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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



THE ECLIPSE OF APOLLO:
VIOLENCE AND PASSION IN THEATRE OF THE BREAK

GRADUATE THESIS

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THE ECLIPSE OF APOLLO:
VIOLENCE AND PASSION IN THEATRE OF THE BREAK

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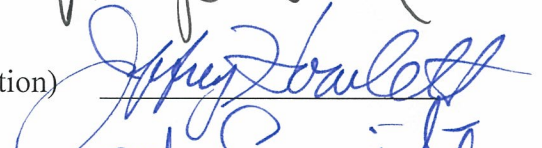
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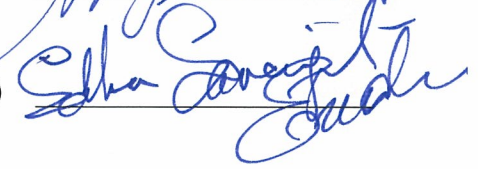
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“I, Esra Kartal, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.”


ESRA KARTAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ÖZET.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. THE NATURE OF DRAMA.....	9
2.1 THE ROOTS OF GREEK DRAMA.....	11
2.2 THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN DRAMA.....	14
3. THE STRUGGLE AND PASSION IN GREEK DRAMA.....	18
3.1 THE EURIPIDIAN TRAGEDY AND MEDEA.....	18
3.2 THE ‘ORESTEIA’ and “THE MIND”.....	28
4. MADNESS AND REASON IN AMERICAN DRAMA.....	37
4.1 THE UNTOLD STORY OF ELECTRA.....	37
4.2 A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE: A PLAY ABOUT MADNES AND DESIRE.....	51
5. CONCLUSION.....	56
REFERENCES.....	58

ABSTRACT

THE ECLIPSE OF APOLLO:
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ESRA KARTAL

/Master of Arts in American Culture and Literature

Advisor: Associate Professor Mary Lou O'Neill

September.2014

The purpose of this thesis is to claim that even though there are centuries between the plays, they share and display the basic fight of the human nature which happens between the reason and the insanity. The duality of the mind actually gives life to existence of tragedy. However, concept of “madness” which is caused by this duality mostly results in violence that cannot be controlled in spite of the reason. This idea suggests that the ups and downs of the characters in the plays that have a significant effect on the course and the results of the events.

For the study, two ancient Greek plays were chosen, Medea, and Oresteia. In parallel to these plays, two American plays were chosen to make the comparison with the Ancient Greek Drama, Mourning Becomes Electra and Street Car Named Desire. These plays all record moments of break-down: times when the system—the family, the state, the social norms—can no longer be seen as effective, functional or natural. The existing order is shown to be false and corrupt. This moment of break applies at all levels: Apollo and the critique of reason, social structures and the epistemological limits they impose, and indeed the genre of drama itself. When these systems show themselves to be old, static and oppressive, this type of theatre emerges to question the old

order. Violence, passion and madness are deconstructive. The rational does not always explain power structures that confine us. Indeed, its purpose is to deny them. Reason alone cannot create compelling drama.¹

Key Words: Madness, Violence, Drama, Tragedy

¹ Gaston Bachelard coined the term epistemic break to refer to a paradigm shift. This concept is everywhere evident in Foucault's use of epistémé, as the limits of knowledge arising from power/knowledge relations.

ÖZET

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

Esra Kartal

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı, Yüksek Lisans

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Mary Lou O'Neill

Eylül, 2014

Bu çalışmanın amacı aralarında yüzyıllar olsa bile insan doğasındaki akıl ve deliliği temel alan tiyatro oyunlarının benzerliklerini incelemektir. İnsan doğasındaki bu ikilem tragedyaya hayat verir. Ancak şiddetle sonuçlanan “delilik” konsepti aklın gücüne rağmen kontrol edilemez. Bu fikir, tiyatro oyunlarındaki karakterlerin inişli çıkışlı ruh hallerinin olayların akışını ve sonuçlarını değiştirdiklerini gösterir.

