In his book, *The Hidden Plot: Notes on Theater and the State*, in which he deals with his own life, he reports that when he was five years old, the area where he lived was bombed and that he was surrounded by bombs until the age of eleven (Bond, 2000, p. 2). He experienced the traumas of evacuation and bombing of innocent civilians. This terrifying world influenced Bond, like other playwrights, poets and artists who witnessed the destruction brought on by the Second World War, and these experiences manifested themselves in his plays. As a playwright who personally experiences this miserable situation that people get through, he is aware of the suffering and traumas. Consequently, he wants to agitate the audience with the violence he deliberately displays in his plays. The main purpose of Bond is not just to show a violent play on the stage, but to raise awareness about the violence that exists in the society. Thus, real people living in that society will feel the feelings that lie in their subconscious and cannot be expressed.

The political playwrights of that period explored the fragmentation and ambivalence of contemporary society which was an adoption of a quite new dramaturgy. They do not have any ideological aim but they question the existing order. Edward Bond also aims to question the system as a political thinker and his works are considered in terms of the Rational Theater. For Bond, the society is made of other smaller societies having their own history and culture. He creates his characters from these smaller societies and stages the classes of these societies. After the Second World War, the society was fragmented, and people lost their faith in truth, values, and ethics. These feelings caused people to be alienated from the society. Playwrights such as Bond, display individuals “....as caught between incoherent psychological forces that outline their desires, and social forces that restrain fulfillment of these desires” (Mander, 2018, p.1203).

Antonin Artaud introduces the Theater of Cruelty as a theatrical genre in his *The Theater and Its Double* (1958). Artaud is one of the representatives of the surrealist

movement. He developed a distinctive theory of theater that is different from his contemporaries. While introducing the Theater of Cruelty, he brings a break from the traditional western theater and aims to attack the senses of the audience with the characters created through this theater (Çakırtaş, 2018, p.14). Bond is considered an English representative of Antonin Artaud's Theater of Cruelty. For Bond, man is not innately cruel but the society and his experiences make him so. When his physical and emotional needs are not satisfied, he grows crueler (Bozer, 1987, p.79).

Bond thinks that the function of theater is to create a rational society and new people. The people, society, and culture in his plays are handled in the context of the Marxist thought. The plays written by Bond during his writing career are divided into three periods. Although these periods are different from each other in terms of thought, each of them is complementary to each other. The first period begins with *The Pope's Wedding* in 1962 and ends with *The Sea* in 1973. In the plays set in this period, the playwright's aim is not to seek solutions to existing problems, but to show them on the stage. The Second Period starts with *Bingo* in 1973 and ends with the play *In the Company of Men* in 1992. The difference between the plays of this period and the early period plays is that the playwright now reflects on social problems on the one hand, and on the other hand he thinks of looking for solutions to them. Third-period plays start with *Olly's Prison* in 1993 and continue with *The Tune* in 2007. In this period, social problems are reflected and solutions are sought. During this period, only children are allowed to stage plays sent to school theater clubs with the idea that "*children are the elders of the future and children will change the future*" (Biçer, 2008, pp.59-72).

Bond gathered his plays around the problems of a post-war society and how to find solutions to these problems. Hence, he is a playwright who believes that the subject of society and human should be dealt with in literary works. In this context, he describes his theater as "Rational Theater" in 1974. According to him, literature should make society livable and change it positively. So, the Rational Theater highlights an immediate and radical change in the society (Mander, 2018, p. 1202). In his preface to his book *Plays 2: Lear, Sea, Narrow Road to the Deep North, Black Mass, Passion*, Edward Bond himself explains why he deals with violence in his plays:

*I write about violence as naturally as Jane Austen wrote about manners. Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent we have no*

*future. People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about us and our time* (Bond, 1978, s.3).

He wrote his first play, *The Pope's Wedding* (1962), which launched Bond's career as a playwright. After *The Pope's Wedding* he was commissioned by the Artistic director of the Royal Court to write another play which was *Saved* (1965). His other plays are as follows: *Early Morning* (1968), *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (1968), *Black Mass* (1970), *Passion* (1971), *Lear* (1971), *The Sea* (1973), *Bingo* (1975), *The Fool* (1975), *A-A America* (1976), *The Bundle* (1978), *The woman* (1978), *The Worlds* (1979), *Restoration* (1981), *Summer* (1982), *Derek* (1982), *Red Black and Ignorant* (1984), *The Tin Can People* (1984), *The War Plays: A Trilogy* (1985) and *Human Cannon* (1985), *Jackets or The Secret Hand* (1986), *In the Company of Men* (1987–1988), *September* (1989), *Olly's Prison* (1990), *Tuesday* (.....), *Coffee* (1993-94), *At the Inland Sea* (1995), *Eleven Vests* (1995–97), *The Crime of the twenty-first Century* (1996–1998), *The Children* (1999), *I Have None* (2000), *Existence* (2002), *Born* (2002–2003), *The Balancing Act* (2003), *The Short Electra* (2003–2004), *People* (2005), *The Under Room* (2005), *Chair* (2005), *Arcade* (2006), *Tune* (2006), *Innocence* (2008), *A Window* (2009), *There Will Be More* (2010), *The Edge* (2011), *The Broken Bowl* (2012), *The Angry Roads* (2014), *The Price of One* (2016), *Dea* (2016).

As a playwright who experienced the Second World War, he was influenced by this war and the difficulties experienced after it, and reflected this feeling in his plays. *Saved* shows autobiographical features in one aspect, bearing traces from Bond's own life. The sounds of bombs, especially heard in the park in the play, are the result of Bond's impact when a bomb was thrown in a park where he lived as a child.

### **3.2. Saved**

Even if it is Edward Bond's second play, it was *Saved* that took much attention of people and caused a number of political uproars. As in all of his early plays, the aim of the playwright in *Saved* is to reflect the poor culture in modern society and reveal the existing one again. The alienation of individuals from themselves and each other in the society, their lives without love, indifference and without any emotion are staged without any interpretation or analysis in order to force the audience to question these situations (Hay & Roberts, 1980, p.39).

Consisting of thirteen scenes, the play deals with the lives of an ordinary working-class family devoid of love, morals, and peace. The name of the play is derived from the belief that a third-generation baby born in such a family would be his salvation if he dies by being stoned rather than being like his illegal father, Fred. In the play, as the reflection of unconsciously suppressed emotions on the stage, violence becomes the trigger of the suppressed feelings of the audience. The fragmentation, ruthlessness, and suffering of individuals in the outside world continue in this way as aggression and suffering. Social breakdown and trauma in the play create a vicious circle that triggers one another. All the characters are psychologically wounded and traumatized in a way. Through these characters, Bond aims to portray a diseased society in a world of trauma.

This chapter focuses on Edward Bond's controversial play *Saved* and characters' trauma responses and trauma representation through their behaviours. In the play, in which the elements of violence are emphasized, Bond tries to describe the problems that affect the psychological and spiritual structure of the characters with their behavior and discourse rather than directly expressing them. Both the protagonists and the minor characters are traumatized inside, and all the meaningless and violent speeches and behaviors they exhibit are indicators that their moods are not normal. The play is like a psychological reminder of the damage that the Second World War left on the human mind. The characters are indifferent and careless to each other. Their relationship is driven by hatred, anger, and violence.

The play opens with Pam and Len getting ready to have sex in the living room of Pam's house where she lives with her father Harry and her mother Mary. The presence of psychological, verbal and physical violence is felt in the play from the very first scene. The first psychological violence that catches the eye is the violence that Pam is exposed to. One of the most important problems affecting Pam's spiritual and emotional world is the indifference of her parents. The effects of this violence originating from the relationship between her mother and father can be clearly observed in Pam. She does not care about her father Harry, who enters the room when she is about to have sex in the living room of their house with a man whose name she does not even know and continues as if her father does not exist. Likewise, Harry ignores his daughter and his lover with her; he does not care about them. Stemming from this psychological violence, there is much suffering in the play. Freud classified three directions of suffering which

are from our own body, from the external world, and from other people. For Freud, the last one is the most painful one for us (Freud, 1961, p.24).

It is clear that the father-daughter relationship between Pam and Harry could not be established in a healthy way, or even such a relationship does not exist. From this point of view, it can be argued that the traumatic mood of Pam is quite effective in her behaviors. Through her relationship with Len and especially with Fred in the following acts, she tries to create a father-daughter relationship and so she tries to regain her lost object of love and desire. This repressed desire leads her to the point that she has sex with Len in her father's house. In the following acts, she does the same thing with Fred. Considering this in the oedipal context, Pam's behavior may be a kind of redoubling her trauma. Therefore, Fred's abandoning Pam means indirectly repeating her experience of being left alone by a beloved male figure. According to Muller, the neglect and abuse in the home are the reason for a traumatized child as either a witness or a victim. So, Pam is a trauma victim as much as a trauma witness.

In *Saved*, the characters suffer from different types of violence which cause them to experience trauma. The silence between Harry and Mary indicates the presence of psychological violence. Ignoring the sexual intercourse Pam and Len had in their living room, one might think that Harry has no moral consciousness. Likewise, Pam's insensitivity to her father is not a psychologically healthy individual behavior. Claiming that the lack of parents or the indifference of parents towards children depresses another trauma on the stage, Çakırtaş evaluates the situation psychologically:

*“Transforming her loneliness into bodily action, Pam reflects the destruction of emotional violence on the audience. Emotional violence gives way to sexual violence in Pam's melancholic mood” (Çakırtaş, 2018, p.17).”*

Pam has become a traumatic individual because of this silent psychological violence she is subjected to within the family. This is the underlying reason why she is so indifferent and careless to her parents. Pam, who is a victim of trauma in this way, has become a victimizer this time by showing the same apathy and indifference to her own baby. The reason of Pam's repressed response is the feelings of pain she feels because of lacking her parents' love and affection. H.M. Spencer (1918) highlights how important repression of emotions is in his article titled *“The Psychology of Repressed Emotions”*. In this case, Pam has not had a healthy relationship with her parents and her



suppressed feelings do not allow her to show her real feelings about her baby. In fact, her relationship with her parents is a key point in forming her identity both as an individual and a mother. Her conversation with Mary about the baby's cry demonstrates that she has not got the sufficiency to be a parent:

Pause. The baby screams with rage. After a while MARY lifts her head in the direction of the screams.

Pam-laa!

Slight pause. PAM stands and puts her cosmetics in a little bag. She goes to the TV set. She turns up the volume. She goes back to the couch and sits. There's plenty of left-overs.

LEN. Full up.

MARY. An' there's rhubarb and custard.

LEN: O.

Pause. The baby choke

PAM. Too lazy to get up an' fetch it.

MARY. Don't start Let's 'ave a bit a peace for one night.

Pause.

PAM. 'Is last servant died a over-work.

LEN. I ain' finished this, nose.

MARY. Why don't yer shut that kid up.

PAM. I can't

MARY. Yer don't try.

PAM. Juss cries louder when I go near it

Caruth (1996) points out “we are implicated in eachother’s trauma”, it is “never one’s own” (p.24). Even if the individual is not directly and first-hand traumatized in the past, brutal events in the past can still have indelible effects. Pam bears witness to the history of her parents that she inherited. This existing trauma of her parents is implicated in her life, too. Though the Second World War is long gone, its traumatic breakdown continues to haunt her consciousness and confirms her close, emotional, obligatory relationship with the war trauma she inherited from her parents.

Another trauma Pam suffers from is caused by Fred’s indifference to her. The more she wants to get closer to Fred, the more Fred ignores her and even tells her to leave his life. Pam is unable to accept this situation, and resorts to “displacement”, which is one of Freud’s defense mechanisms. Although she is deeply angry with Fred for not wanting her, not visiting her regularly, she turns her anger towards Len, not Fred. According to her, Len is guilty due to driving Fred to get away from her. In using defense mechanisms, the ego makes an effort to make it easier for the individual to adapt to his environment. Freud divides the self into three parts as id, ego, and superego. The id is the most primitive state of the self; it acts with sexuality, instinct, and aggressive

impulses. The superego enables the individual to act according to the value judgments if they are suitable for the society or not. The ego, on the other hand, acts as a conciliatory bridge between these two. The corruption of any of these causes personality disorder in the individual. If the ego is not sufficiently developed, the individual with increased anxiety uses defense mechanisms (Cüceloğlu, 1992). That is exactly why Pam finds Len guilty at every opportunity:

**PAM** (to LEN). See what yer done?  
**FRED**. Didn't take 'er long.  
**PAM**. It's your place t' stick up for me, love. I went through all that trouble for you! Somebody's got a save me from 'im.  
**FRED**. Thanks. Thanks very much. I'll remember this. He stands and starts back to his own table.  
**Liz** (starting to click her fingers). I can't 'ear the music!  
**PAM** (to LEN). Don't bloody sit there! Yer done enough 'arm!  
**PETE** 'OO brought 'er 'ere ?  
**FRED**. Chriss knows!  
**PAM** (pointing to LEN). 'E started this!  
**FRED**. I don't care what bleedin' wet started it. You can stop it!  
**PAM** (to LEN). I 'ate yer for this!

Pam's persistence, whose sole purpose is to be cared for and loved, is just like a child's behavior. Her relationship with Fred gives the audience the impression of torturer and a tortured relationship. There is no sign of affection between them. Pam's obsession with Fred, her insistence on him visiting her more often, getting angry and starting a fight when she gets a negative response, and Fred's refusal expresses a traumatic response against emotional violence. Pam's obsession with Fred is the behavioral manifestation of obsessive thinking that emerges to suppress the painful thought of lack of communication and disconnection with her parents. In this way, obsessive thought outside of consciousness reaches the level of consciousness as a compulsion. Pam, who is disturbed by the rumination of this feeling in her mind, is unable to cope with the sadness and pain that arose, thus making Fred obsessive and suppress obsessive thinking unconsciously. Sevinç, Yalçın and Öztürk (2018), in their article titled "*Death of Time and Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma*", state that the more severe and deliberate the trauma is, the more its effect is felt, and even this feeling is one of the destructive effects of the trauma that imprisoned not only the victim but also the future generations (pp. 21-28). The term intergenerational transmission of trauma was first used by H. Barocas and C. Barocas as a result of observing the effects on children of

Holocaust survivors. Even if children are not directly exposed to trauma, it has been observed that they reflect their parents' traumatic experiences in various ways and face various emotional difficulties (Barocas H. & Barocas C., 1979, pp.331-340). How contagious the trauma caused by emotional violence and unhappiness is, can be clearly observed when looking at Pam's environment and her relationship with other characters. Being from the working class, Harry is negatively affected by the current system, and as a result, he has become an unhappy and non-communicative individual. With his wife Mary, they are a family that has long lost their moral values. Pam, who grows up in such a family, inflicts violence on her own baby. In this way, the violence and the trauma it causes are transferred from one generation to another one.

The social turmoil is caused by the brutality of capitalism, and war has created a geography, where these social traumas and individual reflections easily grow in societies. Each individual's response to the causes of the trauma is again individual, but there is a correlation between the magnitude of the cause and the behavioral disturbances of the traumatized. It is thought that this process will continue to increase as long as the traumatic social functioning continues and if a social or individual support system is not established.

Although twenty years have passed, Bond, as a playwright who was exposed to the Second World War at a young age and spent his youth in a traumatic society trying to survive after this war, shows the intergenerational transmission of trauma in all his characters. Harry and Mary lived through the war years personally, and as a couple who has sacrificed a son to this war, they could not escape from this effect for years. They have never been a decent family, and they have not been able to keep Pam, their only child, away from this trauma. Unable to fulfill their parental responsibilities, Pam has also been the victim of their traumatic past. Harry and Mary have transferred their individual traumas to their children. The reason for Pam's abnormal behavior, such as having sex in her living room with someone she does not even know his name, regardless of her father, being obsessively attached to Fred, choosing Len as the scapegoat of every crime, and not giving any reaction to the murder as well as mothering her own baby is because she is a victim of trauma transmitted between generations. Naturally, she cannot show love, affection, and attention she has not received from her own parents to her own baby.

As of the period in which the play was written, it is obvious that the characters reflect the spirit of the period. Characters' actions against the system or their inactions cause them to express their helplessness for their conditions, repressed feelings, and the traumas they have experienced in this way. These characters, who struggle to survive by being pushed out of the society, are trapped between the old world and the new order. It can be argued that the difficult conditions after the war destroyed the family relationships, and people had no other purpose than just trying to live. While Pam seeks love with Fred, who has only a physical relationship, she is extremely distant and alien to motherhood, which is one of the most natural feelings. The life she lives is a completely emotional pressure for her; this makes her an inevitable victim of trauma. She suffers from losing her relationship with Fred. In addition to this, her relationship with her parents causes her to have more emotional problems. She has gone through trauma because of these. She seems to be trying to escape from these by denying that Fred does not care for her anymore and by ignoring the existence of her parents. Actually, she is so deeply affected by being ignored both by her parents and Fred. She perceives her house as a cage where she feels trapped in.

In her book *"Introduction to Counselling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma"*, Sanderson indicates that verbal abuse can be considered as a type of abuse that causes interpersonal trauma (Sanderson, 2010, p. 52). In this context, it can be argued that Pam is traumatized because of Fred's behaviours towards her. Also, this feeling causes her to experience fragmentation. Another fragmented character is Len, who does not leave Pam's house although she asks him to leave many times. He spends his time caring for Pam insistently which shows that he also has personal traumas.

Judith Herman states that the highest risk of PTSD is when trauma survivors not only witness the trauma but also actively participate in violence and brutality (Herman, 1992, p. 39). As can be assumed based on their behaviours and statements, all the characters are both witnesses and active participants in the violence. They are traumatic individuals who live in a traumatic society and even open their eyes to such a world. Len's behavior indicates that he is an individual with a personality disorder. Despite being a person who is the closest to Pam and her baby, who is always with Pam, he continues to stay where he is not wanted and quietly witnesses the murder of the baby. He does not react at all to what is happening, nor does he even attempt to stop them. Pam, as mentioned above, is a trauma victim suffering from apathy and lovelessness.

She is indifferent to everyone and everything around her, including her own baby. Her only wish is to be cared for by Fred, with whom she was obsessed. Harry and Mary are individuals who have lived through their inner trauma by embracing silence for years. Fred and other young gangsters likewise reflect the mood of their society by displaying absurd behaviors of traumatic origin, but also quite commonplace to them. The characters, even family members, are together because of necessity and need, there is absolutely no emotional connection or communication between them. Everything is meaningless, and they are unable to have any kind of ties in their relationships. The atmosphere is full of suffering, depression, violence, and aggression.

When the characters' family ties, social relations, and emotional situations are evaluated in terms of the cultural and social characteristics of the time they live in, Bond's aim is to clearly depict all kinds of violence on the stage and witness the violence that exists in the real world and the traumas it brings. Also, the characters are as much as the audience engage directly in the continuing cycles of violence and trauma. While the characters witness the violence in the play from inside, the audience witnesses it from the outside. The working class characters in South London are not trying to improve their situation because they are hopeless and insensitive. The only thing they do when they are directly or indirectly involved in violence is to act irresponsibly and blame each other. While in this kind of insensitivity, they do not take an action to stop the violence. Although Len seems to be the only character who has made an effort to improve his conditions from the beginning of the play, he does not attempt to prevent it by witnessing the baby's murder silently from behind the trees (Lopez Pena, 2009, p.3).

**LEN.** I saw.

**FRED.** What?

**LEN.** I come back when I couldn't find 'er.

**FRED.** Yer ain't grassed ?

**LEN.** No.

**FRED.** O.

**LEN.** I was in the trees. I saw the pram.

**FRED.** Yeh.

**LEN.** I saw the lot

**FRED.** Yeh.

**LEN.** I didn't know what t'do. Well, I should a stopped yer.

**FRED.** Too late now.

**LEN.** I juss saw.

**FRED.** Yer saw! Yer saw! Wass the good a that? That don't 'elp me. I'll be out in that bloody dock in a minute!

Freud attributes this to the nature of the unconsciousness and the way it works. In this context, when evaluating the individual psychology underlying this behavior of Len, it cannot be considered separately from the environmental factors. Handling individual psychology and social psychology together is very important in terms of evaluating Len's mental health. Although twenty years have passed, the destruction brought about by the Second World War lies at the root of the society's state. Individuals who are insensitive to each other and to the society, loveless, and desperate try to hold on to life.