Bu çalışma için Antik Yunan tragedyalarından “Medea” ve “Oresteia” Modern Amerikan Tiyatrosundan da “Mourning Becomes Electra” ve “A Streetcar Named Desire” incelenmiştir. Bu oyunların ortak özelliği sistemin-aile, devlet, sosyal normlar-düzgün işlemediğini göstermeleridir. Bulunan düzen bozulmuştur. Bu çöküş anı her seviyede görülür: aklın hakimi Apollo, sosyal yapılar. Bu sistemler baskıcı ve eski görüldüğü anda bu tür tragedya eski düzeni sorgulamak için ortaya çıkarlar. Şiddet yeniden şekillendirir. Tutku yeniden şekillendirir. Delilik yeniden şekillendirir. Mantık her zaman güç yapılarını açıklayamaz. Tek başına tiyatroyu yaratamaz.

Anahtar kelimeler: Delilik, Şiddet, Tiyatro, Tragedya

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ESRA KARTAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Drama has been an important artistic way of reflecting and observing the inner world of a person. It was used as the demonstration of the self or/and the society in ancient Greek tragedy and it has been seen to show the same emotions of the individual or/and the public. Drama sometimes reveals the sorrow that a person suffered and makes the audience pity, or shows the joy of the moment. Therefore, apart from all the significant components of the play itself, “character” plays an important role. Aristotle who has been an important name in the drama history, states in his fragmentary treatise of the fourth century B.C. “*The Poetics*”, each character is different and this difference is related to the balance of spiritual principles in psyche. Character analysis becomes the foremost step of understanding the plays and thus given prominent importance. Therefore, two questions arise here. If the character affects and changes the course of events, how does madness which arises from the conflict of the good and evil in the mind affect the character and the course of events? Another question is what kind or kinds of similarities can be seen in Ancient Greek and Modern tragedy. These are the two most general questions which will be the subject matter of this thesis study. The study does not claim to find final answer to the questions as a definitive determination is not within the scope of this type of project, but it will speculate on some often overlooked similarities in the approach to character in Ancient Greek and modern tragedy.

There are many important theoreticians, writers and scientists that can help us understand the struggle between essential fight of what are conventionally described

as good and evil in the soul of the self. Michel Foucault, Nietzsche and Camille Paglia are important writers that will be referred to in this study. However, the real question is how these names and their works will help us to answer the questions that are stated. Actually, the most apparent reasons are as the main question is the conflict in the soul, Frederick Nietzsche's "*Birth of Tragedy*" and Camille Paglia's "*Sexual Persona*" seems to help us understand the connection between the clash and the representation. Michel Foucault's "*The History of Madness*" will guide us about the result of this clash which is madness of the passion, as will his subsequent work on knowledge/power relations.

Nietzsche describes the idea of aesthetics under his own terms and he draws the frame that the birth of tragedy as the combination of the two divergent gods of art, in origin and purposes, Apollo and Dionysus. These two different types of perspectives thrive unlike each other and come together to create an influential work of art. He refers to these contrast forces as the most important opponents in the history of the Greek drama. These two contrasting instincts are not just the part of the Greek culture and history but they are also the basic insights of a human being. Therefore, while trying to understand a character in a tragedy, these insights might be helpful to uncover the hidden or unsolved sides of the soul. Dionysus represents intoxication, out-of-control passions and contrasts with the order and structure of Apollo. The dark undersides of human emotions are symbolized by Dionysus.

Apollo represents the "brightness" as he is the god of light; thus, reason and "enlightenment". In art, he embodies-harmony and order. He provides balance and perfection for those who feel trapped in the world. Apollo gives peace and trust that make life possible and worth living. Apollonian art is about the rhythm in form and style. Change is not a highly accepted concept in Apollonian art since it is not

considered safe. In order to escape and forget about the cruel side of the life, a person must dream and find reconciliation in the dreams. Apollo expects from his followers to show moderation and self-control since arrogance and excessive feelings are considered as the part of the “barbarian” and “titanic” world. Nietzsche gives the examples of Prometheus who suffered because of his “titanic” love for the mankind and Oedipus who fell due to his excessive wisdom. However, the balance and perfection that he provides is also the reflection of the inner self of Apollo since in Greek culture gods are like humans with certain powers.

His brother Dionysus, on the other hand, is the initiator of the chaotic and destructive force. Unlike Apollo, Dionysus is the representative of change, creativity and the forgetfulness of the self. The core of the Dionysian art is “intoxication” which rises, intensifies and fades into the surrender of oneself to nature. In contrast with Apollo, Dionysian art is accepting life as it is and embracing the suffering that comes along with it.

When these definition and explanations are interpreted, it can be seen that Nietzsche is actually theorizing the birth of the tragedy as a balancing of the forces represented by the two unlike brothers. These different brothers, Apollo and Dionysus, are the two “brother emotions, the good and the evil” that we likewise cannot separate in the self.

Nietzsche provides the idea that art was naive and structured before Dionysus. The spectators were finding the relief and consolation in the form of art and help them forget the pain they experience because of life. After Dionysus enters the world of art, he brings chaos and joy. At this point, only feeling of relief cannot dominate the idea of art, yet ecstasy is the indispensable part of it. Dionysus presents the

opposite idea dreaming which is waking and for Nietzsche this is the most significant side. He believes that the complete existence of Apollonian art, with its form and consolation, is the reflection of suffering which is provided by the Dionysian art. Nietzsche's most effectual claim is that Dionysian art gave life to Apollonian art and Apollo cannot live without Dionysus. The excessive feelings show themselves as the truth and the pain and the suffering gave birth to ecstasy. When the Dionysian mood is ascendant, the Apollonian systems of reason and order are shattered. Nevertheless, in those shattered moments, the Apollonian art showed itself more determinedly and as baleful as death. In accordance with Nietzsche's ideas, the unification of Apollonian and Dionysian art spreads to all people and shows the strongest duality of the nature which empowers the artistic mark. This idea is the strongest idea and this idea shows the reader what makes the artistic or tragic experiences possible.

It is significant to see how these two different forms of art cannot be defined apart from their opposites. Apollo gains meaning with Dionysus just like reason is impossible without the contrary category of madness. In fact this duality is the essence of the tragedy and this duality makes the play or the tragedy real in the eyes of the audience. When we think of a piece of art such as a painting, both Apollonian and Dionysian impulses can be seen. The unity of shapes and colors, the brightness come from Apollonian impulse, yet the creativity of the shapes and the actual deep feeling are the reflection of the Dionysian mood. In parallel with this example, the tragedy is the representation of both. The basic aspects like the protagonist or the flaw of the character can be seen in almost all Greek tragedies. These aspects create a kind of harmony among the plays. However, although each play has the same essential parts, every one of them represents a different feeling or emotion. Also,

Dionysus creates the drama, the conflict, but, in most classical drama, all must be restored to reason and order in the conclusion of an art work—its resolution.

Camille Paglia starts with a more basic explanation as she states “In the beginning was nature”. However, as man starts to form the society which is “an artificial construction”, to escape and hide from the devastating force of the nature. Mankind formed the ideas of God which is constructed on the ideas of punishment and fear. Nonetheless, the idea of God and religion and generosity of the nature help them survive.

As she continues to talk about the relationship between the man, god and nature, she begins to talk about Apollo and Dionysus and how they identify both nature and art and surely the connection between them. For her, the “Apollonian” strategy is the pretty. The known nature like flowers, birds finds its way through Apollo and embraces the life, Dionysus on the other hand present the vulgar pleasures of the nature.