World War II or its effects are not directly mentioned in the play, but these effects are observed by the audience. Pam's parents, Harry and Mary, lost one of their children in a bomb explosion years ago. This situation traumatizes them severely and they have not been talking to each other for years. The outcomes of trauma are clearly seen in Harry and Mary. In her article "*Psychoanalysis, Culture and Trauma*", Caruth describes that "survivor" is the one who witnesses the death of people; "this really is a process of becoming a survivor" (Caruth, 1991, p.165). In this case, Harry and Mary are survivors as they witnessed the death of their own child. This loss has left them fragmented and they had to repress their real feelings in order to survive. Silence has been their way for being survived. The emphasis here is on the example of Harry and Mary that many innocent people lost their lives during the war, and their relatives also suffered from severe traumas and destructions in this way. The depression, oppression, restrictions, and traumas caused by war also paved the way for the emergence of all kinds of violence in the post-war modern society:

**PAM.** She never mentions 'im an' 'e never mentions 'er. I don' wanna talk about it.

**LEN.** They never mention each other?

**PAM.** I never 'eard 'em.

**LEN.** Not once?

**PAM.** No!

Freud mentions the "factor of surprise" in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. He explains that the surprise factor is the fright experienced by the victim and this is the key element in fact (Freud, 1920, p.12). Harry and Mary's trauma is caused by the surprise of their son's death because of a bombing in the park. It is a shock which frightened them to raise another child in such a world. According to Freud, the threat coming with the surprise factor plugs us into danger without being prepared for it (Freud, 1920 p.12).

The danger that Harry and Mary faces is the unfortunate loss of their son. They are not dead but they both are haunted by the destruction caused by the war and traumatic experience came with it.

The physical and emotional violence elements that dominate the whole play have become a kind of communication between the characters. Even their presence is enough for the characters to suffer. The fragmented society they were born into, their disconnected family ties, and their lifestyle have led them to violence and trapped them in the trauma cycle. They have a routine life with no expectations from the future. However, sometimes even if they want to get out of this routine, they do not make any effort for it. Their past traumatized their present, thereby putting them in a vicious circle. Harry and Mary remain silent and they do not talk about their traumatic past because of the war they experienced and it is a kind of defense mechanism against being re-traumatized while narrating this experience. So, their trauma remains repressed. Their loss has damaged their psyche and their silence is a way of escaping the effect of being re-traumatized. Stanley becomes silent for the same reason in *The Birthday Party*; the traumas he experienced in the past have made him an unhappy and disconnected individual today. In the modern world that characters have to adapt to, they have become victims on the one hand and victimizers, on the other hand, of this trauma. The silent cry of trauma between Harry and Mary not only hurts them, but Pam is also another victim who has suffered from this trauma that exists in the society. In short, individuals from the past that is full of traumatic experiences have created a traumatic society. The only thing individuals think about in this society is to survive. They try to make sense of their own existence in the flowing meaninglessness of life.

Considering that Bond is a playwright who has experienced the war time, the atmosphere in the play, especially the central park scene is an obvious reminiscent of wartime psychology; the repeated phrase "*A bell rings*" is the best example of this. This atmosphere creates an intense disturbance feeling on the audience as well as on the characters. This situation indicates that the characters are exposed to the traumatic legacy of the outside world and that they are affected by this painful lifestyle. The characters are presented as painful because of being suppressed both physically and psychologically. This suppression stems from the current order of the traumatic society in which they live. The impression created while staging the violence experienced and inflicted by the characters and accompanying traumas is that violent behavior actually

the outcomes of historical traumas of the individual. Like the Second World War, the impact of a catastrophic event is highly traumatic. These are clearly expressed in the play as the elements that bring about violence. A purposeless, unemployed, and hopeless groups of young people, addicted to drugs and sex, with disconnected family ties, loneliness, fragmentation, social and individual crisis are the traumatic factors that are effective in producing violence.

Bond's point is to reflect the rupture of the human relationship caused by violence, pain and trauma that emerged correspondingly during the twentieth century. In the third scene, the conversation between the youth gang and their way of addressing each other are portraits of their violence and suffering. In most of the conversations in the play, language is used as an element of pressure and threat. The slang and abusive speech and style they use are completely violent. Verbal violence is so oppressive that individuals eventually resort to physical violence under the influence of this pressure. In other words, every individual who is a victim exhibits traumatic behaviors as a victimizer. Similarly, language was used as an element of violence by Goldberg and McCann in *The Birthday Party*. The verbal violence used against Stanley illustrates his repressed sense of anger, and he resorts to physical violence because of this pressure; he kicks Goldberg and attacks Lulu. Besides, in *Saved*, Pete, who causes his death by hitting a little child, never regrets this, and uses verbal violence to blame the deceased child while describing the incident. This is an obvious signal of the loss of emotions and humanity among the individuals in the society:

**PETE.** What a carry on! 'B come runnin' round be'ind the bus. Only a nipper. Like a flash I thought right yer nasty bastard. Only ten or twelve. I jumps right down on me revver an' bang I got un on me off-side an' 'e shoots right out under this lorry comin' straight on.

**MIKE.** Crunch.

**COLIN.** Blood all over the shop.

**MIKE.** The Fall at the Roman Empire.

**PETE.** This lorry was doin' a ton in a built-up street.

**BARRY.** Gam! Yer never seen 'im.

**PETE.** No?

**BARRY.** 'It 'im before yer knew 'e was comin'.

**PETE** (lighting his pipe). Think I can't drive?

According to Freud, people have innate desires and impulses; most of which are acquired in childhood. However, these desires are often suppressed because they have to conform to moral rules, social and external reality. The individual, who does not want to give up these desires, throws them into his unconsciousness. In his book *Jokes and*



*Their Relation to The Unconscious*, Freud states that these unconscious emotions are expressed through jokes; the contents of the jokes are mostly libidinal and aggressive (Freud, 1905, pp.73-74). Traces of trauma in the speeches of the youth gang are seen in this way in the unconsciousness.

The traumatic experiences of the individuals imply the corruption in their personality. At the root of this corruption lies the traumatic factors brought about by the Second World War. Because individuals are not satisfied with the society in which they live and they do not feel love and respect each other, they burst out with violent and rude actions. These attitudes of young people like Pete, Colin and Mike can be interpreted in the light of their troubled childhood experiences. It can be true to argue that all these are the signs of the emotional deprivation they have been exposed to. There is the impression that these young people do not have a strong and responsible father and a loving and caring mother in their lives. As individuals are deprived of these, they are portrayed as trauma victims as much as victimizers who have lost their identities. It is an inhumane behavior to stone a baby to death by a youth gang. In the society they live in, individuals are so traumatized that they cannot even think that the reality of the life of others may be different from their own (Nicholson, 2003, p.13). In this context, it is an undeniable fact that the role of the family and family ties in maturing mentally as well as physically is important. Because they are emotionally disturbed, and are grown up without love and affection, they create a violent world for themselves. They all suffer from emotional problems because of their traumatic past experiences which give them indecent identities.

As exposed to a corrupted society in which people are irrelevant to each other, unkind, irresponsible, and violent, the characters cannot get away from their traumatic experiences since the society as a whole keeps reminding them of violence, loss, and lovelessness. Erikson states that although the community in general is thought of as the focus of activities specific to the individual, it actually has functions, such as sharing pain, providing a context for intimacy and embodying binding traditions (Erikson, 1995, p.188). However, here comes to the fore that society shares all kinds of negative behaviors as well as pain or intimacy. The unemotional brutal speech of the youth gang and the song Barry sings just before inflicting violence on the baby remains as the materialized version of their violence and apathy which involve the effects of the Second

World War. All these traumatizing effects are reflected in Barry's song which explains the relationship between their behaviors and the dimension of the collective trauma:

**BARRY.** Rock a bye baby on a tree top  
When the wind blows the cradle will rock  
When the bough breaks the cradle will fall  
And down will come baby and cradle  
and tree an' bash its little brains out  
an' dad'll scoop 'em up  
and use 'em for bait.

Barry's song is proof of his and others' traumatizing emotions and behaviors. In the song, he is violent and cruel; he lacks any emotional states. In this sense, the song becomes a relief of the trauma. In short, traumatic experiences individuals have fill them with anger and make them obsessed with violence. They are all part of a war-affected society. For this reason, they all suffer from the after-effects of war trauma. The point underlined in the play is the life of a society suffering from war and the deeply broken social ties between individuals and the resulted degrading sense of the community.

During the play, there is no real connection among any of the characters and even in the family members. Harry and Mary do not have a healthy relationship with each other, including their daughter, Pam. They do not even try to develop any connection. Likewise, Pam, Len and Fred cannot make meaningful connections with each other. Even, Pam and Len live in the same house, but they are disconnected because their traumas have damaged them all. The society in which they live has affected the emotional and psychological states of the characters so strongly that their ties to even their closest family members are extremely weak and insignificant. Nobody cares about the baby crying without stopping for minutes. Besides, no one helps the baby, including even its own mother, even though they hear its constant crying and choking because of crying. Even after being brutally murdered, Pam does not show any sign of mourn for her dead baby. This suggests that emotionless human relationships are the proof of individuals as members of a war-torn society who lost the feeling of humanity. They can be regarded as insensitive living things. In addition to relationships, another feature affected by this trauma is identity; individuals lose their ability to empathize, and they cannot even empathize with themselves (Laub & Podell, 1995, p.992). They have no plans, goals or expectations for life. Individuals whose only goal is to be safe and survive have lost their identity and self. In summary, the society consists of emotionless individuals who have had to adapt to new traumatic situations that occur after traumas experienced in the past.

Based on the above discussions, it can be stated that neither Fred nor Pam are qualified to be parents. Fred is embarrassed to play the role of a sensitive father alongside his friends. In addition to condoning the murder of the baby, he himself participates in this brutal action. It is evident in the scene where Pam visits him in prison that he feels no remorse for what happened to the baby. Pam likewise never feels sorry for what happened to the baby, obsessively telling him that she believes Fred is not guilty:

**PAM.** I ain't blamin' yer.

**FRED.** Blamin' me? Yer got bugger all t'blame me for, mate! Yer ruined my life, thass all!

**PAM.** I never meant –

**FRED.** Why the bloody 'ell bring the little perisher out that time a night?

**PAM** (fingers at her mouth). I wanted a –

**FRED.** Yer got no right chasin' after me with a pram! Drop me right in it!

**PAM.** I was scared t' stay –

**FRED.** Never know why yer 'ad the little bleeder in the first place! Yer don't know what yer doin'! Yer're a bloody menace!

This conversation between Pam and Fred signifies their blindness to the past and to their present situation. Nothing has a meaning for them, and what is happening around is not their concern. The blindness is a signifier of a morally corrupted society that is full of traumatized individuals.

Characters suffer from a collective trauma that shapes their lives in the society that exists after the war and its effects. They do not have any connection with others. They do not have anything meaningful in their lives. Loss of beloved ones, problematic relationships with family members and a dysfunctional culture can be regarded as the reason of these characters' traumatic situations. In the eleventh scene, there is an incident of violence that causes an outburst of physical and verbal anger among family members. This burst of anger, which begins with the physical violence Mary inflicts on Harry, increases with the involvement of Pam and Len. The characters are together, but they do not communicate with each other. Each of them expresses the emotions that they suppress in their own mind. The sentence "*baby is gone*" that Pam repeats constantly can imply that this fact has traumatized her. Pam, to prevent the traumatizing pain from rising to the conscious level by suppressing external reality, does not show her sadness and exhibits careless, indifferent, and sometimes aggressive attitudes:

**PAM** (crying). Why don't 'e go? Why don't 'e go sway? All my friends gone. Baby's gone. Nothin' left but rows. Day in, day out Fightin' with knives.

**HARRY**. I'm shakin'.

**PAM** (crying). They'll kill each other soon.

**LEN** (to PAM). Yer can't blame them on me!

**PAM** (crying). Why can't 'e go away!

**HARRY** (removes Ms shirt). Wet

**PAM** (crying). Look at me. I can't sleep with worry.

**MARY**. Breakin' me 'ome.

**PAM** (crying). 'E's killed me baby. Taken me friends. Broken me ome.

**HARRY**. More blood.

**MARY**. I ain' dearin' up after 'im. 'E can clear 'is own mess.

**PAM** (crying). I can't go on like this.

**LEN** (to PAM). There was nothin' in it!

**PAM** (crying). I'll throw myself somewhere. It's the only way.

**HARRY**. Cold

**PAM** (sitting and crying). Stop 'im! They'll kill each other!

**LEN** (stops). I was goin' a 'elp 'im.

**PAM** (crying). Take that knife. The baby's dead. They're all gone. It's the only way. I can't go on.

**MARY**. Next time 'e won't be so lucky.

**PAM** (crying). Yer can't call it livin'. 'E's pullin' me t' pieces. Nothin' but trouble.

**LEN**. I'm tryin' t' 'dp! 'Oo else'll 'elp ? If I go will they come back? Will the baby come back? Will 'e come back? I'm the only one that's stayed an' yer wan'a get rid a me!

**PAM** (crying). I can't stand any more. Baby dead. No friends.

**LEN**. I'll go.

**PAM** (crying). No one listens. Why don't 'e go? Why don't they make 'im go ?

**PAM** (crying). No 'ome. No friends. Baby dead. Gone. Fred gone.

When Pam is regarded as a trauma witness, her behaviors can be seen as a response to what she has witnessed that she could not even be aware of. According to Caruth:

While the precise definition of PTSD is contested, most definitions generally agree that there is a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events, which take the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviors stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have begun during or after the experience and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event (Caruth, 1995, p.4).

In this context, Pam's reaction to what she experienced during the fight and what happened to the baby can be evaluated as her delayed response to her witnessing trauma.

The trauma victim is in a complex state of emotion due to the negative experiences she experiences. This feeling leaves the victim helpless and destroys his interest in the outside world. Conditions such as the individual's environment, developmental factors, and psychopathological predisposition increase the effect of trauma on the psyche (Sevinç, Yalçın & Öztürk, 2018, p.22). When all the characters in *Saved* are evaluated from this perspective, they can be considered as victims of trauma. Again in this context, it can be said that the underlying causes of violent behavior seen physically on the stage are individual traumas. The movement the audience witness is actually the outward reflection of the characters' complex emotions stemming from lovelessness, loneliness, and not being able to belong. In his preface to the *Saved*, Bond states that people are actually good by nature, but their experiences make them bad. When evaluated from this perspective, although Len creates the feeling that he could be a good person in essence, this is not seen in his behavior. Like others, he ignores the baby's cry.

One might think that Mary likens Len to her son she lost in the war, and perhaps because of this, she seems close to him. However, the fact that she has her torn pantyhose sewed to Len and the interesting dialogue between the two brings to mind the idea that there is an oedipal tendency:

**LEN.** Yer got lovely legs.

**MARY.** You get on with it.

**LEN.** Lovely an' smooth.

**MARY.** Never mind my legs.

**LEN.** It's a fact

**MARY.** Some people'd 'ave a fit if they 'eard that Yer know what they're like.

**LEN.** Frustrated.

**MARY.** I'm old enough t' be yer mother.

Although Harry sees them at that time, he leaves the room carelessly, thus highlighting the moral breakdown and corrupted family ties. His quarreling after this incident is a sign that his repressed emotions are triggered and the traumas he has hidden in his subconsciousness emerge. Years later, Harry and Mary keep in touch with the trauma released in this way. A gift from their past is important to both and obviously brings back good memories to their minds. They are newly married, and the teapot as a gift from Mary's mother is a memory of the good old days. They do not have a deceased child yet (Ünal, 2018, p.25). As a result of the traumatic experience triggered, their

longing for their past loving, peaceful days emerges. Their repressed feelings have been released.

HARRY moves so that his back is to her. He puts his cup upright in his saucer. He puts milk in the cup. He reaches to pick up the teapot.  
MARY stands, goes to the table, and moves the teapot out of his reach. She goes back to the couch. Sits. Sips.  
**MARY.** My teapot.  
Sips. Pause.  
**HARRY.** My tea.  
He pours tea into his cup. MARY stands and goes to the table. She empties his cup on the floor.  
**HARRY.** Our'n. Weddin' present  
**MARY** (goes to the couch and sits). From my mother.

Looking at the oedipal tendency here, it is felt to be different from that between Meg and Stanley. While Stanley is drawn into this situation by Meg, Mary has no compulsion. This situation triggers Stanley's traumatic experiences and causes him to behave aggressively towards Meg, but Len is not affected by this. Although the intimacy between Stanley and Meg grabs Petey's attention, he does not care, Harry also displays a careless attitude. However, as Petey continues to ignore it in the future, it is observed that the situation has a different effect on Harry. This intimacy triggers his traumatic past and causes a burst of anger. The traumatic effects triggered are important for Harry and Mary as a means of communication after years.

In scene twelfth, Harry is seen to empathize with Len. Here, the playwright actually aims to generalize the psychological mood of the society. The house where Len lives, Pam and her parents' house, symbolizes loneliness and repression. Harry is aware of the fact that there is no different life outside. That's why he insists Len not to leave, keep staying with them. Here Harry advises Len, remembering his traumatic experiences from the past. Obviously, he himself wanted to get away from this fragmented world, but could not succeed:

**HARRY.** Where yer goin' ?  
**LEN.** 'Ad enough.  
**HARRY.** No different any other place.  
**LEN.** I've heard it all before.  
.....  
**HARRY.** Yer don't wan'a go.  
**LEN.** Eh ?  
**HARRY.** Don't go. No point  
**LEN** (his trousers round his ankles). Why ?  
**HARRY.** Yer'd come back.  
**LEN.** No use savin' anythin' t'night –  
**HARRY.** Don't let 'em push yer out

**LEN.** Depends 'ow I feel in the mornin'.

Despite all this, it does not matter who the people around him are for Harry, who is unhappy in this fragmented world they live in. His desire to get rid of the pressure on him may also be interpreted as a kind of resistance to this existent order. Once he dared to do so, but could not succeed. In fact, this desire does not disappear. In his conversation with Len, he gives the impression that he will do this again in the future. This shows that, despite all the traumatic events he has gone through, he still carries a little bit of hope. One day this order will be disrupted and he will get rid of all the difficulties that restrict him. Although his traumas have taken him over now, he believes that one day it will end:

**HARRY.** I'll go when I'm ready. When she's on 'er pension. She won't get no one after 'er then. I'll be out. Then see 'ow she copes.

In *The Birthday Party*, the same example of courage cannot be observed in Stanley, who is similarly affected by the same system and has left his place of residence and settled in a small seaside town. Unlike Harry, Stanley is a traumatic victim who is trapped by his past traumas, looking at the future, and is completely hopeless. Written while the same system continues, both plays have common traumatic experiences, but how the characters reflect them differs. Despite his failure, Harry's hope has not disappeared; he still has limited belief that one day everything will be alright, but Stanley has not survived this trauma and has become much worse at the end of the play.

While the events that lead to mental trauma are listed by psychologists and psychiatrists, wars and unexpected deaths are found in all this order in an alliance. One of the most common consequences of this situation, which makes the person depressed, is not enjoying life, not being able to plan for the future, alienation, being disturbed by situations that remind you of the event, and avoiding this situation. All these symptoms can be easily observed when looking at the characters. Despite their young age, none of them have any plans for the future. They have become individuals who live aimlessly in the society. Again, the trauma experienced brings with it various anxiety disorders other than depression.

Studies have revealed that PTSD is seen two or three times more in women compared to men (Kılıç, 1998). The lifestyle and behavior of Pam and her mother Mary,

and the female characters in the play confirm this finding. Pam is initially alienated from her family and even her own baby. She is not concerned with their existence, and her only purpose is to be with Fred. Apart from that, she seems to have closed her perceptions to all living and non-living beings. Mary, on the other hand, does not feel any responsibility as a parent who has passed on her trauma to her daughter. She also is alienated from her home, husband, and daughter and behaves without any love or affection towards them. Furthermore, she ignores the crying of an innocent baby for minutes, and it is observed that there is no maternal instinct towards the baby, just like her own daughter. On the contrary, the baby's crying makes her uncomfortable with this situation:

**MARY** (watching TV). I ain' goin' up for yer. (Still watching TV.) High time it 'ad a father. (To LEN).

There's plenty a tea in the pot

**LEN** (watching TV). Yeh.

**MARY** (watching TV). That's what it needs. No wonder it cries. (Pause. To LEN.) Busy ?

.....

**MARY**. Shut that door, Lea. Me 'cad's playin' me up again.

**LEN** Take some a yer anadins.

**MARY** I've 'ad too many t\*day. Thass what makes it worse.

Avoiding the traumatic situation or trying to forget it does not reduce the effects of the trauma. This situation evolves into a state of recovery only for those who seek help and share their problems with others. There is no such request or attempt in the characters. They seem to be used to the living conditions they live in and already accept this situation. Traumatic living conditions seem normal for them, and no matter how apparently this is, some of their emotions are actually suppressed, some have changed directions, and some are hidden in the subconsciousness.