Both Paglia and Nietzsche describe a similar dynamic through the gods Apollo and Dionysus. The balance of the nature is acquired with them as the human nature. The conflict of the mind and the soul is like the never-ending battle for mankind. Paglia uses the same definitions as Nietzsche; therefore, it will be more purposeful to analyze the tragedies through their definitions and explanations.

The substantial connector of the two streams mentioned above will be Foucault which will be evidence for how tragedies embrace reason but end with madness through the passion since I believe this idea is mentioned by both Paglia and Nietzsche. Moreover, the madness which grows out of emotions and passions will be seen through the violence that the characters will show.

Foucault defines the different kinds of “madness” and gives the history of madness. The type of madness that will be purposeful for this thesis is the “madness” that finds its way through passion.

Violence has been one the chief instincts of man throughout the history. Although humanity has desired to be powerful and civilized, it couldn't deny the very basic instinct which actually played an important role in shaping history and societies. As violence has apparently always been part and parcel of human life, humanity has dealt with it in many different ways and that's how it appeared in many different forms in history and literature. Violence was also a quality of the Dionysian orgies.

Madness is one of the strongest states that resulted in violence. In the past, people were shut down from the society to preserve peace and safety. They were put in ships and made to sail far away from their home. For them, sea is not just the means to carry them away from the society that shut them away but it is the means to purify them. The mad man was in his own special cell in which he couldn't get out, yet sailing through the unknown waters to free his mind. He was the prisoner in the freest roads. That's when he became the central motive of illusions in the shallow shores of courage and fear.

Mad men, once feared and isolated figures of the society, started to gain power in literature. People with mental illnesses were no more the ridiculous and humiliated individual who were hiding in shades but were the centre of the theatre itself as the person to reveal the truth. In spite of being drowned in the emotional blunting, madness or the mad men reminds everyone the truth itself because it is in the very heart of truth. After these times, madness was seen as the duality between the soul

and the body or good and evil. Madness was the leading conductor of the chorus of the weaknesses. It was seen as the ruler of the evil in the soul yet it led to goodness as well.

Foucault defines madness in many different ways. Nevertheless, the most remarkable definition is when madness masquerade itself as reason. Madness lost its very own features which identified its structure. It soon became the crucial part of the reason which acted with reason. No matter how hard it tries to disguise itself, the passions of the human soul are the cause of madness. Foucault quotes from François Boissier de Sauvages as he says “The distraction of our mind is the result of our blind surrender to our desires, our capacity to control or to moderate our passions...” Enlightenment thinking seeks to eliminate the passions, emotions and the body from the privileged conception of the human being as reasonable. Passions must be suppressed to achieve humanity. However, for Nietzsche both our reason and our passions are the elements that make us human and indeed they are necessary for art. Foucault states Sauvages’ ideas as the basic definition which is the flow of the emotions and desires, but he also adds that these ideas just state the moral priority in an unclear way. Foucault states that the observable fact of madness and the possibility of the passion have essential connection. Actually, the idea that is defined by Foucault shows some similarities with Dionysian idea that is described both by Nietzsche and Paglia. Mind keeps our passions under control. It helps us behave in a reasonable and compatible way in the society.

When the word passion is defined, it is impossible to define with one or two words. The word itself embodies many meanings and feelings in it. Passion is a strong feeling of love, hate, anger or the combination of all three. Therefore, it is important to note that although these feelings are considered the essential sides of

human nature, they are also seen as the weakness of the brain because the brain, symbol of intellect, is privileged in the modern world of the west. Western science is seen as the product of the Apollonian mind. For western culture identity and naming are two important aspects since if the name is known, it is much easier to control.

Not only is it one of the most powerful causes of madness, passion actually forms the very origin of madness. As a result, passion and madness have been kept in a very close relationship. This close relationship which is caused love, hate, or other passions can result in violent indications as though it is a “movement against itself”.

As I mentioned above, I believe that Foucault is the best way to link the interpretation of Nietzsche and Paglia and to show that no matter in which time it is written, in the very basics of the tragedy, the main conflicts or the dualities of the individual are presented. The further step taken is the results of these dualities.