It was mentioned that the individual's inability to cope with the realities he is in and his depressive states make him tend to use defense mechanisms frequently. Although this situation gives a sense of temporary relief or discharge for the individual, after a while it may bring the individual to the point of being unable to distinguish between reality and unreality. The individual cannot reach true happiness and satisfaction in this way. Moreover, the inability to cope with this reality leads to the emergence of an angrier, more depressive identity. Individuals who experience this situation cannot experience the satisfaction of the needs of self-phenomena, such as



feeling safe, belonging, love, and respect. They do not have the features of A. Maslow's self-actualized human model. More specifically, severe trauma eliminates emotional approaches while also destroying aesthetic feelings. They prioritize constantly accusing, aggressive, caring for daily life, an unplanned and irregular life. It can be argued that such an identity is at the forefront both in the behaviors of the characters toward each other and the sensitivity they should have in terms of society. Fred, who personally and willingly participates in the murder of a baby of his own blood does not feel disturbed by this situation, and exhibits a completely egocentric approach when explaining his situation to Pam and Len who come to visit him while in prison. Instead of talking about why he is there, he accuses the police of failing to do their job, and talks about the material things he needs at that moment. He portrays a traumatic individual who is far from an emotional approach and who only prioritizes his daily life:

**FRED** Where's the snout?  
**LEN** Put it in yer pocket.

Trauma, which affects both mental and external behavior, also represents a threat to the environment. Because the behaviors that are reflected on the outside also have a social dimension, the addressees of emotional, intellectual and behavioral responses affected by trauma are the cultural and moral criteria of social life. This criterion always judges and punishes the patterns of traumatic behavior. In terms of the imbalance between superego and id in an individual sense, traumatic behavior creates a negative perspective on both the individual and those who witness the behavior. However, since the traumatic individual who reveals the behavior cannot use his psychological behavioral integrity and judgment ability in terms of social judgments, he continues his antisocial behaviors in parallel with the id aspect of his personality. In this context, it is thought that this is the main reason behind the youth gang pushing and kicking an innocent baby and brutally murdering it:

PETE pulls the pram from COLIN, spins it round and pushes it violently at BARRY. BARRY sidesteps and catches it by the handle 't it goes past.

.....  
**BARRY** Try a pinch.  
**MIKE** That ought a work.  
**BARRY** Like this.  
He pinches the baby  
.....  
**COLIN** 'Old its nose.  
**MIKE** Thass for 'iccups.

**BARRY** Gob its crutch.  
 He spits.  
**MIKE** Yeh!  
**COLIN** Ha!  
 He spits.  
**MIKE** Got it!  
**PETE** Give it a punch.  
**MIKE** Yeh less!  
**COLIN** There's no one about!  
 PETE punches it.  
 Ugh! Mind yer don't 'urt it.  
**MIKE** Yer can't.  
**BARRY** Not at that age.  
**MIKE** Course yer can't, no feelin's.  
**PETE** Like animals.  
**MIKE** 'It it again.  
**COLIN** I can't see!  
**BARRY** 'Arder.  
**PETE** Yeh.  
**BARRY** Like that!  
 He hits it.  
**COLIN** An' that!  
 He also hits it

Specialist Clinical Psychologists Pınar Çelikoğlu and Virna Gülzari from Boğaziçi University Psychological Research and Application Center, in their article, titled *The Effects of Trauma and Coping with Trauma* express that in the ranking of the groups affected by the effects of social trauma, “.....*they have been found those who are victims of a disaster in the past, those who have family problems, those who have experienced loss in the recent past, those who do not have strong social ties....*”( <http://www.bupampsi.boun.edu.tr/?q=node/23>, accessed 22/01/2021). In social traumas, the leading behavioral disorder caused by trauma or the risk group expected to occur is the ones who are dealing with the social traumatic event or phenomenon. Pam and her family are from this group. In fact, looking at the whole play, it becomes clear that all the characters go through these processes.

It is possible to notice the effects of the characteristics of the period and the playwright’s point of view or the philosophical approaches he believes in. Usually, war is an argument for the rate at which capitalism is spreading. It can be presented as cold and hot. In the Marxist understanding, war is treated as an inter-class struggle. Having a Marxist point of view, Bond thinks to link the cause of social traumas to war and therefore to the capitalist expansionism of the period. At the same time, there is a case of drawing attention to the “*brutal nature of capitalist society*” (Çakırtaş, 2018, p.16). Apart from the family at the center of the play, Bond tries to reflect the traces of social

negative evolution, with the city gang as the sampling area of the capitalist trauma. In the play, images of Freudianism, existentialism, and pragmatism in terms of the roles and personality characteristics of the actors are tried to be given as social examples of opposition to the capitalist thought. In this context, the message that the playwright aims to communicate is the social trauma created by capitalism and wars and the diseased side of the society in which he lives, as in his other plays.

When trauma is analyzed in a very general sense, it can be thought that the most common cause of it other than chronic diseases is violence in its broadest sense. This violence can be physical, emotional or spiritual. The violence that has started with war and family loss in the play reveals the picture staged as a result of all kinds of violence that continue in the family and trigger each other as a psychological process. In *Saved*, the aim of social trauma, which comes to the point that a baby is killed by a parasite group including its mother, indirectly, and directly his father, is to show the point where society and societies have evolved to draw the attention to social trauma and the society of violence.

In both psychoanalytic theory and social development theory, there are certain periods of development in the discourses of Freud and Ericson in which the individual obtains acquisition regarding values and social life. This achievement is especially parallel to the parents' being in control of the child (Üre, Arı, & Yılmaz, 1999). If the parent has been exposed to trauma, his uncontrolled life creates an obstacle to the child's normal behavior. This situation is defined as "T" trauma in the literature. The major "T" trauma is distinguished as an extraordinary and significant event that causes the individual to feel powerless and have little control over their environment" (evrimagaci.org, accessed 22/01/2021). Natural disasters, sexual assault, major accidents, and the war and its effects on which the play is based on the trauma theme are the causes of the "T" traumas of the characters. The phenomenon of war, which is subconsciously treated as a cause of individual trauma in the play, again from the point of view of the playwright, and the phenomenon of social destruction of capitalism can be evaluated as the major "T" trauma.

Although Len shows traumatic personality characteristics like other characters, sometimes he can behave in more control compared with them. He shows a little more sensitivity in behaviors towards social adaptation while in Pam's house:

**LEN** Can yer move yer - thass better.  
**PAM** Yer d'narf fidget.  
**LEN** I'm okay now.  
**PAM** OW!  
**LEN** D'yer 'ave the light on ?  
**PAM** Suit yerself.  
**LEN** I ain' fussy.  
**PAM** OW!  
**LEN** Can yer shut them curtains ?

This situation should be considered together with the fact that the reactions of individuals exposed to trauma are individual. Actually, what Cathy Caruth insists on is that the events do not affect everyone in the same way:

The pathology cannot be defined either by the event itself—which may or may not be catastrophic, and may not traumatize everyone equally—nor can it be defined in terms of a distortion of the event, achieving its haunting power as a result of distorting personal significances attached to it. The pathology consists, rather, solely in the structure of its experience or reception: the event is not assimilated or experienced fully in time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event. (Caruth, 1995, p.4)

In short, it can be said that in the play, in which such behaviors are observed in other characters, besides Len, all individuals have traumas they are exposed to either by transference or experience in their own lives. This type of influence is referred to as minor “t” traumas. These traumas are “events that exceed the capacity of the individual to cope with emotional functioning, causing deterioration” and often manifest themselves as “avoidance”, and reactions to events are smaller (evrimagaci.org, accessed 22/01/2021).

When it comes to the last scene of the play, it is striking that the individuals have returned to their daily lives as if nothing has happened. Mary cleans the table, Pam sits on the couch reading the magazine, Len fixes the chair that was broken in the previous scene, and Harry fills out a football betting slip. Even though this scene gives the impression of being peaceful for the characters after such disturbing scenes, it is thought that it does not have the same effect on the audience. The playwright aims to disturb the audience from the very beginning to confront them with the things happening in the real world. The feeling of anger, anxiety, hatred, and apathy triggered in the audience causes them to face their own trauma. What they watched on the stage are not events from which they are far; these events happen right next to them.

In general, violence, the traumatic situations it causes and the consequences of these situations are among the elements that come to the fore in the play. The characters are wounded spiritually; they cannot heal these wounds, and they have not made any efforts to heal them. In some cases, it is thought that they are not even conscious of this injury to their souls. The gap created in them by broken family ties, lack of communication, lack of love, and indifference is unfillable. No matter how much the audience react, it should be remembered that what happened in the play reflects the realities of that period. When evaluated within the scope of trauma theory, it can be stated that the characters keep their pain in; they do not share it with anyone. They are not even conscious of what they are experiencing, and have kept up with the chaos of the society, and actually they have lost spiritually by trying to live in this chaos. According to Laub, the listener is "*the blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first time*" (Laub, 1992, p.57). He highlights the importance of narrating trauma. More specifically, narrating the trauma helps the victims understand that they are not alone, which is important for the victim to more readily accept the traumatic situation. Kaplan (2005) calls this "empathic sharing" (p. 37). Looking at the characters in the play, it is seen that this empathic sharing situation does not exist among them. Because each of them are problematic and traumatic individuals in their own world, individuals have become strangers and indifferent to each other since the conditions of the society they live in have destroyed communicating with each other and sharing feelings.

## 4. CHAPTER FOUR: FROZEN

### 4.1. Bryony Lavery and Her Horror Theater

Bryony Lavery was born in 1947 in Wakefield, and she grew up in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, England. Starting her career as a playwright, Lavery acted in many plays and worked as a director at the same time. In addition to these, she produced many translations, essays, and adaptations. The playwright also supported and contributed to the British Lesbian Theater and the Women's Theater Group. She created artistic products on subjects that had become taboo during her lifetime, such as sexuality, lesbian stories, violence, etc. She often uses Aristotelian and Brechtian features, especially in dramatic genres. These features are particularly evident in the award-winning play *Frozen*. While the characters in the play are acting alone in a mimetic way, they actually continue as a monologue that appeals to the audience indirectly. Consequently, every monologue is intermingled with other monologues and dialogues that continue during the play. There is no particular order, time or place in these monologues and their forms that turn into dialogues, whereby past and present thoughts and feelings are intertwined (Wald, 2006, p.116).

*Frozen* was first performed at the Birmingham Repertory Theater in 1998. The play, which was performed in many other theaters in England, received a Tony Award nomination for the best play on Broadway in 2004 and significantly increased the awareness of the public in America towards this issue. After the play was performed, Lavery was accused by the critics and the audience of plagiarizing the case of Lucy Partington who was missing for twenty years and found out that she was murdered. Lucy's family, like Rhona's family, did not hear about their daughter for twenty years and only found out what happened to her twenty years later. It is claimed that Lavery was inspired by this event to write *Frozen*. Marian Partington, Lucy's sister, stated in a statement that it was impossible to describe the impact her sister's loss had had on them, as if it was looking for a body at the bottom of the frozen Arctic Ocean. It is thought that Lavery named the play *Frozen*, and was inspired by this event. In fact, it is noteworthy that the characteristics and discourses of the character of Ralph are similar to those of Frederic West, Lucy's murderer, and Robert Black, who was another serial killer (Wald, 2006, p.118).

Lavery makes particular use of Horror Theater features in *Frozen*. When horror is mentioned, what comes to the mind in general is what this emotion makes the person feel. It can be also described as a combination of fear, disgust, anxiety or negative emotions. It is known that the word horror comes from the same root as the word “horripilation”; horripilation means goosebumps. Based on this point of view, it can be stated that the word horror is related to the physiological response. In other words, it is related to the physical behavior as well as emotional effects. However, it should be remembered that there is a difference between the moments of horror and horror as a genre, apart from natural horrors. Even if a work is not in the horror genre, there can be moments of horror in novels, plays, and movies. The purpose of including these moments in the works is to surprise, disgust or disturb the audience or reader in many ways. While defining horror artistically, a definition of it can be made by considering the way it is used in literature and other arts and the components that make up horror. It is possible to see these defining features in Horror Theater. In Horror Theatre, the audience’s reactions are parallel to the emotions of the characters (Richardson, 2015, p. 4-8). In this context, Lavery’s purpose in the play is to confront the audience with the horrible act of child abuse that traumatizes families, individuals, as well as the society. It is clear from the trauma representations and responses of each character that Lavery has successfully achieved this goal.

The play consists of two acts and 30 scenes. The first act consists of monologues. The main characters are Agnetha, Nancy, and Ralph who use these monologues in order to show their frozen states to the audience. In the second act, these monologues are replaced by the dialogues between the characters in which they communicate. While pre-traumatic and post-traumatic situations are included in the play, traumatic situations or events experienced by trauma victims are not directly staged. For instance, the abuse and murder that Rhona was subjected to by Ralph, or the abuse, violence, and neglect that Ralph was subjected to as a child were reported but not directly acted on the stage. This is in line with the principle of trauma theory that traumatic experience eludes narrative memory (Wald, 2006, p.115).

Some of the works of Lavery, which have been written in many different literary genres as well as plays, are as follows: *Of All Living* (1967), *Days at Court* (1968), *Warbeck* (1969), *I Was Too Young at the Time to Understand Why My Mother Was Crying* (1976), *Sharing* (1976), *(With Peter Lebourne) Germany Calling* (1976),

*Grandmother's Footsteps* (1977), *Snakes* (1977), *The Catering Service* (1977), *Floorshow* (1978), *Helen and Her Friends* (1978), *Bag*, produced in London (1979), *Time Gentlemen Please* (cabaret) (1979), *The Wild Bunch* (1979), *Sugar and Spice* (1979), *Unemployment: An Occupational Hazard?* (1979), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1980), *The Joker* (1980), *The Family Album* (1980), *Pamela Stephenson One Woman Show* (cabaret) (1981), *Missing* (1981), (With Patrick Barlow) *Zulu* (1981), *Female Trouble* (1981), *The Black Hole of Calcutta* (1982), (With Patrick Barlow and Susan Todd) *Gotterdammerung* (also known as *Twilight of the Gods*) (1982), *For Maggie, Betty and Ida* (1982), *More Female Trouble* (cabaret) (1983), (With Yvonne Allen, Annie Lewis, Geoff Parker, Tracy Thomas, Isobel Ward, and Elly Wilkie) *Cocktail Cabaret* (1984), *Calamity* (1984), (With Su Elliott, Sally Greenwood, and Pippa Sparkes) *The Wandsworth Warmers* (1984), *The Zulu Hut Club* (1984), *Hot Time* (1984), *Origin of the Species* (1984), *Witchcraze* (1985), *Getting Through* (1985), *The Wandsworth Warmers Christmas Carol Concert* (1985), *The Wandsworth Warmers in Unbridled Passions* (1986), *Sore Points* (1986), (With Sally Owen and L. Ortolja) *Mummy: A Family Who Cheated Death* (1987), *The Headless Body* (1987), *Madagascar* (1987), *Puppet States* (1988), *The Dragon Wakes* (1988), *The Two Marias* (1988), (With Nona Sheppard) *The Drury Lane Ghost* (1989), *Peter Pan* (1991), *Her Aching Heart* (1992), *Goliath* (1997), *More Light* (1997), *Breathing Underwater* (1998), *Frozen* (1998), , *A Wedding Story* (2000), *Illyria* (2000), *The Magic Toyshop* (2001), *Last Easter* (2004), *Stockholm* (2007), *Red Sky* (2007), *It Snows* (2008), *Kursk* (2009), *Beautiful Burnout* (2010).

#### **4.2. Frozen**

When Tony Award-winning *Frozen* was performed at the National Theater in 2002, it was considered a troubling play for both the reader and the audience, as it was recorded in the theatrical recordings as a disturbing play. In the play, in which the traumatic situation experienced by her family is deeply felt, when a little girl is searched for being missed for twenty years and after it is revealed that she was sexually abused and killed, it is revealed that the sexual abuser Ralph is also a victim of childhood sexual abuse at the same time. While this situation makes the audience feel that the bond between victim and victimizer is not very clear, it is still confusing that this feeling of the mother, who has an intense sense of revenge, is replaced by calming and then



forgiveness. It brings the question of “Could I forgive if it were me?” to the minds of the audience. Bryony Lavery, who is an important playwright in English Theater, includes black comedy elements from time to time; however, putting black comedy elements into a serious subject such as sexual abuse can be considered as a controversial topic.

Considering the period in which the play is written, issues such as sexual abuse and rape are among the topics that are not talked about much in the society and are mostly kept secret. In this play, Lavery aims to raise awareness in the society by openly talking about sexual abuse and rape. Children who disappeared and were later found abused and murdered are frightening features of the 1990s (Aston, 2003, p. 55). So, if these are the facts of life, then everyone should talk about them and people should be aware of them. In *Frozen*, in addition to the existence of sexual abuse, the psychological and sociological damage affecting the society and individuals, the reasons for such acts are conveyed to the audience. At the same time, whether such an act is forgivable or not is left to the empathy of the audience.

The main focus of this chapter is Bryony Lavery’s Tony Award Winning play titled *Frozen* and the trauma representation through characters, namely Nancy, Agnetha, and Ralph. Also, their responses to trauma will be analyzed. The play reveals the characters’ representation of their insidious traumas and their frozen states experienced by different events. However, they have a common point that brings them together through the play. The ordinary lives of ordinary characters, namely Nancy and Agnetha suddenly turn dark and they find themselves in an extremely traumatic atmosphere. The situation is a little bit different for Ralph, who is another main character, because he is an individual who has been under the influence of his traumatic past throughout his life. In the play, it is seen that all three characters take a frozen state due to their traumatic experiences. Agnetha is stuck by the sudden and shocking death of her colleague and lover David. Nancy is stuck on the day her daughter disappears at the age of ten and has not heard from her for twenty years, and in her belief that one day her daughter will return. Besides, Ralph is stuck in his childhood trauma, which shapes his present life.

It was mentioned in the plays, *The Birthday Party* and *Saved*, which were examined in the previous chapters, that there are no situations such as flashbacks in which trauma is directly observed, and traumatic reminiscences and experiences which

are observed in the behaviors and discourses of the characters. Looking back at *Frozen*, Nancy goes back in the second scene, twenty-five years from the first scene, to the day Rhona disappeared. This flashback is a technique used by the playwright to link the past and the present together to reveal the traumatic tensivity of the play. Nancy does not know what happened to Rhona in her own reality, but Rhona was abused and murdered twenty-five years ago, and this situation is still blurred in Nancy's memory (Wald, 2006, p.115). For this reason, Nancy has become an individual who suffers from trauma in this process. Cathy Caruth demonstrates that trauma is understood not at the moment of the event, but later when it takes over the life of the individual (Caruth, 1995, p.4). Horrible and traumatic events experienced by the individual then return to the individual as flashbacks, reported actions or nightmares. When Nancy's situation in the second scene is evaluated from this perspective, it can be called a trauma symptom and its belated return.

Another representation of Caruth's definition of trauma's "belatedness" is seen in Nancy's other daughter, Rhona's older sister Ingrid. Ingrid manifests the symptoms of trauma with her dream which can be considered its belated return. Ingrid is also young when Rhona disappears. The sudden disappearance of her sister, the ways her parents go to search for her, and the fact that she was not able to make sense of what she had been through as a child over the years are not surprising, but it is impossible not to be affected by them. Although she cannot understand the current trauma at first, she later becomes a traumatized individual with dreams. In her dream, Nancy narrates:

*"I had a bad dream, I'm in the frozen Arctic and I'm exploring but I'm no good at it. I've lost somebody, the body's under the ice but where? I walk, looking for ... but it's getting harder and colder. the ice is building up... ' I say 'No wonder, you've let the thermostat go off...' but she wails like a great soft thing ... says ... 'I look for a hole, I look for a seal hole, but there's no hole, the body's down there but it's all getting whiter."*

Christina Wald (2006) indicates that considering the ocean as an overwhelming status of traumatic experience, then the frozen ocean is accepted as an indication of characters being stuck in the past (p.1). In this context, Ingrid is also a traumatized subject. Kolk explains that the effects of traumas experienced as a child are observed in adulthood, and that negative experiences will also affect this period of life. According to him, traumatic memories remain vivid in memory; they do not change and can be triggered easily. This makes it difficult for a traumatic individual to lead a normal life

(Kolk, 2014, pp.154-164). The fact that Ralph, the main character in the play, has not survived his childhood traumas will be shown in detail in the following discussions. Because of these traumas, he has harmed both others and himself. Besides Ralph, another character who was neglected by her mother as a child is Ingrid. Although she is not directly involved in the play, this situation is clearly felt by the audience from the narration of Nancy. Her parents, especially her mother, neglects Ingrid as she rushes through the memories of her missing sister and the various ways they take to find her. A small but intense detail in the conversation that takes place between them when they go to see what has been left of Rhona makes this clear: “*She was my little girl! And she said. So was I*” (*Frozen, p.72*). Based on Ingrid’s sentence “So was I”, it would not be wrong to say that a child who has been neglected still cannot accept this situation even in adulthood, and that she feels anger and resentment inside.