2. THE NATURE OF DRAMA

“All tragedies are finished by a death; all comedies are ended by marriage”

Lord Byron

It cannot always be said that all tragedies are ended with death, yet the concept given by Byron seems quite right since tragedy has a kind sincerity that can most of the time be equal to death.

Aristotle states in his *Poetics* a very basic definition for drama which is the imitation of an action. Action is very important in the tragedy since it needs to be serious and important and also it should be happening to very important people like kings or warriors so that tragedy will be accepted by the audience. In tragedy, the hero or the heroine of the play makes a great mistake and suffers from that mistake.

For Aristotle, man is distinguished from other animals since he can imitate better than all of them and also he finds “pleasure” through imitation. Therefore, it can be said that men finds pleasures in presenting and viewing the imitation since he can learn from the imitation. Aristotle doesn’t mean imitation of man but the action that man represents. Man has certain characteristic qualities, yet happiness or misery is the action that is imitated in the tragedy and that’s the idea that makes the play important.

Aristotle points out some important features that make a good tragedy. The unity is the first important feature that needs to be handled by the playwright because

if the plot is the combination of the actions, the actions represented need to be “cohere”. As it is mentioned, the tragic hero cannot be an ordinary person. The tragic hero must a person that must matter. In addition to this characteristic, the tragic hero should have a “flaw” which is called hamartia. The flaw is important because the plot of the play will be based on this flaw. Hybris is considered as one of the characteristics of the tragedy and it is connected to Hamartia or the flaw of the hero. The hero abuses the power that he has and basically the events in the play get more and more complicated. Then, with two features, tragedy is complete, the “Peripeteia” and “Anagnorisis”. Peripeteia happens when the action takes its course not by the doer but by the flow of the events. Peripeteia occurs when the actual course of events find its way. Anagnorisis which can be translated as the recognition or the discovery is considered as the final aspect of the tragedy. In this part, the unknown facts are cleared and the story reaches its final destination. The end of the play gives the spectator empathy and complete understanding as the events are finally cleared.

When we analyze the social world of the tragedy, it can be said that the tragic figure is mostly alone and isolated. This separation can partly be because of the nature of the character or by the society itself. The tragic hero considers himself or herself special and different from the society. The tragic hero although very powerful and bold always makes the mistake of seeing or feeling himself above the society and its norms. In spite of the reasonable chorus that advices him with virtue and self-discipline, in the final step the tragic hero suffers because of his mistake. As he is alone and isolated, he is the one that suffers the most and alone.

As we shall see later in this study, the main characters whom the plays are constructed upon actually present the features mentioned above. For instance, Medea represents a tragic figure as she is mostly isolated and alone. The further she gets

from the society, the more she suffers. It wouldn't be right if the characters are analyzed only. The course of events also helps the tragedy to come to life. For example, if the course of events is analyzed in "*Mourning Becomes Electra*", it can be seen that Lavinia's story finally reaches "Anagnorisis" and everything is revealed. Although she has done many things during the play, still the audience may have pitied her.

2. 1 THE ROOTS OF GREEK DRAMA

Athenian life had given life to extraordinary situations because of the social and political life. Wars had great importance and their results had affected the Athenian Golden age. Despite all the changes occurred in the society, the public needed a kind of continuity in their lives. Therefore, it can be said that Athenian life is the harmony of novelty and stability. The most crucial stability was the Greek religion and its traditions. It can be stated that Greek tragedy was the best reflection of the mixture of old and new. It was old and familiar for the people since it was related to wars, legends and gods. It was new for the public because it was an ongoing creativity and the demonstration of innovation on the stage.

In the classical period, Athenians were known for their strong relationships to Gods. People as individuals or groups had to show their respects to Gods in order to win their love and approval. At that time, if you respected and honored the Gods, they would help you and protect you even sometimes from themselves. Therefore, Athenians offered statues or festivals to honor the Gods. Actually, the offerings and the festivals helped Athenians to develop in art and social connections. This remarkable relationship between Gods and humans helped Greek Tragedy appear.