The most important person in the development process of the child is the mother. The mother fulfills responsibilities such as raising her child in a healthy way, guiding and helping him. However, it is inevitable that there will be changes in Nancy’s mental health, who experienced a traumatic process after Rhona’s disappearance. This creates anxiety and a kind of depression in her. These factors undoubtedly have negative effects on Ingrid’s development as a child. As a traumatized mother, it is unlikely that Nancy will be able to contribute to Ingrid’s emotional development while raising her. Although there is no direct explanation in this regard in the play, it indirectly brings to mind the thought that these make it inevitable for Ingrid to experience problems such as adjustment and self-esteem, especially in adolescence.

The relationship between Nancy and Ingrid is not displayed directly in the play. However, it is clear from Nancy’s narration that the relationship between the two is not what it should be, as she is a traumatized mother. Due to her reactions to Rhona’s loss, it is thought that Nancy neglects Ingrid, does not spare enough time for her, cannot enter her emotional world and cannot empathize with her. Undoubtedly, these have negative impacts on Ingrid’s spiritual and emotional development. The intergenerational transmission of trauma has been mentioned in previous chapters. Similarly, it can be said that Nancy transferred her own trauma to Ingrid. Traumatic experience is a painful reality that affects all relationships, emotions, and behaviors of the individual. As a traumatized individual, Nancy’s both personal and family life has been affected by this trauma. After the trauma she experienced, all her roles in the family changed. Her

approach, attitude and behavior towards Ingrid and Bob have changed and she has become an indifferent individual towards them. Ruppert argues that the trauma experienced by the mother and its reflection on her child and the content of this trauma creates sensitivity in the child's development. The mother's trauma is passed on to the child. As the transferred trauma has a form of verbal emotions, they also reflect emotions such as anger, fear, and neglect towards their children (Ruppert, 2011, pp.201-202). While Ingrid is already traumatized by the loss of her sister, she also experiences a second trauma to which she was exposed by her mother.

Again, as in *The Birthday Party* and *Saved*, it is seen that denial, which is one of Freud's defense mechanisms, is used in this play. As mentioned earlier, denial is a defense mechanism that individuals use to express events and situations that they have a difficulty in accepting. To protect themselves, the individuals who want to ignore the dangerous situations they are exposed to use the denial mechanism. Anna Freud states that with the shock effect of the individuals when they unexpectedly lose the object of love, they deny the objective elements of the event and replace these intolerable facts with a delusion that they produce themselves (Freud A., 2011, p.62). Nancy lost her love object, her daughter Rhona. However, she denies this, believing that she will come back one day. So she will not feel severe pain and be detached from reality. Nancy's belief and expressing it explicitly can be considered as a traumatic fixation.

In Caruth's book, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), Dori Laub mentions in his article titled *Truth and Testimony: The Process and The Struggle* the importance of the process of witnessing with a story of an adult who was a four-year-old boy during the Holocaust years. Forced to leave his family at the age of four, this little boy somehow manages to survive by going through various difficulties. He has nothing but a single photograph of his mother and the promise that his parents made to meet one day again when they left him. When the child is in a difficulty throughout his life, he survives only by clinging to them. His only motivation is his belief that one day he will meet his parents again. It is this strong feeling he feels every time he looks at the photograph in his hand. Laub interprets this as what this young boy exactly does with his mother's photograph is to create his first witness, which has been the only thing keeping him alive on the streets all these years. According to Laub, this story "... exemplifies the process

*whereby survival takes place the creative act of establishing and maintaining an internal witness, who substitutes for the lack of witnessing in real life”* (p.71). A similar situation is also valid for Nancy in the play. She believes that her missing daughter for twenty years will come back. For this reason, she does not change anything in her room. She tells her husband and the other daughter Ingrid not to touch anything in the room or even to enter the room. Because when Rhona arrives, she should see that everything is still as she left it. That is what Nancy believes and wants. She strongly believes that Rhona will return. While this is psychological pain, on the one hand, it is also Nancy’s motivation to survive. What his mother’s photo means to the little boy in Laub’s story Rhona’s room is the same for Nancy.

According to Henry Krystal, at later ages, the individual’s past experiences now lie unfolded before them. The individuals must accept this situation or continue to wage an internal war against their past (Krystal, 1995, p.78). Looking at the twenty-year history that has passed since Nancy’s loss, it is seen that instead of accepting Rhona’s missing, she has an internal war with her past. In other words, there is no thought that her daughter will not come anymore. Leaving her room as it is, her efforts to find Rhona by becoming a member of a group called Flame, and her eternal belief in it are indicators of this. However, in the end, she wants to end this war within herself and accept the death of her daughter, that she will never see her again, and allows her past to get out of her present life. When Nancy’s other daughter, Ingrid, is viewed from this perspective, she is thought to have accepted her traumatic past before her parents. Because she still feels the traumas related to herself internally, she must have accepted the trauma she experienced with Rhona’s departure so that she was able to move on, build and live a life in another country that is different from her family. In one way or another, Nancy’s trauma has become a factor in traumatizing her other daughter. Her frantic actions, obsession with her daughter’s stuff, and negligence of Ingrid have all contributed in traumatizing Ingrid.

Another striking point in the play is the function of Flame, of which Nancy becomes a member after her daughter disappears. After Rhona disappears, Nancy gradually takes on a frozen mood. Her only thought and hope is the possibility of her daughter returning one day. Therefore, she volunteers for Flame and believes that Rhona will return to them, just like the missing children who are reunited with their families there, even years later. Besides, it is very meaningful that the organization’s name is

Flame, because it can be interpreted that this frozen situation in which Nancy is stuck can be only melted by a flame:

...FLAME is about  
just that ...  
keeping that flame of hope alive  
keeping it burning  
so that our missing children  
can see its light  
and feel its warmth  
and come towards it!

For such situations, Herman uses the term “survivor mission”. According to her, individuals in this situation discover the meaning of their tragedy by turning it into a social action (Herman, 1992, p.149). Nancy, a volunteer for Flame, may also want to internalize the trauma and pain she is experiencing with Rhona’s loss by contributing to a social action. This can be actually thought of as Nancy’s first step towards recovery. Volunteering at Flame is a form of rehabilitation for Nancy. It is an activity that is good for her in order to protect her health and self-integrity after the trauma in her mind. It can be considered as a means of treating her to some extent, and it is very important in terms of preventing her from getting worse. Because Nancy has suffered from a serious trauma after the loss of Rhona, she needs mental rehabilitation. Her inability to learn the truth for a very long time also prevents her from mourning. Therefore, waiting for Rhona, her object of love, to come one day affects her psychology negatively. Because with each passing year, for instance on Rhona’s birthdays, her hopes about her return to home are nothing but prolonging the duration of her trauma.

Moreover, according to Felman, the survivors testimony is necessary since the trauma cannot be healed if it is not transmitted (Felman, 1995, pp.16-25). In this case, Nancy needs a cathartic transference process to overcome her trauma. While it can be said that she takes the first step in this direction in terms of her role in Flame, her meeting with Agnetha is a continuation of this. Afterwards, when Rhona’s coffin is opened, this process continues as Nancy confronts what is left of her and decides to talk to Ralph at the suggestion of Agnetha as well as Ingrid. Here, Nancy’s testify brings clarification to the issue on her mind. Thanks to the integration of the traumatic event, Nancy will finally accept the truth and survive.

Another main character, Agnetha, is an American psychiatrist. She shows up in the play by going to London from America to present a study of serial killers that she

has been working on for many years, whereby most of their murders are unconscious acts at a conference in London. Although she herself is a psychiatrist, she also has pain and traumas inside her. This is clearly observed in the first scene. She meets the audience while trying to take a firm stance despite her strange attitudes. Herman states that traumatized individuals avoid mourning their loss because they fear this loss and the grieving process and even think that if they start to grieve, they will never come out of this mourning process (Herman, 1992, p.136). In the first scene of the play, the strange behaviors of Agnetha, while preparing for her departure from America to London, draw the attention. Although the reason for this is unknown to the audience at that time, the reason for Agnetha's behavior becomes clear as the play progresses. She has recently lost her colleague and lover David, with whom she has worked for twenty years; David's death was due to a car accident. When an individual loses a loved one as a result of a traumatic event, he/she has to cope with both the effects of the traumatic event and the mourning of the loss. It can be quite challenging for the individual to deal with these in the beginning. Therefore, the individual goes through an emotional and physical process with ups and downs. The tragic dimension of the event overwhelms the human spirit. To protect himself/herself from this situation, the individual suppresses his/her emotions or partially cuts off his/her connection with the event by freezing his/her emotions to take a break (Zara, 2011, pp.99-100). Based on Agnetha's actions, the impression that she suppresses her emotions in order not to mourn this loss arises. She has an inner frozen state; she suppresses her emotions and avoids experiencing her pain, fearing that the "mourning process will never end" as Herman reveals.

However, although she suppresses her feelings and breaks off relations with them, it cannot be said that she can ultimately achieve this. In other words, the interpretation derived from her behavior is in this respect. According to Herman, the individual who cannot grieve, "*she is cut off from a part of herself*" (Herman, 1992, p.135). While Agnetha is experiencing this situation, she suddenly succumbs to her suppressed emotions and experiences an outburst:

Oh no.  
I do not need this.  
Not now.  
Please.  
*But it is now. She puts down her tickets. Her teeth  
chatter uncontrollably. She succumbs loudly to the  
chattering ...*  
Er g-g-g-g-g-g-g ...

oo g-g-g-g-g-g ...  
okay  
out  
good.  
*She waits again. Then tears fill her eyes and she starts  
blubbing. She encourages herself to cry ... then bawl ...  
there is something deliberate and good-humoured  
about it ... as if she is two people ... one expressing  
emotion, the other encouraging it out ...*  
Mmmmuuuuuuurr ...  
mmmmmmaaaaaaaaaa ...  
yes, come on ...  
wwwwwaaaaaaahhhhhh ...  
mmmmmmaaaaaaaahhh ...  
Come on ...  
plane to catch...!  
Oh boy ...

This is experienced as a result of the sudden triggering of the emotions suppressed by David's death on her way from New York to London. The suppression of one's emotions and pain prevents mourning, and thus the healing process is also hindered. In Agnetha's case, and in general, it is possible that this is unconscious repression. Related to this, van Der Kolk and van Der Halt argue that repression is not an active process that removes overwhelming experience (van Der Kolk & van Der Halt, 1995, p.168).

Another situation is related to Agnetha who also falls in love with her colleague, David, and sleeps with him shortly before his death. Moreover, Agnetha is also a friend with David's wife. Precisely for this reason, the guilt she feels for having slept with her friend's husband may be also the reason why she suppresses her feelings in order not to experience her pain (Dellbrügge, 2009, p. 10). David's sudden death is a shocking and highly traumatic situation for Agnetha. As a result of this trauma, she feels guilty towards David's wife. This guilt she feels is more than a normal guilt, because it is a traumatic guilt. Her situation tends to make her rethink the fact that she slept with David before his death, questioning whether there is anything she can do to change this negative experience. The American Psychiatric Association added the feeling of guilt as a trauma symptom among the PTSD diagnostic criteria in DSM-5. From this point of view, one of the reasons for Agnetha's emotional distress is the guilt she feels towards David's wife. Her feelings are quite complex. She internalized negative emotions, such as anger, shame, regret, and remorse. This suggests to the audience and the reader that guilt is a mediating factor in the persistence of her PTSD symptoms. She cannot take the



feeling any longer and calls David's wife, Mary. The point of this conversation is not really to ask how Mary is, but to confront her own guilt. Although Mary does not understand the conversation between them, it can be thought that this conversation relieves Agnetha a little because she has attempted to confront her "sin" herself.

In the later scenes of the play, it is observed that Agnetha becomes calmer. She no longer behaves strangely. However, it is seen at the end of the play that she has not been able to fully cope with this trauma. This can be clearly seen in the speech she and Nancy have at Ralph's funeral:

**Agnetha:**

I worked with him every day for ten years.  
Two days before he died ...  
I slept with him.  
It just happened.  
His wife is a very good friend.  
Why am I telling you this?

**Nancy**

Why are you?

**Agnetha**

Do I tell her?

**Nancy**

No.

You just suffer.

'The difference between a crime of evil  
and a crime of illness is the difference  
between a sin and a symptom...'

*Your* words.

I read your thesis ...

You knew what you were doing.

Live with it.

Another main character who suffers from his past experiences like other trauma victims is Ralph. In this chapter, the cases and experiences in which the concept of trauma will be mostly represented will be supported with examples from his life. With this character, Lavery aims to reveal how a terrible reality such as child abuse negatively affects families, children, and society. Ralph's past experiences and the long-term traumatic child abuse he was exposed to have formed his current lifestyle. The real thing that draws attention when he is both victim and victimizer by causing extreme harm to both himself and others, and even at one point, causes the audience to experience the dilemma of whether to sympathize with him or not, is the fact that he is not aware of what he is doing and he is unconsciously doing these actions.

Agnetha interviews Ralph in London, whereby she is attending a conference, and the supporting example of her research is Ralph's story. Her interviews with Ralph are very important; they bring to the fore her basic assumptions about trauma as an analyst, making Ralph aware of his traumatic resilience as a trauma victim. In addition, this situation not only reveals Ralph's character analysis, but also offers the audience or readers the opportunity to understand the reasons for his discursive sexual behavior. According to Freud (1920), there must be a transference between the patient and analyst so that the patient can familiarize with the traumatic resistance. The situation Agnetha is trying to create with Ralph is similar to this. Freud points to the need for the analyst to analyze the symptoms in the trauma victim and bring him awareness. Therefore, a cathartic transfer process is needed. Thanks to this transfer, the patient realizes self-realization by integrating his trauma into his present self. Agnetha's theory implies that all Ralph has done is unconscious; he is also a victim of trauma. What she wants to prove to both the audience and Ralph is to make her assumptions about the trauma come to the fore and make them aware of Ralph's traumatic resilience.

In the context of Agnetha's work, when it is accepted that he is a trauma victim, it is inevitable that Ralph is a fragmented individual, because being a child who is a sexual abuse victim makes him fragmented. Herman states that chronic sexual abuse in childhood makes fragmentation a central tenet of personality organization. The integration of information, memory, and emotional states is prevented by the fragmentation of consciousness. While the fragmentation in the internal representations of the self prevents identity integration, the fragmentation in the internal representations of others prevents the development of a secure sense of independence (Herman, 1992, p.78). So, it can be revealed that Ralph's repressed childhood trauma during all those years makes him a sexual predator during his adulthood. Because of this fragmentation, his identity could not be completed. Accordingly, it can be thought that Ralph has developed a second self. In her article "*Psychoanalysis, Culture and Trauma*", Caruth argues (in her interview with Lifton) that an individual's sense of self changes radically when exposed to extreme trauma. For this reason, a traumatized self created by the individual unconsciously is formed. This is not an entirely new self. However, it is a situation caused by the traumatic effects of the painful situations experienced by the individual (Caruth, p.164). It is thought that Ralph's childhood traumas due to sexual abuse from his stepfathers and neglect of his mother caused him to form a second self

in his adulthood. This idea also supports “a crime of illness” situation that Agnetha claims when she analyzes Ralph psychologically.

Ralph, who was exposed to sexual abuse in his childhood, has a traumatic sexuality idea by associating violent behaviors towards him in his adulthood with the terrible sex he experienced. The reason for this cognitive and psychological disorder in him is the sexual abuse that causes his childhood traumas. At the heart of all this is the fact that Ralph is a child neglected by his mother. His mother, who is the only parent responsible for his care, neglects him physically and mentally. Ralph, who is deprived of basic emotional needs, such as attention, love, and protection, cannot complete his psychological development in his later life and becomes a sexual abuser who inflicts pain and violence on others.

One of the negative effects of Ralph’s being exposed to sexual child abuse is the obsessions of compulsive hoarding and sequencing. Hoarding obsession is defined as the person’s intense anxiety about throwing away the objects they have accumulated (Marufoğlu, 2010, p.22). When this hoarding obsession, and likewise the sequencing obsession, is considered according to the psychoanalytic theory, this situation can be explained by the displacement defense mechanism, that is one of Freud’s defense mechanisms. With the displacement defense mechanism, it can be said that the person develops obsessive-compulsive symptoms due to the inability to react to the experienced event, and these symptoms neutralize the event causing the distress (Geçtan, 1989). Accordingly, it should be remembered that Ralph makes videos of the girls he abused, places the pornographic videos he has bought from different countries in a particular order, and is disturbed by the thought that the police would treat them carelessly.

Through his narration and Agnetha’s nailing, the audience witness Ralph’s pathetic situation. He was abused as a child by the lovers of his negligent mother who shut her eyes to his abuse. This causes Ralph to show false memory syndrome, a symptom which is described by Kaplan and Manicavasagar (2001) as a situation “... caused by memories of a traumatic experience, most frequently Childhood Sexual Abuse which are objectively false but in which person strongly believes” (pp.342-348). Ralph’s memories about his childhood, and his father especially, cannot be trusted as they are the evidence of his false memory syndrome:

Big kitchen ... we had a big kitchen obviously ...  
with an *Aga* ... a dark green *Aga* ... and that’s where all

the kettles and pans ... copper, all copper, all gleaming  
in the light ... because there were lights everywhere ...  
spotlights on tracking yeah ... to just touch in a mood  
of country ... and a log fire ... with them ... whatsis ... *settles* ...  
wood ... pine ... antiquey ... and here is where the dog sits ...  
*lies* ... when he's not guarding ... or going out on the hills  
with us, *romping* ... and then we come back and open the  
tin of Pal Pedigree dogfood and he gets it, bosh, in  
a special new shiny tin on the red stone floor ...

.....  
*Mother* does the meals.  
She goes to Iceland and Sainsbury's and Tesco's  
and she gets a *variety* and she doesn't put up with  
*low standards* ...

oh no  
oh no  
the long pine table *always* has a selection of  
... and the *correct* cutlery crockery for different  
meals ... and we all sit down to eat together ...

.....  
Yeah. Father. *Dad*.  
Except when we're out riding ponies.  
Or reading *poytry*.  
In the room with all the books on shelves.  
And the Nicam Digital television.

The audience learn that this is not the case at all in the scene where Agnetha tells the truth directly to Ralph's face. A similar conclusion is reached when this situation is evaluated within the scope of Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real theory, in which Lacan explores the concept of traumatic reality. According to Lacan, the ego strives to create an appropriate image that hides the fragmentation that is self-experienced in childhood through imaginary and symbolic memories. For this reason, he claims that individuals develop illusory visions to protect themselves from this fragmentation. Ralph's pathetic state and memories about his childhood can be also explained in this way.

Being sexually abused in his childhood causes Ralph to be a psychologically unhealthy individual throughout his life. For this reason, his own traumatic causes are actually at the root of the destructions he causes. His inability to accept the truth because of his unconsciously suppressed emotions is also due to his defense mechanism. His denial defense mechanism gets involved in his explanation when Agnetha asks about his childhood. He is fragmented because of his repressed emotions and this is the result of the denial mechanism. He has a difficulty in remembering what he has gone through in his past due to the trauma he has experienced. This is one of the symptoms of PTSD. It is clear from his conversations with Agnetha that he thinks that while he was raping little

girls, he thought they liked it too. That is why he never feels that when he raped Rhona or the other girls, he was causing them pain. He only realizes that he hurts them when he remembers his own past, the pain he felt when his stepfathers abused him. At this very point, he feels “remorse”, a feeling that he cannot understand when he hears it for the first time, whether he knows what it is or not. This intensity of emotion also causes him to suffer physically. He feels the pain felt by the girls and their families, both spiritually and physically. He wants to apologize to Nancy, but he does not know what to say or how to say it.

Not remembering first and remembering later are both due to his past traumas. While the traumas that cause him not to remember harm many people, the trauma he experiences after remembering damages him, too. Ralph, who cannot stand these, commits suicide at the end (Sedehi, 2016, p.2).

Ruth Leys argues that the basis of trauma lies between two paradigms which are mimesis and antimimesis. According to the mimetic theory, the individual’s traumatic experience involves the form of hypnotic imitation or identification. When the victim cannot remember the actual traumatic event, he/she imitates it. As Agnetha claims, when Ralph is accepted as a trauma victim, it would not be wrong to comment that he might be identifying with his stepfathers, the aggressors of his past. Unconsciously, he does the same to other children by imitating what was done to him in the past. Ralph is in a vicious cycle of trauma. As a victim of child abuse, he declares a kind of war on the young girls around his neighborhood. The victimized Ralph chooses new victims for himself, such as Rhona and many others. He rapes them, takes videos, and kills them, then he buries them. His psychologically disturbed mind and acts display his unconscious frustration with the world in sexual violence, which is an inheritance from his own childhood. He witnesses this trauma himself, and for this reason, he suffers from psychological trauma unconsciously while bringing it into his adulthood. With the visits of Agnetha and especially Nancy, he could give voice to his trauma and is haunted by his own traumatic experience. This traumatic remembering is called “pathogenic reminiscences” by Breuer and Freud (1955, p.56). The love, affection and sense of belonging that he has not had in his childhood as well as his understanding of love and the sexual abuse he has suffered from push him to display brutal behaviors throughout his life.

Individuals who have been sexually abused in their childhood, especially by family members, come to think that other people are a source of terror or pleasure, and they have almost no needs and desires of their own (van Der Kolk, 2007, p.231). Ralph, who was sexually abused by his stepfathers as a child, is also clearly seen in this situation. He reveals this in his reflections on Rhona:

....finally ...  
she goes  
'Hello.'  
I think she quite liked me.  
Oh yes  
she was interested.  
The van's down here  
Obviously.....  
she wants to come  
it's only fifty yards  
it's convenient.....  
... she's persuaded it's time  
to get in the van  
you make it work  
she's in the van.

It seems that the most critical thing is Ralph's wishes and thoughts. It does not matter to him what Rhona wants. If he wants to talk to someone, that person has to speak to him, and there is nothing more important than that. This scene is one of the most obvious representations of his trauma due to child sexual abuse. Van der Kolk reveals that those who have experienced childhood traumas of abuse and neglect constitute almost all of the criminal offenders in the society. The majority of child abusers reported that they were also abused as children. Based on this data, it is argued that by continuing the internal trauma in children, they themselves become perpetrators in the future (van Der Kolk, 2007, p.228). The cycle of violence in the play epitomizes Ralph's situation. He cannot get over the childhood trauma he experienced, and this time he has become the victimizer of an event that he was victimized once by continuing this in his adulthood. Looking at the reflection of the play from Agnetha's point of view, it is seen that she also thinks similarly. Moreover, she reveals that Ralph did all this unintentionally and unconsciously, and that he is in a victimizer situation today because the trauma he experienced affects his frontal lobes.

Laub and Felman state that the testimony is actually the address of the narrator for hearing. According to them, if the trauma survivors know that they are heard, they stop hearing and listening to themselves (Felman & Laub, 1992, p.71). Assuming that Ralph is a witness of his own past experiences and brutal experiences in his memory, it

can be interpreted that he has always assumed the role of self-witness from the past to the present. When Agnetha arrives, she plays a crucial role as a listener, revealing Ralph's past sufferings during her communication with him.

Emphasizing the importance of narrating the trauma, Laub also states that if the price of the act of narrating is to relive the event, then this act itself can be extremely traumatizing. Instead of relieving the individual, it can cause more intense traumatization (Laub, 1992, p.67). Talking to Agnetha about her past, Ralph relives what he felt in the past. After talking to Nancy as well, he gets completely re-traumatized and cannot get out of this situation. In *The Birthday Party*, considering that Stanley, who does not want to talk about his past, has a similar end and his experience with strangers coming into the house has made him re-traumatized, McCann and Goldberg can be called dysfunctional listeners. However, Agnetha's role here is not dysfunctional. She is a willing and responsible listener in the play. She claims that Ralph has committed all these crimes because he is sick, and that he can recover if he is treated:

To my mind evil bespeaks conscious control  
over something.  
Serial murderers are not in that category.  
They are driven by forces beyond their control.  
The difference between a crime of evil  
and a crime of illness is the difference  
between a sin and a symptom  
And symptoms do not intrude in the relationship between  
murderers and the rest of us.  
They do not force us to stop and observe the  
distinctions between right and wrong,  
between the speakable and unspeakable,  
the way sins do ...

Through his interview with Nancy, Ralph is able to develop a perception of what he has done. He realizes that he has hurt many people with his actions. Because of his awareness of the destructive effects of his actions on other people, he realizes his own denials of his childhood. Shalev (2007) argues that besides education, social bounds, and inheritance, childhood experiences must be also considered since they are effective on the vulnerability of individuals (p.207). For this reason, the painful effect of Ralph's childhood sexual abuse experience cannot be ignored in considering his present actions.

In Caruth's book, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), Henry Krystal mentions in his article titled *Trauma and Aging: A Thirty Year Follow Up* the importance of the trauma survivors to accept their past experiences. However, he also states that this

will become impossible if the individual experiences the process of reconciliation with himself as bringing back the helplessness and shame of the past (p.93). When he is considered a trauma survivor due to his childhood sexual abuse, Ralph begins to confront his past with Agnetha's arrival because earlier, he did not even care why he is arrested. The only thing he cares about is that the police have messed up the videotapes and their order in his place; they have broken his order in the house. Ralph, who begins to face his past when Agnetha reminds him of the facts of his life in response to the False Memory Syndrome he has, feels the helplessness he experienced in the past once again and the emotions that he has been suppressing until that moment are triggered. Finally, with the arrival of Nancy, this time he feels both the shame of the past and the regret of today exceptionally deeply. He cannot stand it anymore and commits suicide.

In the same study, Krystal argues that if the individual does not accept the inevitability of what has happened, he feels anger, guilt, and shame. The problem here is that, in this process, with the individual's memories returning to the self-representation, that is, in the process of returning the emotions that he suppressed, it becomes inevitable to experience pain (Krystal, 1995, p.87) nor can Ralph ignore this pain. The emotional pain he experiences turns into physical pain when he brings back his suppressed emotions from the triggered traumas. This process is actually Ralph's acceptance of the past, namely his remorse:

**Ralph:** I think I've caught something.  
I think I caught cancer or something.  
Here.  
That's lungs, right?  
Lung cancer.  
And that's me not even fucking smoking!

**Agnetha:** Where is this pain, Ralph?  
*He shows her.*  
That's your heart, Ralph.  
Did the doctor check out your heart?

**Ralph:** Says there's nothing fucking *wrong*  
with the heart!  
Fucking Quack Cunt!

**Agnetha:** How long have you been in pain, Ralph?

**Ralph:** Er ...  
It started ... night after that mother of that  
girl Rhona I done came ... that was Thursday ...  
so ... (*Counts on his fingers.*)  
It's been a bit.



One of the situations highlighted by traumatic experiences in the play is “revenge”. Revenge is described as “*harm done to someone as a punishment for the harm that they have done to someone else*” in *Cambridge Dictionary*. It can be considered that his mother, who is mentioned in the events such as neglecting Ralph and using violence against him, has her own traumas as well. Since Ralph’s biological father is never mentioned, it is possible that his mother raised him alone. His father may have died or he may have abandoned his mother. In both cases, the mother is alone. Possibly, she vents her anger on Ralph’s father by abusing her own son. When it is remembered that she tolerates the violence and abuse done to Ralph by her lovers, her mother’s behavior in this way is claimed to be an act of revenge against Ralph’s father. The mother, who is a victim of trauma, also victimizes her son and takes a role in making her son both a victim and a victimizer like herself in the future.

Another situation in which revenge is seen in the play is undoubtedly the behavior of Ralph raping and murdering little girls. It can be said that he is taking a kind of revenge on his mother, who neglected him in his childhood, used physical violence, and condoned the sexual abuse of his lovers. The fact that the victims he chooses are girls rather than boys, he speaks about women with hatred, and he constantly calls Agnetha “cunt” makes the audience think about these. This is how he takes revenge on the women he has become obsessed with because of his mother (Öğütçü, 2018, p. 162). According to Caruth, this situation can be called dislocation of trauma due to the belatedness effect of trauma (Caruth, 1995, p. 9).

It is possible to see another revenge illustration in Nancy in the form of revenge fantasy. Ever since she learned that her daughter, who has been missing for twenty years, has been brutally murdered, she wants to take revenge on the person who has done this to her, which is quite justifiable considering the trauma she has experienced for the past two decades. What she has left now is nothing more than a few bones from her daughter, whom she last saw twenty years ago as a ten-year-old little girl. Nancy’s narrative in the scene where she wants revenge is a representation of emotional relief. If she does this, at least, she will be able to achieve her own justice, come out of the darkness she has been in for twenty years and continue her life like other people:

I said 'If I go to see him,  
 I'm taking a gun.  
 Blow his brains all over the wall.  
 I'm taking a knife  
 slice his thing off  
 stick the blade through his eye  
 and take out his brains that thought  
 what he thought to do what he did ...  
 She was my little girl!  
 .... I can't do that.  
 I Can't Do That.  
 I CAN'T DO THAT!!!!!!!

The play's fragmented structure involves internal monologues. It is known that Ralph's traumatic memory is distorted by remembering his traumatic past as a child. So, it can be said that he is stuck between the fragmented memories of his past and awareness of today. The play's deployment of internal monologues gives the same impression since, like Nancy's situation, it can be accepted as a trauma symptom. During the play, the interior monologues of the characters address the audience indirectly and they intermingle with one another to form dialogs (Öğütçü, 2018, p. 158). Most of these monologues ignore the time, space, and chronological order:

I should have gone round myself with those secateurs.  
 We've never seen eye to eye on shrubbery.  
 I'm prune-to-a-dormant-bud  
 but she'll be instigating a slash-and-burn regime.  
 She's let her *Clematis montana alba* do its own thing.  
 I said 'They like their feet in the shade and their head in  
 the sun' but she's plonked it  
 in a south-facing bed  
 sandy soil  
 and it's gone on the rampage over into next door's speciality alpine.  
 I offered to go round myself tomorrow and cut it back for her  
 but she says 'It's Bridgnorth tomorrow.'  
 Always leaves it to the last minute and then it's got to be  
 done This Minute Now Immediately.  
 So I asked for volunteers but that was like getting  
 someone to sign up for active service ...  
 Bob's got Nautilus training ...  
 and what's *that* all about...?

As seen in the monologue above, Nancy's present action of nipping buds off is interrupted by her past memories which is an example of her fragmented thoughts. In this case, it would be possible to accept Nancy as a trauma survivor. Similar situations repeat throughout the play.

Fragmentation of the characters can be interpreted as they are suffering from PTSD. The reason for Nancy and her family's fragmentation is undoubtedly the loss of

Rhona. The process they go through after Rhona disappears is quite traumatic for all of them. Although the audience cannot see this clearly based on her physical actions, this conclusion can easily come from Nancy's monologues. Nancy convinces herself that Rhona will come back one day, and she neglects her other daughter, namely Ingrid due to her efforts for this cause. Ingrid thus becomes another trauma victim. It is not possible for her not to have been affected by both being neglected and the traumatic atmosphere at home. Consequently, it is seen in Nancy's narratives that after a while, she continues her life in other countries, turns to different religions and beliefs in order to heal her trauma, and becomes an individual who finds solace in this:

...these mucky little parcels start arriving  
inside  
cloth squares about this big ...  
bright colours  
with foreign-type writing on ...  
Handkerchiefs?  
Head squares?  
Then a postcard ...  
'In Lhasa. Hope you got the Tibetan  
prayer flags.  
They are printed with spiritual blessings.  
They are hung up each year  
to signify  
hope  
transformation  
and the spreading of compassion. As the year progresses  
the wind disperses the energy of the words,  
which carry the power to pacify and heal  
everything they touch.  
Lots of love.  
Ingrid.'

The same situation is true for Nancy's husband, Bob. He also suffers from PTSD after Rhona's disappearance. Broken family ties, traumatic experiences, processes, and the atmosphere make him a fragmented individual. It is possible to find this again in Nancy's narratives:

...maybe Bob ...  
to primp and preen in private!  
I know what's going on and  
I know who with.  
It's all gone a bit softly-softly and undercover  
what with The Disappearance ...  
but if it's over I'm Raquel Welch!  
I don't care!

Another illustration of fragmentation is obviously seen in Agnetha, who tries to hide the agonising event she has been through as much as possible and suppresses her emotions. The emotional discharges she experiences in the first scene, her crying, and afterwards, her strange behaviors that continue on the plane show that she is also in a mood caused by PTSD. It is obvious that she has not yet accepted the death of her friend and lover, David, and has not survived the shock, but she suppresses her feelings. Herman indicates that individuals who experienced childhood trauma can ignore intense pain and hide their memories in the form of complex amnesia; this is a conscious suppression. The individual hides his memories in the depths of his memory in order to ignore the pain he has experienced (Herman, 1992, p.74). In this context, as can be seen from her sending an e-mail with hatred to a dead person, calling David's wife since she feels guilty, crying when she hears David's voice while talking to Ralph, and finally through her conversation with Nancy about David, putting her professional life aside, it can be argued that Agnetha is perhaps a fragmented individual, who since her childhood suffers from PTSD. It should be also noted that the crying act after hearing David's voice contains emotions, such as helplessness, sadness, and longing. This is actually a reminiscent of a traumatic experience. During this recollection, Agnetha re-experiences the emotion she had after David's sudden death. The emotions that she is suppressing are triggered, she experiences these feelings again, and suffers from a kind of emotional pain.

While Hartman (1995) states that the traumatic event bypasses consciousness and perception and leads directly to psyche (p.537), van Der Kolk and van Der Hart reveal that if the event experienced by the individual is very severe, the individual may not remember this trauma. If he does not remember, then his memory resides in his subconsciousness or in an alternate stream of consciousness that can dominate the consciousness (van der Kolk & van der Hart, 1995, p.168). An example of this situation is observed in Agnetha's behavior while writing an e-mail to David. The fact that she is going to present the work they prepared together alone triggers her repressed trauma that she has experienced due to David's death and acts strangely. She loses control on the plane; while expressing her anger in a hateful email to the recently deceased David, she types it by hitting the laptop. However, the point to be noted here is that Agnetha is also aware of how her behavior will be understood from the outside. Therefore, while doing this, she tries to hide the laptop's screen with one hand and to calm herself internally. At

this point, the existence of an “alternative stream of consciousness” that van Der Kolk and van Der Hart talk about emerges.

Cathy Caruth argues that trauma consists of not just facing death but unknowingly surviving (Caruth, 1996, p. 64). According to her, because of this unexpected extreme shock, the individual perceives the event as never happened. This creates a memory gap. Accordingly, the traumatic process that Agnetha has gone through first comes to mind. Due to David’s sudden and shocking death, she is also a victim of trauma now. She cannot put this experience, which she has not yet fully understood and does not want to accept, into a meaningful narrative. The hateful email she wrote to David and her strange behavior while writing it, and then the fact that she called Mary and hung up not knowing what to say, show that she also suffers from trauma. Another example that supports Caruth’s claim is seen in Nancy’s trauma. She cannot know what happened to Rhona for twenty years. This obscurity already makes her a direct victim of trauma. Besides, the trauma she experienced when she received the news of the death of her daughter, whom she had been waiting to return for exactly twenty years, is added. Rhona’s death is not new; however, it is sudden and shocking that Nancy, who is always waiting with hope, knows this. The shock she experienced when she first got the news creates a memory gap in her and she again experiences a second traumatic process. In short, it can be argued that traumatic experiences that are not perceived and are not fully embedded in the memory do not remain permanently unconscious. Triggers can bring these experiences to light anytime and anywhere.

In the play, where the traumatic experiences that exist in real life are revealed, how the characters reflect and cope with them, and sometimes not coping with them are quite impressive. With the character of Ralph, Lavery presents to the audience the fact that the act of remembering further shatters his already fragmented identity, although it takes courage to talk about these in the world the playwright lives in at that time. As this act of remembering undoubtedly brings back his traumatic past and memories, Ralph has a vicious cycle of trauma that he cannot get out of. This cycle finally gives him the feeling of remorse; the facts of his past experiences re-traumatize him. According to Herman, fragmentation becomes the basic principle in shaping the personality of the individual in those who experience chronic abuse in childhood. This fragmentation of consciousness interferes with the normal integration of memory and emotional states (Herman, 1992, p. 78).

Since Ralph's chronic childhood abuse also prevents the integration of his memory and emotional states, he cannot get out of the trauma triggered by Nancy's arrival. As a result of this trigger, he is haunted by his past memories. Ralph's suppression of childhood trauma in his life until Nancy's arrival and the false memory syndrom he experienced resulted in his addiction to alcohol besides being a victimizer. It seems that one of the disorders associated with childhood trauma resulting from childhood sexual abuse is substance use and alcohol addiction (Nazlı & Hurşitoğlu, 2021, p. 225).

In general, Ralph grows up lacking the most human emotions, namely love and care. However, in order for a child to become a self-sufficient and decent individual in the future, he must be loved by his mother, who is the person he trusts most; all the basic emotional needs of a baby or a child, such as love, protection, and attention are met by the mother as much as possible. Expressing the necessity and importance of feeling love in order to believe in its existence, Krystal emphasizes that in order for the individual to accept himself and his past as it is, he must first feel love (Krystal, 1995, p. 89). Known to have grown up as a neglected, repeatedly abused child in a loveless environment, Ralph cannot be said to have experienced love or has the kind of empathy that allows for a sense of being able to love. As a perpetrator, he may be thought of that he needs to love and be loved.

Lavery, who supported the feminist theater movements, women, and women's studies during her authorism, gives women the mission of curing other psychological problems, especially sexual harassment in the society. While the character Agnetha expresses this in her scientific studies, Nancy does it by working in Flame, helping the families who are victims there, and empathizing with them. Another woman who plays an active role in Ralph's becoming a perpetrator today is his mother. His mother neglects him, inflicts physical violence on him, and allows him to be physically and sexually abused by his stepfathers. Ralph cannot forgive his mother and therefore develops an abusive character by putting himself in a vicious traumatic life circle. However, when Nancy arrives and says she forgives him, he realizes what he has done and feels pain, regret, and empathy (Öğütçü, 2018, p.166). Although Ralph eventually kills himself, here the emphasis is on the woman's lofty ability to show an act of forgiveness even in such a situation. As a woman, Ingrid emphasizes that her mother should forgive him. Again, as a woman, and more importantly, as a mother, Nancy forgives. However,

whether a sensitive and traumatic subject such as sexual harassment and murder is truly a forgivable act is left to the empathy of the audience.

## 5. CHAPTER FIVE: BLASTED

### 5.1. Sarah Kane and Her In-Yer-Face Theatre

Sarah Kane is an English playwright who was born in 1971 in Brentwood, England. The author, who committed suicide on February 20, 1999, had a short life of 28 years. Although she has five plays in total, she is the most talked about the author of the 90s and her plays have a great impact on the English literature. Due to the excessive images of violence, rape, and cannibalism in the plays she wrote, she is called the “bad girl of the stage” by many critics (Aston, 2003, p.7). She does not call herself a feminist, and even categorically denies it, but this does not prevent her from mentioning gender issues in her plays. She clearly includes the power division between men and women in her plays. For instance, in her play *Blasted*, which will be examined in this chapter, it is possible to see this situation between the main characters, namely Cate and Ian. Kane deliberately handles unusual and extreme emotions in her plays; she aims to make the stage create awareness and change in the audience.

Although many years have passed since the Second World War, its effects still continue all over the world. In addition, after this war, small-scale wars and disasters continued all over the world, including the Cold War between from 1947 to 1991, the Suez Crisis in 1956, the Vietnam War in 1955, the Falklands War in 1982, the Gulf War in 1990, the Disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the Bosnian War in 1992. Therefore, the psychology of war, the destruction, and losses caused by wars continued to affect people’s lives negatively, and it took a long time for the society to heal its wounds. The traumas brought about by these, and their psychological effects on people’s lives have continued to increase. As a result of these wars and disasters, uneasiness and anxiety still continue all over the world at that time. The use and spread of television in the 20th century has an important role in increasing this anxiety situation that dominating the world. Collective awareness of fear and anxiety has emerged in the society, and people have not only been aware of wars or disasters anywhere in the world, but also have the opportunity to watch and follow them.