The word “tragedy” was basically about plays presented in the festivals held to honor the Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility. The plays’ plots basically represented the violent conflict both human and divine. The play often ends with the resolution of the problem but most with substantial suffering.

Greek tragedy is considered as the foundation of the drama. It is a dramatic and choral presentation of an action usually taken from a legend or remote history and containing events of a certain amount. It is required to have religious, political and moral significance. Its political importance mostly disguised since the moral and religious values are highly presented.

When we look at the origin of both tragedy and comedy, Aristotle states in his work *Poetics*, both tragedy and comedy started in creativeness. Tragedy started as choral poem to honor the god Dionysus. All drama was presented to honor Dionysus since he was the god of wine but most importantly god of fertility. During his festivals, he was honored with rituals and plays.

The ancient theatre didn’t have any commercial purposes at the beginning, yet as they gained popularity among people, rich citizens provided money for the actors of the plays and trained the choruses. The plays were presented in the festivals and it was a tradition for one dramatist to present three plays and a satyr-play with three actors. Three dramatists took part in the festivals and prizes were given according to the evaluation of the judges.

The main themes of the plays were mainly chosen from the historical legends which had an important role in Greek history. The manifestation of fiction was avoided in the plays but originality was highly supported and the legends that are used were mostly changed to go well with the writer’s aim. The legends were just

“frames” for the authors and usage of the legendary parts is one of the aspects that make Greek tragedy so powerful and everlasting. As Aristotle states the most influential tragedy should handle important people and events since only a calamity of great significance can devastate the audience and that can have the most tragic effect on them. The victorious legends of past were blended with innovative imagination of the writer. The mythological gods were presented as “human gods” with flaws and they were the inseparable part of the plays. The main characters, the heroes and heroines, were perpetually portrayed as “normal” humans, with human faults as well as human virtues. This is also one of the strongest aspects of the tragedy that made it believable and acceptable in the eyes of the audience.

The tragedies or the plays were written in verse form. Although it was important to have strong literary text, the demonstration of the play on the stage also had a very important role. The audience was not only interested in the theme or the plot, but they were also interested in the costumes and how the actors were performing on the stage. The chorus which is accepted as the backbone of the Greek Tragedy wore very sophisticated costumes and masks and had to memorize very detailed and long lines of the plays. They also had to know the dance routines of the play and had to create the harmony with the tragic actor. The tragic actor with their costumes and masks had to represent the words in the heart of the tragedy out loud since every individual could hear them. The most important demonstrations of tragedy were seen in a competition in the city’s main festival which was held for Dionysus and board of citizen judges awarded the first, second and third prizes to the competing playwrights at the end of the festival. To guarantee the fairness among the plays and playwrights, all tragedies has the same number of cast who were all men. As all the actors had the lines with special rhythm, the musical role of the chorus’ role boosted the overall

poetic nature of Athenian tragedy. As it is stated before, the plots of the tragedies were both human and divine, so when representing the divine powers in the play, special effects were used and they were also one of the most significant sides of the play. The actors unlike most of the playwrights were quite popular in the society especially if they performed well on stage.

The playwright was also the director, producer even one of the actors. They spent all their time and energy to present the tragedies. These people were also the ordinary citizens of the Athenian society since they fulfilled their military and social obligations in the society. The best known Athenian tragedians are Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.

2. 2 THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN DRAMA

American life just like Athenian life gave life to American drama. The history of theatre in America goes back to the second half of the 17th Century, when there is evidence of attempts being made to stage plays in some of the less Puritanical of the early American colonies. After the Independence War, some comforting rules and regulations were brought to theatre. Mostly Shakespearean plays such as “Othello” or “Macbeth” were staged. With the help of the relaxing regulations, many British artists chose to come to the continent to start a new life. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, new theatres were built in New York and this time is considered as the birth of Broadway. In 1861, the Civil War had a temporary impact on theatre, yet later it was used for political purposes. As the Civil War ended, the American theatre didn't stop expanding. However, the plays were mostly under the influence of British or European drama.