Described as one of the most talented and controversial playwrights of the 1990s in British Theatre, Sarah Kane aims to remind the audience once again of the gravity of the events taking place by bringing this ongoing violence to a hotel room in Leeds. She



realizes that she cannot remain indifferent to the violence and trauma experienced in the world. She actually starts to write *Blasted* about the reunion of two former lovers in a hotel room, but in the second half of the play, she changes the whole course. While she is writing *Blasted*, she witnesses the cry of a Bosnian woman on television. She reflects on how this war in Bosnia has affected people and the existence of another society that has become indifferent to the suffering in the world. In the face of this situation, Kane presents a completely different direction to her play, which started as an ordinary romance firstly and creates an unexpected repercussion in the British Theatre. The British Theater, which was in stagnation at that time, regains its vitality with *Blasted* and the play suddenly becomes the most discussed play.

The In-Yer-Face Theater, a new movement that changed the western understanding of theater at that time, emerged in England at the end of the twentieth century. Issues, such as war, violence, miscommunication, problems experienced by individuals, their desperation, indifference to each other, drug use, unhappiness, fragmentation, perversion, and sexuality form the basis of this movement. Aleks Sierz has made the broadest definition of the movement., stating “.... *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*”. This theater is outside the usual theater tradition for both the actors and the audience. Being unconventional, it gets on the nerves of the audience and shocks them. It challenges ideas that may or may not be shown on stage and breaks taboos. It makes the audience question moral norms while taking them on an emotional journey. While giving the audience a feeling of discomfort, it reminds them too much of who they really are and what is going on around them. The language used by the characters is filthy and critical topics are spoken about openly. The characters take off their clothes and have sex. There is also humiliation and sudden violence (Sierz, 2001, pp.4-5).

The In-Yer-Face Theater was heavily criticized when it first appeared. However, it soon established itself; it has attracted playwrights, actors, and directors, who think that the audience have become desensitized and it is necessary to influence them. The display of violence on the stage that started with Antonin Artaud’s “Theater of Cruelty”, with its features of awakening the audience and creating empathy in them, began to revive at the end of the 20th century with the effects of the wars and massacres that took place in various parts of the world. These features have pushed the young playwrights to write on taboo subjects, such as violence, sexuality, brutality, and rape that affect

societies individually and collectively. Such staging examples, especially directed by young writers, have been brought to life with the In-Yer-Face movement. Mark Ravenhill, Philip Ridley, and Sarah Kane are at the forefront as the most important representatives of the movement. The purpose of the plays, which are staged to shock the audience, disturb their insensitivity, annoy them, is deliberately like this. Because of the critical topics, the violent sex, and rape scenes, the writers who openly brought these to the stage received heavy criticism at the beginning; nevertheless, the In-Yer-Face Theater movement achieved its purpose and surpassed the traditional theater. The staging of all these real events, which exist in Britain as well as all over the world, aims to make people think who they really are. The plays written in this framework highlighted the dark side of the world and put the truth in the face of the audience.

When individuals witness in the theater the social events that they ignore, become indifferent and insensitive to in real life, and even the distortion of the system they are in, they can no longer escape from it, whereby they are affected by the shocking and disturbing features of the movement. Undoubtedly, extremely disturbing events, such as extreme violence, anal sex, rape, and death performed at the In-Yer-Face Theater attract the audience. Another reason why the audience are so impressed is that In-Yer-Face Theater is deliberately staged in small theater areas. Thus, the interaction of the audience with the play becomes much more disturbing. This movement that attracted the audience is actually known as the experiential theater, which resembles the features of Theater of Cruelty. The aim is to make the audience feel that they cannot escape from these realities in the world. They may be able to escape from them in real life, but live performance creates an environment where they cannot escape. With the In-Yer-Face Theatre, the traumatic events experienced by individuals in the past and their effects are also revealed. The uncertainties and darkness experienced in the world are revealed on stage in a very violent and painful way, connecting the audience to Artaud's Theater of Cruelty and the understanding that will shock them (Karadağ, 2013, p.18).

After the suicide of Sarah Kane, one of the most important representatives of In-Yer-Face Theatre, her plays were interpreted as autobiographical by a group of critics. Of course, it is quite understandable that her works, like other playwrights of the period, had reflections of the negativities they lived and witnessed in the society. While there is no consensus as to whether her plays are fully autobiographical, they are thought to be

traces of her past experiences and traumas. More specifically, the similarity of the names, namely Cate and Kane, and the fact that Kane's father, like Ian, is a journalist, raises doubts about the relationship between Cate and Kane. It should be remembered that Cate has such an explanation to Ian "*Happens all the time, .... since dad came back*" (Kane, 1995, p.9). Considering that Cate was subjected to child sexual abuse by her father, the thought that Kane may have experienced such trauma in her own past comes to the mind.

Although the plays written by Kane were described as quite shocking and disturbing even before her suicide, these characterizations doubled after she committed suicide. The opinions of the theater public and commentators are divided into two. While one group glorified Kane, the other group described her as a suicide artist with harsh criticism. While the general purpose of violence is to desensitize people to an event, the opposite is seen in Kane's plays. With the violence in her plays, she aims to prove that the theater is strong enough to leave traces in people's minds and that it will create enthusiasm in the audience that will reactivate them. When her plays are carefully read and analyzed, it is possible to prove that they are much more than just traumatic thoughts in her mind and an ordinary suicide note. She uses the dramatic form features with great skills and integrates them with the content of the play. In fact, that the characters do not specify some of their features and that their places have general characteristics encourage the audience to identify with the character. As a result, awareness arises in the audience who can empathize and allow them to remember their own experiences. The linguistic features, the dramatic text, and the visual order in the play, which Kane skillfully uses, ensure that the actual messages that the play aims to convey reach the audience (Othman, 2020, pp.52-53). These features are also prominently seen in *Blasted*. The characteristics of the soldier character are not mentioned; he does not even have a name. Any soldier can live and do all these. The hotel room where the incident takes place can also be any hotel room in Leeds or anywhere else in the world. The aim here is for the audience to face all the facts and gain awareness.

Kane's plays and other works, which she fit into her short life and are masterpieces today, are as follows: *Blasted* (1995), *Phaedra's Love* (1996), *Cleansed* (1998), *Crave* (1998), *4.48 Psychosis* (1999), *Skin* (screenplay for a short movie) (1995), *Three Monologues: Starved, Comic Monologue and What She Said* (short plays) (1992).

## 5.2. Blasted

*Blasted* is Kane's first play and it is performed at the Royal Court Theater Upstairs in January 1995 for the first time. Although Sarah Kane, who was 23 years old when her play was staged, is criticized for being inexperienced, *Blasted* manages to become one of the most popular plays of the 90s and is still one of the best examples of the In-Yer-Face Theatre. While presenting the violence, abuse, and trauma that exist in the society to the audience in an artistic way, Kane thinks that the society has developed a habitual insensitivity towards the events. She aims to reawaken the emotions of the audience by showing disturbing and traumatic subjects on stage. This psychological effect that she aims to create on the audience can be considered a kind of catharsis that results in emotional purification in the audience. While watching the disturbing scenes in the play, the audience become uncomfortable and cannot enjoy it. By empathizing with the characters, they also realize their own expectations. So they experience a kind of catharsis. Furthermore, when looking at the point the play has reached, it is obvious that Kane successfully achieved the effect she aimed with this play, despite all the criticisms she received.

The new world that changed after the Second World War brought violence and trauma to individuals for a long time. Kane's aim with *Blasted* is to communicate to the audience the message that "an individual cannot be free from violence wherever he is". It perfectly illustrates the fusion of the characters' personal acts of violence with the greater violence that is taking place in the outside world.

The main focus of this chapter is Sarah Kane's controversial play *Blasted*, which brought vitality and movement to the British theater and its characters' traumatic experiences, how they respond to them and how these experiences are reflected in their current lives. The psychological effect of this play, which was very popular at the time it was written, on the audience will be also mentioned. The negative effects of war and its accompanying destruction, disaster and traumas on people will be analyzed within the scope of trauma theory. How the traumatic experiences of the three main characters of the play, Cate, Ian, and the Soldier, create a bond that never existed between them is skillfully displayed in the play. Although it is known from the conversations of Ian and Cate that they were lovers earlier, the traumatic and violent relationship between the

soldier character who appears in the second scene of the play with them, especially Ian, is quite remarkable.

The play begins with two former lovers, who have a significant age difference, meeting in a hotel room in Leeds. In the first half of the play, Ian and Cate's personal traumas are in the foreground. Ian is a journalist. He is divorced from his wife, whom he claims to be a lesbian, and has a troubled relationship with his only son. He has a paranoid personality who doubts everything and therefore carries a gun with him. It is clear from his rhetoric that he hates minorities in the country. His demeaning style towards Cate and the others does not go unnoticed. He obviously has negative experiences with this, too. Ian, whose origin is Welsh, calls himself English and emphasizes that there is no difference between Welsh and British, thereby creating the feeling of an identification problem from his past. Ian responds to the traumatic experiences associated with it, by insulting Cate, her family, and minorities and making hate speeches towards them. In this way, he takes advantage of Cate's weakness and puts pressure on him and feeds his own emotions, feeling that he is superior. On the other hand, Cate is a weak character who comes from a middle-class family and always compromises herself to have something throughout her life. She gives the impression that she has been sexually abused by her father and older men since her childhood, and has a past that is full of traumatic experiences. She has a disabled brother and a helpless mother, and is unemployed. Under pressure, she stutters, sucks her thumb, laughs hysterically, and faints. In the second half of the play, these personal traumas are replaced by collective traumas with the participation of the Soldier in the play. An ordinary hotel room will now turn into a war zone.

From the first moment they appear on the stage, the class difference between Ian and Cate draws the attention. While Cate admires the room, Ian does not hesitate to say that he has stayed in much better ones. In the character description made in the text, the fact that Ian is 45 and Cate is 21, and what happened afterwards during scene one reveals that the relationship between Ian and Cate is abused-based. It is obvious that Cate approached him to fill the void her father left, and unfortunately, she is reliving the trauma of being sexually abused by her father as a child with Ian. Her past with both her father and Ian triggers some of her traumas and also causes her to experience some psychological problems. One of them is observed as Dissociative Identity Disorder. Hawthorn mentions both adult trauma and childhood trauma when describing the

underlying elements of Dissociative Identity Disorder. According to him, adult trauma progresses differently in men and women. While he states that war, unemployment, and financial crisis will cause DID in men, he suggests that the underlying reasons for this in women are quite personal. The conflicting and complex relationships and the negativity of the sexual experiences of women cause personality disorder in them. He points out that childhood traumas are associated with the loss of one of the parents or important caregivers for the child and exposure to physical or sexual abuse. In particular, he draws the attention to the fact that the child who is sexually abused by his or her parents experiences dissociation or hallucination in the future (Hawtorn, 1983, p.14). In this context, Cate seems to be a trauma victim suffering from DID. She faints when pressured by Ian, and although she wakes up again, she is still unconscious, and what she says before she sobered up confirms this claim:

**Cate** begins to tremble. **Ian** is laughing  
**Cate** faints  
**Ian** stops laughing and stares at her motionless body.

**Ian:** Cate?

*He turns her over and lifts up her eyelids.  
He doesn't know what to do.  
He gets a glass of gin and dabs some on her face.  
Cate sits bolt upright, eyes open but still unconscious.*

**Ian:** Fucking Jesus.

*Cate bursts out laughing, unnaturally, hysterically, uncontrollably.  
**Ian:** Stop fucking about.  
Cate collapses again and lies still.  
**Ian** stands by helplessly.  
After a few moments, Cate comes round as if waking up in the morning.*

**Ian:** What the Christ was that?

**Cate:** Have to tell her.

**Ian:** Cate?

**Cate:** She is in danger.

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

As it can be seen, the person that Cate refers to using the pronoun “she” is herself. She experiences intense stress due to the sexual abuse she was exposed to as a child and afterwards. This violence and trauma to which she was exposed to affect her personality development and she gives the impression that she is looking at herself from the outside. This situation, which occurs when she faints and loses consciousness, indicates that she

is experiencing depersonalization or detachment from reality. In short, DID can be considered as a kind of defense mechanism that Cate uses to struggle with her traumas.

As pointed out in chapter one, Freud based his theory of early trauma on childhood sexual abuse. According to him, an individual who has not yet reached sexual maturity cannot make sense of this situation. Therefore, when the event occurs, it is not traumatic for the individual. However, memories of the abuse are triggered when the victim makes sense of the experience or confronts a similar situation again. So, trauma occurs with the dialectic between the original event and the event experienced after the delay. These suppressed and forgotten memories actually continue to be unconscious and, if triggered, they return to the individual in the form of different psychosomatic symptoms (Freud, 1896). It is possible to see this situation, also called “belatedness” by Caruth in Cate. When she is humiliated by Ian in the first scene, she feels pressured and starts to stutter first, then trembles, and faints. She opens her eyes when Ian tries to wake her and “burst out laughing, unnaturally, hysterically, uncontrollably” (Kane, 1995, p. 8). She faints again afterwards. This time she starts wandering; when she wakes up, she no longer remembers what happened. However, based on her conversation with Ian, it becomes clear that Cate is a victim of sexual abuse by her father as a child:

**Cate:** Did I faint?

**Ian:** That was real?

**Cate:** Happens all the time.

**Ian:** What, fits?

**Cate:** Since dad came back.

Cate comes to the hotel, but she does not want to have sex with Ian. Considering the age difference between them, Ian’s desire to have sex with her and pressure on her and the reason why she fainted are due to the effects of her childhood and the relationship with her father. This hysterical depression and psychosomatic symptoms show that Cate was subjected to childhood sexual abuse by her father. In the context expressed by Freud and similarly Caruth, Cate, who could not fully grasp what she experienced as a child, is triggered by a similar event, and memories that she suppressed in her subconscious have now returned to her as trauma.

The fact that Cate does not feel comfortable with Ian shows hysterical symptoms and faints because she feels under pressure, which indicates a trust problem in her. Judith Herman states that abused individuals may experience trust problems, such as basic

trust, autonomy, and initiative (Herman, 1992, p. 80). Cate does not trust Ian because after a while, Ian stops calling her and diverges from her. Afterwards, when he wants to see her again, Cate agrees only because she thinks Ian is upset. As an individual who was sexually abused by her father as a child, it is thought that this sense of insecurity has come to the fore in Cate. The return of repressed traumatic memories gives symptoms in this way.

Patton, McNally, and Fremouw (2015) refer to the common reactions that an individual experiences as a result of rape or attempted rape victimization as the Rape Trauma Syndrome (p.2). In fact, the term was first used in 1974 by Anne Burgess and Linda Holmstrom. They also defined Rape Trauma Syndrome as psychological reactions resulting from sexual assault. According to Patton, McNally, and Fremouw, the victim of sexual assault shows significant psychological and physiological symptoms. Symptoms based on fear and anxiety include general pain, chills, and numbness. The victim may relive this experience in challenging thoughts and nightmares. In addition, changes are also observed in the victim's eating pattern (Patton, McNally, & Fremouw, 2015, p.2). Based on this point of view, when Cate's psychological state and traumatic symptoms are examined, it can be claimed that she also experienced a kind of RTS. When Ian wants to have sex with her, her past traumas unwittingly come to light. Her reactions seem to be due to her traumatic past, which she has not mentioned before. Although it is thought that she is already a victim of trauma due to being sexually abused by her father as a child, when we look at her past with Ian, it is understood that she has also been abused by Ian since her childhood. In the hotel room, while Ian sexually seduces her, her behaviors such as stuttering and thumb sucking are symptoms of the trauma she has been exposed to since childhood. It is noteworthy that she shows physiological as well as psychological symptoms. She says that the day after she was raped, she still hurts and is still bleeding. Ian's rape of Cate is not seen on the stage, but in the beginning of scene two, the audience immediately understand this from the clutter of the room and the scattered flowers on the floor. After Cate wakes up, she can no longer suppress her feelings during the conversation between them, and she experiences an outburst of anger and begins to use physical violence against Ian with the power of the gun:

*He picks up his jacket and begins to put it on.  
He stares at the damage, then he looks at Cate*



*A beat, and then she goes for him, slapping him around the head hard and fast.  
He wrestles her onto the bed, her still kicking, punching it at his groin.  
He backs off rapidly.*

Cate, whose trauma is triggered again, starts to stutter, then trembles, and faints again. Experiencing trauma subsequently, Cate cannot escape being raped by Ian again. Her past traumas and the traumatic experience she has at that moment due to being raped also resurface:

*.... As he comes, **Cate** sits bolt upright with a shout  
**Ian** moves away, unsure what to do, pointing the gun at her from behind.  
She laughs hysterically, as before, but doesn't stop.  
She laughs and laughs and laughs until she isn't laughing any more,  
She is crying her heart out.  
She collapses again and lies still*

Another indication that Cate is experiencing RTS is the implication that she is having nightmares when she faints. It is possible to deduce this from the sentences “Have to tell her”, “she is in danger” that come out of her mouth between fainting and waking up. Once again, it can be said that there has been a change in Cate’s eating habits due to this syndrome. Avoiding meat in the first scene, Cate comes to the hotel room in the last scene with a large sausage in her hand. Her life has changed every time because of the traumas she has experienced and is going through “She eats her fill of the sausage and bread, then washes it down with gin (Kane, 1995, p.58). In short, Cate is a victim of psychological trauma due to the sexual violence and rape she has been subjected to since her childhood.

Cate’s control over her own body is compromised by Ian’s pressures, and she feels threatened. For Cate, who is hurt by this situation, this is also a traumatic experience. Trauma brings the person face to face with the extremes of helplessness and fear (Gölge, 2005, p. 20). Since Cate cannot respond appropriately to this threat and fear she faces, both her past experiences are triggered and she will experience another trauma that will emerge in the future when she is triggered again. Ian is a trigger for Cate because of her traumatic experiences from her childhood. Cate’s symptoms when Ian pressured her are a clear indication of this. Her psychosomatic behaviors, such as thumb sucking, stuttering, and fainting are observed more as a result of the verbal violence and pressure that Ian applies to her. Ian’s derogatory and condescending remarks about the hotel staff and other people Cate mentions give the impression that this language used

by the people in the society they live in is also a part of the routine life. It is obvious that this situation causes a mental suffering for Cate, and due to this mental suffering, she has to suppress her emotions. Rape has a great impact on Cate both physically and psychologically. The mental suffering that Ian inflicted on her is a heavy burden on Cate's shoulders and it is obvious that she cannot tolerate this situation anymore. Because of this pressure and mental suffering, her past traumas are also triggered and she can be thought of as experiencing a regression to her past life. The most obvious example that brings this thought to mind is Cate's thumb sucking behavior.

Herman argues that the most basic level of victim's traumatic representations is to avoid both the traumatic event itself and talking about it (1992, p.....). It is possible to observe this situation of Cate indirectly. When Ian starts to pressure her, her first reaction is to stutter. It is also noteworthy that she does this, especially after Ian's negative and insulting statements about her brother. Obviously, Cate has a tough life. She displays a loving and protective attitude towards her mother and brother. She is bothered when her brother's condition is made fun of, but she does not talk about it. The audience sense it from Cate's reactions. It can be understood that Cate has had traumatic experiences in this regard as well. Having a protective and defensive approach towards her brother may be due to the fact that both she and her brother have been exposed to such negative behaviors in the past, and they may be even still exposed to. Ian's traumatic statements about her brother trigger her traumatic experiences and cause her to get excited and stutter:

**Ian:** Retard, isn't he?

**Cate:** No, he's got learning difficulties.

**Ian:** Aye. Spaz.

**Cate:** No he's not.

**Ian:** Glad my son's not a Joey.

**Cate:** Don't c-call him that.

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

**Cate:** Like wh-what?

One of the traumatic symptoms observed in Cate is her pathological dependence on Ian despite all that has happened. Survivors of long-term repetitive trauma can be dangerous to themselves at times. They may engage in behaviors, such as self-harming, inability to protect themselves at times of danger, and pathological dependence on the abuser (Herman, 1992, p. 117). It is possible to see this in Cate's approach to Ian. In the face of sexual violence from Ian, even if she tries, she fails to protect herself and cannot escape being raped again. Despite Ian keeps humiliating her at every opportunity, she

still worries about him. She tells him not to smoke and to take care of himself. Despite Ian's disdain for her clothes, family, and job, Cate still tends to help him. She even feeds him with her hands in the last scene. All of this is a manifestation of her pathological addiction to a perpetrator, a man who has abused her for years. It is thought that if Cate were a psychologically healthy individual, her reactions to what Ian did should have been much different. However, her traumas have made her a masochistic individual.