The period just after the World War II seems to be the repetitions of the same ideas and motives. The playwrights were trying to give meaning and form which would differentiate American drama from English or European drama. However, as the authors were trying to create a novelty in the plays, it imprisoned the American theatre within the bounds of eclectic. Although being eclectic, it can be said that great plays were written and presented at those times yet there was a kind of dissatisfaction about the products.

It will also be wise to consider the social and political events which shaped the literature and the drama. Drama was kept apart from all the genres since people were looking for something that would please them without tiring them or taking their time. Novels were too long for most of the people, yet the plays were at most four hours and all the audience needed to was to sit and watch the play. Therefore, plays were convenient for people. As stated above, American people were dealing with the effects of the war and theatre seemed a great cure for it. This demand gave a great opportunity to the theatre to flourish and in spite of the similar motives; most of the great examples of the American theatre were seen in this era.

It can also be stated that the plays that were written and presented were “dramatic” or “theatrical” rather than literary, yet the poetic style that was used by the playwrights struck the audience. It will noteworthy to state that “realism” was the leading line at that time. Most of the plays were using the same “realism” in the plays like “Detective Story” or “The Autumn Garden”. The productions took over the literary style and the playwrights relied on the music, stage design and light.

Actually, it is quite important to “define” or “redefine” some of the terms. The first one is the “form”. What is meant by form in this century is the “distinctive

structure of a play or simply the style that the playwright has used. The second term that needs to be clarified is the “idea”. The idea does not mean subject matter, yet the combination of the playwriting and production that make the play entertaining or amusing for the author. However, I strongly believe that the most important term to be defined is the word “modernity”. It is significant to define this word since this study is aiming to bring the old and modern. Modernity basically means simplification in this context. The term is closely used with the rise of the realistic drama and stage production.

The very first idea of modern theatre that distinguishes itself from the other ideas is the idea of freedom. This idea makes the modern theatre productive and it challenges the whole idea of “decorum”. As it is stated above, the new concept of the theatre has represented the instability of the modern world. Nonetheless, it does not mean that modern stage is very far away from the “form”. It is certain that the modern stage has been home to discussions and opinions, but still it has carried the structure of the drama in itself.

The most crucial question is how these two different times are similar and how can we see the link between each other? These two different times share many similarities as much as differences. It is certain that Modern drama has been affected by the Athenian drama. Therefore, when the root of the drama is considered, it is always safe to go back to the beginning. What I mean is, the idea of the theatre started with the appreciation of the two Gods “Apollo” and “Dionysus”. These two gods who are just the opposite of each other actually have made the perfect combination for centuries and this idea is still in the essence of the theatre. Athenian drama had its own costumes, mask and rules which were all about the rules, but it also gave the passion and feelings of an individual. The modern drama has tried to

simplify the “form” or the rules, and represent the reality of the life on the stage, yet still it has its own form. It may be worth noting here that the political culture of post-WWII America is extremely conformist. The cold war (red scare) dictates a very authoritarian social order. That may be the Apollonian structure of the times. The artists in all media were targeted by McCarthy’s committee on anti-American activity. This severe limitation of artistic freedom may have invoked a more forceful expression by playwrights of the Dionysian principal in order to break from the oppressive limits of the social structure.

3. THE STRUGGLE AND PASSION IN ATHENIAN DRAMA

3.1. THE EURIPIDIAN TRAGEDY AND MEDEA

The first idea should be to try to understand the tragic idea, the tragic way of thinking about life which made the Greek plays what they are. In the dramatic methods such as in *Medea*, there is a purposefulness or positiveness, which is not explained by mere absence of something, a mere lack of harmony between the poet and his form.