The other character whose traumatic past and behavior will be analyzed in the play is Ian. Although he appears as a victimizer in the first scene, it is not difficult to say that Ian also has traumatic experiences and is an individual suffering from PTSD. Based on the strange and meaningless attitudes he acts, it is clear that Ian is not psychologically a healthy individual. He implies that he has committed some crimes in the past. Obviously, he also has traumatic memories that he repressed back in his memory. He feels threatened in his seemingly ordinary life. As a result, the anxiety and fear he experiences cause him to display abnormal behaviors. He feels insecure even in that luxury hotel room. This act reminds the psychological trauma that was inherited to people after the Second World War. Hesitating to open the door, warning Cate not to open it, carrying a gun, and even being afraid of the sound of a car outside are some of his unusual and remarkable behaviors. These behaviors are supportive elements in defining him as a psychologically disturbed individual:

*He reaches for his gun.*

*There is a knock at the door.*

**Ian** starts, then goes to answer it.

.....

*Outside, a car backfires – there is an enormous bang.*

**Ian** throws himself flat on the floor.

**Cate:** *(laughs)* It's only a car.

**Ian:** You. You are fucking thick.

**Cate:** I'm not. You're scared of things when there is nothing to be scared of. What's thick about not being scared of cars?

**Ian:** I'm not scared of cars. I'm scared of dying.

**Cate:** A car won't kill you. Not from out there.

Not unless you ran out in front of it.

*(She kisses him)*

What's scaring you?

**Ian:** Thought it was a gun.

In the dialogue above and in the rest of the play, it is clear that Ian has done bad things in the past and thinks that someone will hurt him because of them. This thought can even be triggered by an ordinary doorbell or the sound of a car coming from outside.

In short, this situation brings out the memories that Ian has repressed in his memory, causing him to be paranoid in this way due to his traumas.

Ian's nervous and paranoid attitudes are very similar to Stanley in *The Birthday Party*. Both are in a state of panic and fear for an unknown reason. Like Stanley, who is uneasy at the news of the arrival of two new visitors to the Boarding House, an ordinary knock on the door or the sound of a car outside is unsettling for Ian. Herman talks about cases of "hyperarousal" after a traumatic experience. After the traumatic event, the individual develops a self-protection system with the feeling that the danger may come back at any time and acts as if he is constantly on the alert. The physiological arousal of the individual continues to increase without decreasing. Herman describes this condition as the first major symptom of PTSD (Herman, 1992, p. 25). In this case, Ian, like Stanley, has paranoid behaviors that the audience do not know their reason. Therefore, he is also called as a traumatic subject suffering from PTSD.

Dori Laub states that even if the individual is not directly exposed to trauma, by listening to it, he/she will be a participant of a traumatic event. That is, the listener will experience some traumas within himself/herself (Laub, 1992, p. 57). Ian is not a soldier; he has not witnessed a war or a war zone experience before. However, in the second scene, he becomes a witness to the trauma of war as a listener, since the character of the Soldier, who is included in the play, tells him about his war experiences and memories. Although Ian does not pay much attention to the Soldier's experiences at first, he is disturbed by what he hears as he listens to what the Soldier tells, especially about what was done to his girlfriend. When the Soldier asks him how he would feel if he had been forced to do all this himself, he replies, "*can't imagine it*". Based on this answer and the digressions in the play, such as "*Imagines harder. Looks sick*", Ian is now partially traumatized as a listener.

Things will change for Ian, who is a victimizer until the end of the second scene, when the Soldier enters into the scene. At this time, he will experience what he has done to Cate at the beginning of the play. Though Cate expresses that she does not want to have sex with him many times, he still forces her and when he cannot get the response he expects, he takes advantage of Cate's weakness and unconsciousness and rapes her twice. Herman claims that rapists have a number of arguments to blame or justify rape. One of them is the ineffective resistance of the victim (Herman, 1992, p. 49). During the

rape, Cate again develops traumatic and hysterical symptoms; her uninterrupted hysterical laughter and fainting are a clear indication of her past and present traumas. However, this situation is not important for Ian because he gets what he wants and he thinks that he is not guilty in this case:

**Ian:** Cate, I'll shoot you myself you don't stop.

I told you because I love you, not to scare you.

**Cate:** You don't.

**Ian:** Don't argue I do. And you love me.

**Cate:** No more.

**Ian:** Loved me last night.

**Cate:** I didn't want to do it.

**Ian:** Thought you liked that.

**Cate:** No.

**Ian:** Made enough noise.

**Cate:** It was hurting.

In fact, it is observed that Ian is deeply aware of the physical and psychological violence he inflicts on Cate. Still, although there is no concrete or direct sign of regret for this, it is thought that his own past traumatic experiences are the reason. The fact that he is disturbed by Cate's laughter when he comes to the room naked and immediately dresses again gives a clue in this regard. It is possible to make an inference on this subject by making use of the views of Judith Herman. Herman claims that traumatic symptoms that cannot be spoken in trauma cases manifest themselves in the form of bodily pain by the individual over time. Trauma victims begin to complain of somatic symptoms some time after the traumatic experience (Herman, 1992, p. 62). A notable example of the trauma that occurs somatically in the play is Ian's constant coughing. This action may be due to his internalized traumas that affected his life. While talking to Cate, though he acts as if he is making fun of himself for this situation and not taking it seriously, it seems that, in fact, this situation gives him severe pain. It should be remembered that a similar situation was observed in Ralph in *Frozen*. After confronting his dark past and traumas related to it, it was seen that his physical pain emerged this time. Although Ian had one of his lungs removed last year, no solution was found and he still suffers from this condition. Ian does not seem to have much hope for himself, although Cate tells him he should quit smoking and maybe even get better if he gets a transplant. He implies that he has to endure the pain, and is aware that it will get worse and worse, like an ignored trauma repressed somewhere in the consciousness.

Another situation where Ian is similar to Ralph in *Frozen* is that he does not care about Cate's wishes; he only wants to satisfy his own pleasure. Ralph also did not care

about what Rhona wanted, considering her a source of terror and pleasure. As Van der Kolk states, the needs and desires of others do not matter for individuals who were abused as children. What matters is the individual's own desire and pleasure (van der Kolk, 2007, p. 231). Ian's verbally bullying Cate implies that he still thinks that he has the right to have sex with her disregarding her boyfriend, and this brings to the mind the possibility that, just like Ralph, Ian is an individual who was abused during his childhood. Ian's attempt to dominate Cate in this regard is actually a representation of his own traumas, and also the post-traumatic stress disorder he is experiencing:

.....  
**Cate:** Ian, d-don't.  
**Ian:** What?  
**Cate:** I don't w- want to do this.  
**Ian:** Yes you do.  
**Cate:** I don't.  
**Ian:** Why not? You're nervous, that's all.  
*He starts to kiss her again.*  
**Cate:** I t- t- t- t- t- t- told you. I really like you but I c- c- c- c- can't do this.  
**Ian:** (*kissing her*) Shhh. (*He starts to undo her trousers.*)  
*Cate panics.*  
*She starts to tremble and make inarticulate crying sounds.*

While many Rape Trauma Syndrome studies have been done on female victims, recent studies have shown that men who have been victimized by other men also experience symptoms similar to those seen in women. It is claimed that men can also experience elements of RTS after victimization (Patton, McNally, and Fremouw, 2015, p.2). Raped by the Soldier, Ian's whole life changes suddenly. While he was a victimizer, a rapist a while ago, he is now a rape victim. He expresses his regret after this traumatic experience. He remembers his son, and worries about him. At this time, he expects mercy from Cate. He is in pain and needs Cate. In the scene where he asks Cate to kill him, the audience may think that Cate asked him the same thing before. For the audience, this situation can be thought of as poetic justice.

Kane herself says that she deliberately included the theme of war in the play. In the modern world they live in, people are indifferent to the events around them. Incidents, such as violence, rape, and kidnapping in the society have become commonplace and even become a laughing stock between Ian and his friend as a journalist. As they talk about an incident that is related to a British tourist, Ian makes it clear that he does not care at all. It can be understood from his answers and his smile

that the same insensitivity applies to the person on the other end of the phone. Influenced by the war in Bosnia, Kane wants to show the audience the traumatic bombing scene she created to direct them to this, thus revealing that their ordinary lives may be destroyed in a while, and their identities may become vulnerable to fragmentation. At this point, Kane's magnificent success makes the audience a part of a traumatic war zone. It is thought that there is a connection between Ian's brutal blinding by a soldier from the war zone and Kane's processing of the events in Bosnia. Blinding Ian as an individual is a disaster for him. When evaluated from a social point of view, this event is also very important in terms of reminding that the media is indifferent to these events and ignores them. The incident that takes place in England reminds us of the human tragedy in Bosnia. What is emphasized by this is that violence and rape can happen anywhere at any time, regardless of the geographical distance (Parlak, Biçer, and Yeşilyurt, 2010, p.39). In short, the existence of a social trauma comes to the fore when the characters transfer their individual traumas to each other in a way that affects the whole society.

Psychoanalyst Abram Kardiner, in his article titled "The Traumatic Neuroses of War" (1959), defines re-enactment of the traumatic event as a fixation on the traumatic event. According to him, the individual may act as if the original traumatic situation still existed even in the past. This can be seen both in soldiers who have witnessed atrocities in war zones and in any person because he claims that any individual can be affected by wars with such heavy destructions and can experience the state of being stuck in this traumatic event and reviving it (p.246). Based on this point of view, it can be claimed that from the first moment he is included in the play, the soldier character seems to have been stuck in traumatic events both he witnessed in the war and of which he is the perpetrator. Being seen with a sniper's rifle in front of the door of an ordinary hotel room in Leeds is the first illustration of this. Even when there is no danger for the Soldier, he forcefully pushes the door and neutralizes Ian. Behaviors such as making a passport check, suspecting the presence of a second person in the room, and looking for her can be explained by this situation. As will be discussed in detail in the following discussions, the Soldier has become a traumatic individual due to his experiences in the war zone and has clearly observable traumatic behaviors. Even from the beginning of the play, it is clear that the Soldier will reflect traumatic behaviors due to his repressed traumatic memories and the brutality of the war.

With the trauma representation of the soldier character, Kane is actually trying to expand the audience's awareness of trauma. At the same time, she vividly demonstrates that the excess and intensity of traumatic experiences can re-create trauma, which in turn can further harm both the traumatic individual and the people around them. Although the personal traumas of the Soldier during the war were suppressed at that moment, they are not completely lost. In his memory, somewhere in the back, it is waiting to appear at any moment. In any related or triggering situations, the suppressed feelings of the events that he witnessed and perpetrated during the war return to him as a trauma again in the present. As a result of his traumatic experiences, the Soldier does not hesitate to re-live the situations that disturb him. He repeatedly inflicts harm and pain on those around him by implying that he has to. This presents the most obvious consequences of the Soldier's unresolved traumas to the audience. It is possible to see this situation in a wartime experience that he conveyed to Ian:

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

The Soldier tries to express the indescribable traumas of the war by transferring his own experiences to Ian. By doing this, he presents the chaotic and meaningless reality of war to the audience. He talks about the ignored and unspeakable issues, and presents these as his own personal trauma. Because of his traumatic war experiences, the Soldier's acting manifests itself as a perpetrator and cannibalism. The fact that he killed himself after these actions is a way of expressing the trauma that these terrible actions he was the perpetrator of as a soldier had inflicted on him. This situation can be explained by the indirect relationship of the trauma with the referent (Caruth, 1996, p.7), thus implying the deep destruction of the unity of signifier and signified.

Freud and Bruner indicate that past traumatic experiences are the cause of hysteria symptoms. Although it was initially expressed as a traumatic disorder seen only in women at first, hysterical symptoms were also observed in soldiers returning from the



war later on. Freud and Bruner stated that this hysterical state could be brought under control with speech therapy and called this situation “catharsis”. It is very clear that Kane does not impose a mission of healing and getting rid of his traumas on the soldier character she created. The instinct to transmit the trauma experienced by the Soldier is also included in the play. In his conversation with Ian, he tells what happened to his girlfriend. Afterwards, he narrates his horrifying experiences, of which he was the perpetrator. While this process is considered as a witnessing process for Ian, it can be considered as a cathartic transfer process for the Soldier. For the audience, this means getting to know the inside of war with its horrifying side. However, when the Soldier’s transfer of war experiences to Ian is considered as a catharsis, it comes to mind that he has a similar end with Ralph, who is one of *Frozen*’s protagonists. Dori Laub says that while narrating trauma, reliving it will re-traumatize the individuals more violently rather than relieve them (Laub, 1992, p.67). Just like Ralph, who comes up against his traumatic past after talking to Agnetha and Nancy, but he could not stand the heavy burden of it and commits suicide, the Soldier here cannot stand the trauma of war. He transmits his experiences to Ian, then inflicts both verbal and sexual violence on him. After a while, he cannot bear to relive all these and commits suicide.

Dori Laub divides the witnessing process into three parts. These are “the level of being witness to oneself within the experience, the level of being a witness to the testimonies of others and the last one; the level of being a witness to the process of witnessing” (Felman & Laub, 1992, p.75). According to this classification, the testimony of Ian, who becomes a witness after the Soldier tells him about his war experiences and his traumas, can be classified as “*the level of being a witness to the testimonies of others*”. Considering that he witnesses the testimony of the Soldier, it is possible to say that he is influenced by them. When Cate says she is going out again to get something to eat, he tells her not to go out because it is too dangerous. Since Ian is not a soldier who has experienced a war, it would not be wrong to make an assessment that his speech as if he knows the danger outside is related to the trauma he witnessed because he listened to the traumatic memories of the Soldier. As a result of the Soldier’s raping Ian, torturing him by sucking his eyes, and the bomb falling on the hotel room, at this time, he becomes a trauma witness directly. That is, at this time, he is a trauma witness in the category of “*the level of being witness to oneself within the experience*”, which is the first level of Laub’s classification because at this time, he experiences the brutality

himself. However, what makes Ian a victim of trauma here is that, unlike the Soldier, he cannot experience a release situation, as he cannot transmit his experiences to anyone else in any way. When we look at the play as a whole, it is out of question for Ian and the soldier characters to work through their traumas in any way. It can be said that the only person who does this is Cate. According to Buse, the reason Cate persistently wants to bury the dead baby is because she wants to mourn the past, thereby implying that she prefers working through her past traumas rather than acting out (Buse, 2001, p.181).

Revenge is another situation highlighted by traumatic experiences in the play. Traumatized individuals think that the feeling of revenge will relieve them a little. However, this is not true. The revenge fantasies that the victim repeats in his thoughts unwittingly increase his torment even more. The violent fantasies of revenge he contemplates on can be as frightening and intrusive as the images of the original trauma. Besides, it can increase the victim's traumatic fear towards the original event. In fact, revenge does not reduce or change the damage done to the victim. On the contrary, it exacerbates it. Traumatic individuals who put their vengeful fantasies into action, such as combat veterans committing cruelty, are not able to recover from the symptoms of PTSD and are subject to much more severe pain (Herman, 1992, p.135). The traumatic experiences of the soldier character in the play, in which he was both the victim and the victimizer, especially the rape and torture of his girlfriend by other soldiers, have made him a traumatic individual who secretly produces revenge fantasies. The Soldier seems totally haunted by the images and experiences of the war. He imaginatively identifies himself with other soldiers who tortured and killed his girlfriend. Thus, besides being himself as a victimizer and a perpetrator, he appears to be a witness of the war he was already in. Therefore, he does to Ian the same thing that has been done to his girlfriend. However, this does not bring him any relief. Rather, his trauma eventually exacerbates and he commits suicide. According to Herman, this is related to the fact that the conscious ego can resort to defence mechanisms when exposed to trauma. In such cases, the ego of the individual may reflect what has happened to others or resort to other defence mechanisms in order not to encounter the traumatic event again. In this case, it would not be wrong to say that the Soldier reflects his revenge fantasies and cannibalistic acts resulting from his traumatic experiences to Ian as a defence mechanism.

In Caruth's book, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), van der Kolk and van der Hart mention in their article titled "*The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of*

*Memory and The Engraving of Trauma*” that some traumatic memories may return in the form of physical sensations, frightening images, and behavioral re-enactments. They state that some of them even may return as a combination (p. 164). The rape of Ian by the Soldier, that is one of the most terrible scenes in the play, is related to this situation. Other soldiers in the war zone raped and tortured his girlfriend and killed her. Undoubtedly, this terrible situation is extremely painful and traumatic for the Soldier. By making identification here, the Soldier does the same to Ian. Freud defines the identification process as imitation and states that violence is in the nature of this process. According to him, this process is “...cannibalistic, devouring, incorporative identification that readily turns into the hostile desire to rid oneself of the other, or enemy, with whom one has just merged” (Leys, 2000, p. 30). The Soldier is obviously influenced by those experiences and forces Ian to bear witness what he has gone through by telling him about the war zone. However, Ian’s disregard for what he tells triggers the Soldier’s traumatic memories, and his experiences emerge in the form of behavioral re-enactments and cannibalistic actions:

**Soldier:** Even me. Have to be.  
 My girl –  
 Not going back to her. When I go back.  
 She’s dead, see. Fucking bastard soldier, he –

.....  
**Soldier:** Col, they buggered her. Cut her throat. Hacked  
 Her ears and nose off, nailed them to the front door.

.....  
**Soldier:** You don’t know fuck all about me.  
 I went to school.  
 I made love with Col.  
 Bastards killed her, now I’m here.  
 Now I’m here.  
*(He pushes the rifle in Ian’s face.)*  
 Turn over, Ian.

**Ian:** Why?

**Soldier:** Going to fuck you.

**Ian:** No.

**Soldier:** Kill you, then.

**Ian:** Fine.

**Soldier:** See. Rather be shot than fucked and shot.

**Ian:** Yes.

**Soldier:** And now you agree with anything I say.

*(He kisses Ian very tenderly on the lips.*

*They stare at each other)*

You smell like her. Same cigarettes.

*He gets up and turns Ian over with ne hand.*

*He holds the revolver to Ian’s head with the other.*

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

*The Soldier is crying his heart out.*

*Ian’s face registers pain but he is silent.*

*When the **Soldier** has finished he pulls up his trousers and pushes the*

*Revolver up Ian's anus.*

**Soldier:** Bastard pulled the trigger on Col.

What's it like?

.....

*The **Soldier** grips **Ian**'s head in his hands.*

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

*He does the same to the other eye.*

**Soldier:** He ate her eyes.

Poor bastard.

Poor love.

Poor fucking bastard.

According to Herman, when the individual does not assimilate the traumatic situation, he can instinctively repeat it. For this reason, traumatic individuals tend to re-create the atrocities they have experienced in a real or disguised form. In fact, by doing so, trauma survivors may inflict even more harm on themselves (Herman, 1992, p. 28). The situation of the Soldier above is an example of this case. He consciously re-enacted his trauma, as Herman calls it. But at the end, he himself suffers from even greater damage. In fact, that the Soldier does not have a name in the play indicates that this type of traumatic behavior is not unique to a single soldier. It is stated in many different studies that PTSD is seen in most of the soldiers who experience the war zone. Since it is not clear where the soldier character in the play comes from and for which side he fights, the traumas he has experienced and the brutal behaviors resulting from these traumas are considered inevitable traumatic experiences for all soldiers who have experienced war all over the world.

Another point that draws attention in the play is the trust problem in the characters. Erikson states that the trauma experience can destroy an individual's trust not only in himself but also in his family, environment, society, nature, and even God (Erikson, 1995, p.198). The existence of this situation is observed in all three characters in the play. Although Cate comes to the hotel because she is worried about him, she no longer trusts Ian. Ian often says he loves her to make love with her, but Cate does not believe him. She feels inside that Ian is doing bad things. She already knows that he is cruel to her. She often tells him this openly during her conversations: "*I hate you*", "*Liar*", "*You're cruel*". It is clear from such statements that Cate is aware that Ian is not a reliable person. The real person in the play who draws attention with his skeptical and paranoid attitudes is undoubtedly Ian. He even thinks that he will die soon because

his health is not good enough to live longer. When he feels disturbed by the knock on the door, and when he hears sounds from outside and says that there are people who want to take revenge on him, he actually expresses his mistrust of the world and his surroundings. His traumatic experiences have made him suspicious and distrustful of his environment and family. He does not trust his divorced wife, son, or even God:

**Cate:** Will you have to go to hospital?

**Ian:** Nothing they can do.

**Cate:** Does Stella know?

**Ian:** What would I want to tell her for?

**Cate:** You were married.

**Ian:** So?

**Cate:** She'd want to know.

**Ian:** So she can throw a party at the coven.

**Cate:** She wouldn't do that. What about Matthew?

**Ian:** What about Matthew?

**Cate:** Have you told him?

**Ian:** I'll send him an invite for the funeral.

**Cate:** He'll be upset.

**Ian:** He hates me.

**Cate:** He doesn't.

**Ian:** He fucking does.

.....

**Cate:** God wouldn't like it.

**Ian:** There isn't one.

**Cate:** How do you know?

**Ian:** No God. No Father Christmas. No fairies. No Narnia.  
No fucking nothing.

**Cate:** Got to be something.

**Ian:** Why?

**Cate:** Doesn't make sense otherwise.

**Ian:** Don't be fucking stupid, doesn't make sense anyway.  
No reason for there to be a God just because it would be better  
if there was.

Likewise, what the Soldier told Ian shows that he has also lost his trust in the world and humanity because of his wartime experiences. Traumatic experiences have almost imprisoned individuals inside their brains. The feeling of trust starts to develop from the moment a baby is born. It is the most critical and fragile accomplishment of childhood (Erikson, 1995, p.197). Therefore, it is inevitable for individuals who cannot successfully overcome this critical period when they are children to be skeptical and distrustful of the environment, people and the whole world, considering the traumas they experienced during their adulthood.

Buse (2001), in his book *Drama Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama*, evaluates all these events from a different perspective. He mentions the possibility that the Soldier character may be a reflection of Ian's traumatic experiences

repressed in his memory. Therefore, not all of what is displayed on stage may be a simple reality. Situations such as the arrival of the Soldier and a civil war outside suggest that Ian may have experiences that he wanted to forget, but he could not erase from his memory. What makes Buse think about this is that there is no other witness to Ian's experiences other than himself. To illustrate, Cate is never in the room at the same time as the Soldier, which raises the possibility that the Soldier is nothing but Ian's imagination. Other cases that support this include Ian's regressing into a child-like state when Cate is not in the room, peeing under him, masturbating, eating the baby, etc. In these scenes, the lights blink and get darker; an atmosphere of uncertainty is created on the stage. The Soldier's description of raping a 12-year-old girl may be Ian's replaying of memories of sexually abusing Cate as a child. During the conversation between them, when Ian comments on this incident as "charming", the Soldier asks him if he has done this before, he says that if he did, he would not forget. The Soldier's answer also supports Buse "...you would", thus implying that Ian may have done all of this and repressed back in his memory to forget. Besides, the soldier character may be also Ian's inner voice, which is the embodiment of these suppressed memories of him (p.179). A similar claim was made for Stanley in *The Birthday Party*. For Stanley, the possibility was mentioned that the other characters in the play might be incarnations of his own traumatic memories. Just like him, Ian cannot cope with the traumas from his past, and these traumas may have emerged as the acts of the Soldier in his phantasms. Similarly, it can be interpreted that he is re-traumatized while trying to release his traumas by assigning such a mission to a representative character he created in his mind.

As a member of the society surrounded by recent wars, genocides, disasters, and the trauma they brought with them, Kane's *Blasted* fell like a bomb on the British stage, even though it was subjected to extremely brutal criticism. What is criticized here is actually the minds of people in the society and the pain they ignore. Especially since the theater is a live performance, the effect of the events staged is extremely stronger on the audience. While Ian's rape of Cate is not directly seen, the scene where the soldier rapes Ian is shown to the audience live, deliberately to emphasize that the suffering experienced in the society and the world cannot be ignored. The rape scene of Cate is interpreted as the rape of the comfort zone of both the characters and the audience. Kane wanted to create an awareness in the society by preferring to reflect the modern period as it is rather than a drama that imitates life (Güneç, 2021, pp. 298-311). Just as no one

helps the women in Bosnia, no one helps Cate. The blood flowing from her legs when she returns to the hotel room with food is proof of this. In this way, Kane aims to make the audience empathize with the characters and with those who experienced the disaster in the world, especially the victims of the massacre in Bosnia. Judging by the reaction of the audience while watching the play and the criticism of the play afterwards, it is certain that she succeeded. The pain that society ignores, the traumas that Cate, Ian and the Soldier experience are actually the same pain and traumas experienced by those in that society in the past. Considering the period in which the play was written, Kane, the characters, and the audience are stakeholders of a common past. Therefore, the traumas of wars and disasters are also traumas of individuals in the society. The reason for the reactions of the audience is that the play triggers the traumas that they suppress and hide in their memories.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, Edward Bond's *Saved*, Bryony Lavery's *Frozen* and Sarah Kane's *Blasted* are analyzed through the perspective of the trauma theory that lies bare traumatized individuals' representation of trauma, their traumatic experiences, and responses to trauma. This study argues that these plays represent traumatized characters who are mostly helpless victims entangled in traumatic events and their traumatic past. The study, which is analyzed in terms of the psychological, sociological, and historical development of the concept of trauma, remembering, bringing back, forgetting, and witnessing within the scope of trauma theory, is based especially on the Caruthian understanding of trauma and also the views of theorists, such as Sigmund Freud, Shoshana Felman, Judith Herman, and Dori Laub.

Few studies have been conducted on the multifaceted analyses of trauma in plays written by postmodern playwrights. This study aims to fill this gap by using selected plays by playwrights from different theater movements as primary sources. The representation of historical and social experience in plays undoubtedly reflects the individual memory of the playwrights. The plays are, in a way, fictionalized expressions of the witnessing of the traumatic experiences of the playwrights. The use of different perspectives in the analyzed plays allows the audience to visualize the characters' personal past experiences and representations of trauma. Consequently, it is possible to observe the individual, social and cultural dimensions of trauma. The past of the characters, their current actions, the way they perceive themselves, and the society they live in, are shaped by the political, social, cultural and psychological processes in which they are traumatically imprisoned.

The negative effects of the devastating events of the twentieth century such as war, genocide, and death on the individual and society have alienated people from both themselves and the society they live in. It has been the responsibility of literature and writers to ensure that these facts are not forgotten. Such traumatic events have been the subject of the literary works, and the catastrophic atmosphere of the society is also reflected in these works.



Traumatic experiences in all the plays are wounds inflicted on the souls of the characters that hurt them. These are experiences that prevent the characters from clinging to life, questioning the meaning of their lives, and consuming their life force. Generally, in the plays, the message is given that it is inevitable to experience trauma wherever there are violence and people. Natural or man-made disasters have taken over the lives of the characters, bringing with them anger, fear, and anxiety, and have made them victims of trauma. In relation to the traumatic events they have experienced, their quality of life has decreased and they are stuck between the past and the present. Though they are living in the present, the traumas they have been subjected to force them to relive their past over and over again in different ways, such as dreams, hallucinations, and traumatic actions resulting from triggers. From time to time, the characters have been able to face and accept their trauma. In *Frozen*, Nancy's decision to forgive Ralph by giving up her revenge can be considered a step toward her recovery. However, the mood of the characters gradually deteriorated and they became inextricably depressed, whereby Stanley's mental health at the end of *The Birthday Party*, and the endings of the soldier and Ian in *Blasted* confirm this or by harming those around the characters directly or indirectly, whereby they have become victimizers while they were victims earlier just like Ralph in *Frozen*.

Harold Pinter, Edward Bond, Bryony Lavery, and Sarah Kane are among the most important playwrights of England of the period, who describe the social life reshaped after the Second World War in a very realistic and clear way in their plays. The playwrights bring the collapsed society and traumatic past of England to the fore in their plays. The plays studied in this study reveal the effects of the new world order on individuals and society established after the Second World War. The characters were directly or indirectly affected by the negativities brought by the war. The aim of the authors is to show the traumatic pasts of the characters drawn into the social structure of power and violence, how they represent these traumas, their resistance, and recovery. The plays, which are formed according to different theatrical movements, basically show similarities and differences in the way the characters represent trauma.

It has been determined that the selected plays are feasible for being analyzed in terms of the trauma theory. The situations in the inner worlds of the characters, the individual and social traumas they are exposed to are closely related to the concepts of

the trauma theory. In order to better analyze the plays from the perspective of the trauma theory, it has been better to probe deep into the depth of the circumstances of the characters and their experiences, and convey them to the readers. By considering the traumatic past of the characters in the plays, it is good to emphasize how the traumatic experiences of the characters affect their present lives, how these traumas cause feelings of guilt and fragmentation, how they are transported to the next generations, and whether the characters do anything to cope with these traumas.

Pinter, Bond, Lavery, and Kane have created a unique agenda by bringing the trauma situations that remained behind in the memories of individuals and societies, which are suppressed and could not be healed to the agenda again with these plays. The live performance of the plays on the stage reaches the traumatic memories of the audience as well as the characters, and thus, the traumas that actually exist but remain silent are revealed through the unique transfer process of the theatre. In this context, these plays reveal the emotional destructive impact of trauma on the society by recalling and reminding of the traumatic experiences of the individuals and the society. Faced with past traumas, the audience can experience the traumatic memories that are delayed; they may even take the first step of recovery for their own traumas. *The Birthday Party* which is a mysterious dark comedy about pressure and threat, was not liked when it was first staged and was removed from the show. *Saved*, on the other hand, took much attention of people and caused many political uproars. Similarly, *Frozen* was considered a troubling and disturbing play both for the reader and the audience. Also, *Blasted* caused an emotional disturbance for the audience and received a great deal of criticism since presenting violence, abuse, and trauma is too much to handle by the society.

*The Birthday Party* reveals how much the trauma of Stanley's unknown past has taken over him. His life in the boarding house became more complicated as a result of the arrival of two strangers, and the character, who was threatened and oppressed by these strangers, aggravated the trauma he experienced as the events he experienced triggered his subconsciousness and brought back his traumas. In the play, which was fictionalized over the main character Stanley, references were made to collective traumas experienced socially as well as individually. The traumas and lack of sense of belonging caused by the reasons that required Stanley to flee from his place of residence and come to the boarding house are emphasized. Not to mention where he came from,

Stanley is not happy to be at the boarding house either. However, he has nowhere else to go. His past experience about his failure to be a good artist and his rejection by his family played a vital role in orchestrating the impact of trauma he later experienced. Perhaps, his bad experience with his dad was reenacted with the appearance of Goldberg, who plays the role of the patriarch. Pinter has clearly included this traumatic process and the experience he had with his family when he was a child.

As a political thinker, Bond in his play *Saved*, conveyed to the audience how the Second World War and the social and political events in the new world that emerged after this war caused individual and collective trauma to people. The traumatic experiences of the characters sometimes came together in the common traumatic memory and led the audience to collective traumas. In *Saved*, the fact that the traumas experienced by the characters can be transferred from generation to generation is also included and examples of traumatic experiences inherited from her parents to Pam are exhibited. The author aims to make the audience question the alienation of individuals in the society, both from themselves and from each other, and their loveless, emotionless and apathetic lives. While doing this, he stages the events and the traumas caused by these events and the cycle caused by the past traumas as they are without decoration.

In *Frozen*, an evaluation was made on the causes and consequences of their traumatic experiences, based on the emotional states of the characters. Like the trauma victims in other plays, these characters are sometimes stuck in their distant and sometimes recent past, and live their present under the influence of the past. It was noted that in *Frozen*, unlike other plays, the playwright signals that they can heal by making the characters face their traumas. The issue of child abuse, which is still important today and was a social taboo at the time the play was written, is revealed by the playwright with all its reality. While analyzing Lavery's pointing out that such a sensitive subject should be viewed from a different perspective, the dark comedy elements she used from time to time made us think that this is a controversial subject. It is emphasized that Ralph, one of the main characters, is a victimizer due to the fact that he was a victim of trauma once. Although Lavery received severely criticism that she wrote the play and was inspired by a real event, the traumatic effect of child abuse, which was a taboo in the society, is presented in its entirety in the play.

The Second World War, which took place from 1939 to 1945, deeply affected the lives of millions of people all over the world, both during the six years it continued and afterwards. Although she was born 26 years after the war, Sarah Kane is a playwright who reflects the changing society of post-war England from political, social and economic perspectives in her plays. *Blasted*, a play inspired by the Bosnian war, depicts the dark, painful, and traumatic sides of the world. The play reveals how the traumatic traces of violence make the individual unloved and unhappy. Revealing the violence and trauma experiences of the war through In-Yer-Face Theater, Kane managed to reach the traumatic memories of the individual and the society with *Blasted*, re-enacting the silence of the trauma with the distinctive features of the theater, ensuring that its voice is heard. In this context, she revealed the emotional damage of trauma on the society through the characters. *Blasted*, which confronted the audience with their social and individual traumas, also became the voice of those who remained silent. The play has been a reminder area where the traumatic experiences of the society, which remained silent and in the dark, are confronted by the audience.

In general, it is noteworthy that the playwrights include autobiographical elements in the plays. They conveyed the dilemmas arising from the traumatic situations that they and the society were in and were experienced by the characters. Pinter, who was taken from his family at the age of nine for security reasons and placed in a place by the lake, conveys his own feelings and thoughts to the audience through Stanley. Bond, who was born in a catastrophic world full of suffering and trauma, states that the area he lived in began to be bombed when he was five years old, and these disasters continued until he was 11. It is quite natural that these influences take place in the works of Bond, who is affected by this terrible world. In *Saved*, the bombing scene in Central Park was thought to be a slice of his own life. The same is true for Bryony Lavery, who wrote about topics that had become taboo during the years she wrote *Frozen*. She also has traumas due to her mother's long illness. In addition to these traumas, the fact that she witnessed the events in the society was also effective in creating her characters. Sarah Kane's characters have also largely been the voice of her own traumas, although there is no consensus on whether her plays are autobiographical. When evaluated in general, the plays give the details of a traumatic society, emphasizing that the adaptation of the characters to this society is largely the cause of the psychological and cultural trauma they experience.

The defense mechanisms that emerge in the face of different stimuli, the effects of past experiences and childhood traumas on the subconscious and how they shape their present, the absence or dysfunction of parents, violence, forgetting or suppressing past memories are evident in all plays. It is seen that the important power that directs the lives of the characters is actually the subconsciousness. Emotions that they suppress subconsciously appear in the future. The point that most of the trauma theorists, especially Freud and Caruth, whose works have already been used in this study, emphasize is that trauma does not appear at the time of the traumatic act, but later. Freud called it “latency” and Caruth called it “belatedness”. When the characters are analyzed, it is seen that unconsciously their bodies suppressed the traumas they experienced as children in some way and that they emerged as a result of a trigger in their later years. In *The Birthday Party*, Stanley escapes from his past and settles in a boarding house, and his strange attitudes are triggered by the father figure represented by Goldberg. In *Saved*, Pam’s lack of love and compassion that she could not see from her parents eventually made her obsessed with Fred. In *Frozen*, Ralph is repeatedly subjected to violence and abuse by his mother’s lovers, and he subconsciously stored them. As a result, he has become an abuser in his adulthood. Cate, whose trauma we see subconsciously in *Blasted*, has allowed Ian to rule her own life, with the fact that her father’s abuse has subconsciously developed a sense of submission. By the same token, the soldier’s long exposition to trauma, both as a civilian and as a soldier, makes him exercise traumatic acts against people.

Another important point to emphasize in the plays is the parent figures and the relations of the characters with them. Parents are either problematic, absent or dysfunctional. For instance, Stanley never mentions his mother, and there is no room for her even in his memories. The impression was that his negative past experiences with his mother might be the reason behind his negative attitude towards Meg. He refers to his father once in the play, which shows that his father also played a role in Stanley’s suffering from PTSD. In one way or another, Stanley unconsciously blames his mother for his suffering, because his mother did not do anything to protect him from his abusive father. In *Saved*, there is an example of indifferent parents that can be seen publicly. Harry and Mary’s behavior and their lack of love and carelessness towards Pam, and even the fact that they are absent in Pam’s life, have made her a traumatized and problematic individual. As a result, Pam is also an insouciant mother to her own baby.

Besides, she chose a father for her baby who is just as indifferent and irresponsible as she is. There are two different mother images in *Frozen*. Unlike the mother figure in other plays, Nancy is a mother who fights for her missing daughter and wants justice. On the other hand, she is a source of trauma for her other daughter. She is the missing and nonchalant mother figure in Ingrid's life which causes her to have traumas. Considering his behavior, thoughts and attitudes, the main reason for Ralph, who has been a traumatic and problematic individual since his childhood, is again his mother. By allowing her lovers to abuse her son, Ralph has become a rapist and a murderer. Again, there is no father figure here. Looking at *Blasted*, a dysfunctional mother is seen, and a father model that is absent now but is also abusive when he is. Cate's past experiences and relationship with her father, which seems to be abusive, are observed in her dependent and troubled relationship with Ian.

Another important element that calls the attention in all plays is violence and the trauma it causes. When evaluated in the context of the characteristics of the characters and the plot, the most general result is the fact that individuals who are exposed to violence and who are taught violence become individuals who use violence later since they cannot express their bad experiences and they suppress their feelings. Moreover, being exposed to violent and traumatic experiences makes the individual a traumatic and violent person who seeks to transport trauma to other individuals. Based on this perspective, Stanley in *The Birthday Party* is an introvert who lives by himself, but his traumatic past haunts him. He attacks Lulu and smashes the drum. He reperforms his traumatic past physically. Being used to the life of violence and pain, the characters in *Saved* demonstrate violent and traumatic acts. For example, the main characters, Harry and Mary, lost their mental health due to the pain of their sons lost in the war, and this caused Pam, whom they exposed to emotional violence, to learn about violence. Just like her own parents, Pam has become an unhealthy, traumatic individual who normalizes violence by remaining silent and unresponsive to physical violence against her baby. The brutal killing of an innocent baby by stoning by a group of young people shows the last point reached in violence. Violence in *Frozen* is also a phenomenon that surrounds Ralph and drags him to unhappiness and being a victimizer. He is an individual who was exposed to violence as a child and grew up by learning about violence throughout his life. He does to others what is done to him, and his own trauma causes others to experience trauma. In *Blasted*, where pain, trauma and all kinds of

violence can happen anywhere at any time, the elements of verbal and physical violence are used most strikingly on stage. There are insults, humiliation, pressure, and harassment in almost every dialogue. In short, all the selected plays emphasize that the most important problem of the world is violence and the inevitable trauma it brings is a reality that drags humanity into an endless doom. Although the language and style used by the playwrights while depicting the violence and the trauma it causes are different from each other, the emotion that is intended to be conveyed to the audience is basically the same. In this context, it is an undeniable fact that all the playwrights were extremely successful.

The characters are surrounded by inevitable traumas as a result of the events they have experienced. Although the plays are not written as trauma drama, the traumatic pasts of the characters are thought to have come to the fore in the creation of them. Though Pinter and Bond are playwrights who have personally experienced the war, the violence that Kane portrays in *Blasted* and the trauma it brings are much more intense. Pinter articulated the situations related to the factors, such as threat, fear, anxiety, identity, uncertainty, and communication arising from the lack of confidence through Stanley. The focus is on Stanley's repressed fear and emotions as an individual. The extent of trauma, which is portrayed individually in Pinter's play, is handled collectively in Bond's. By addressing the complex life of humanity in an intellectual and political context, Bond embodied the fact that war, violence, and traumatic acts are experienced as normal, and that people who cannot correctly judge what happened shape the society. Despite being written 30 years after *Saved*, *Blasted* has a lot more violence and trauma. The recent trace of the war has already been erased from Kane's society, but the post-war anger has not subsided. The playwright created a reminiscent effect on the audience by bringing the pain and trauma of a war that broke out in any part of the world to the stage. The development of technology and the growing power of capitalism have made individuals more angry, unhappy, lonely and cruel, and have turned them into traumatized individuals from within. Comparing between Pinter, Bond, and Kane, it seems that there is quite a difference in intensity in terms of the portrayal of trauma. The portrayal of individual trauma has become collective with Bond, and has reached universality in Kane.

In *Frozen*, which is called as “trauma drama” by Christina Wald, unlike other plays, real moments of trauma are not staged. However, the play reflects the subject of extremely intense traumatization. In the play, which offers pre-traumatic and post-traumatic perspectives, the issue of child abuse, which shook the moral values of the society at the end of the 90s, has become the most important point of moral standards. In the play, almost a sympathetic perspective is provided to a child abuser, as well as a serial killer, despite all the bad things he has done and the heavy traumas he has inflicted on others. Unlike *Blasted*, the emotional boundaries of the audience are expanded in *Frozen*.

All in all, the playwrights brought the audience together with the traumatic memory of the characters, on the one hand, and made them witness the traumas experienced. Besides, the audience not only witnessed but also faced their own traumas as individuals of the same society, and saw the fact that they themselves are already indifferent to these traumas around. In this context, Pinter, Bond, Lavery and Kane not only created traumatized characters, but also reflected the devastating effects of the Second World War on individuals, their identity crises, and their quest for being themselves, thus revealing the individualization and search for free self that came to the fore with modernization. It is believed that those playwrights create trauma plays, which have become a well-known genre in the postwar era.



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