Unlike Sophocles, Euripides focuses on tragedy as a group. Sophocles concentrates on one person who is the tragic hero. This person is good but has his flaws. That's why, Sophoclean drama is held up by Aristotle as exemplary drama with the representation of the hero as "like us". In the Sophoclean drama, the tragic hero is drawn to his ruin by his flaws and the circumstances. Still, Euripides is representing the audience another perspective of the tragedy which is that humanity is subject to scourge and the situation is nothing but just the scenery to the outburst of the unreason. It is not the character itself but her passion which leads to unreason is essential.

In *Medea*, a play which seems to depend entirely on Medea's own will and tragic personality, there is a noticeable distinction between Medea's personal tragedy and Euripides' tragic conception. If a wider tragic reference is not held, the play becomes a melodrama. There is not any struggle in the soul of the victim between this passion and another, no suggestion that the passion is the one thing that ruins a

nature. To Euripides, it is a universal force which shows its disastrous power through this victim, something which the end of Medea suggests.

As with plot, so with characterization, Medea is an extreme character. The character is wanted by Euripides only as a vehicle for the passion, and the other characters are the sufferers. The whole trend of the play forces us to anticipate them as victims in a tragedy which makes them greater than their own. Euripides is projecting one tragic element of human nature into Medea which ruins not only her but also the social group.

According to Aristotle's point of view, a dramatist should show the "man in action" not theories in discussion. Euripides' characters are thinkers such as Medea. The dramatist himself actually speaks through his main characters and the one of the most important elements of the Greek Play which is the chorus.

For instance, why did Medea murder her children? The answer is not just the thought that she is a barbarian but as she states "I recognize what evil I am about to do, but my passion is stronger than my counsels: passion is the cause of worse crimes". She is actually aware of the fact that she is going to commit the worst crime, and she can evaluate the results but her reason can't influence her emotions. She speaks to her own passion as if it was the second personality she has been suppressing for long but not anymore.

For Euripides, the evil in the human soul is deep and rooted in heredity and the reason is incapable of controlling it. The dramatist observes this reality and he finds the essence of the man's tragedy which is the conflict of the reason appetites which are embodied in one personality and always in a fight to defeat one another.

When Medea is analyzed in a simple way, the story is basically about a merciless protagonist who is obsessed with the revenge for her unfaithful husband by murdering his new wife, his father-in-law and his sons. On the surface, it is a very brutal story since it is considered the first play in which the “mother” kills her own children to avenge her honor.

Medea may have not been loved by the audience at that time since it is ethically shocking. Medea appears to be the granddaughter of the God of Sun. Actually; she is the representation of the dualities. It is not certain whether she is mortal or divine or she is a just suffering woman because of her husband or something superior such as divine justice. Besides all these confusing thoughts, this play presents a different ending. Medea is an over-passionate woman who escapes after killing her own sons. She doesn't quite suffer like the other protagonist such as Oedipus as he pierces his eyes or Antigone as she kills herself. On the contrary, she leaves the audience with the most disturbing crime scene and troubling idea of how a mother who can slaughter her own children in cold blood. Thus, because of its refusal to admit the privileged status of reason and its avoidance of obvious moral categories, in my reading this play presents a model for the drama of unbridled spirits.

No matter what the story seems to be, *Medea* represents “timeless” feelings for the audience. It shows the despair, humiliation, and cruelty of a woman who was cheated by her husband. Also, the play shows some social struggles that she faces in Athens. She is different from the other females in Athens in the fifth century. She is barbaric and being barbarian can cause embarrassment to her husband. In addition, her feminine role is very much different from the other females of the time since her femininity shows “masculine” notions of “cleverness”. An ordinary woman at that

time wouldn't have the courage to do even the small amount of what Medea did. Certainly she transcends cultural limits; I think her difference reveals that we are all barbarians at some level and surely her origin strengthens this side of her. Hence, I strongly believe that these qualities may have failed with fifth century audience, yet the qualities and actions that she presents are the reasons that she is a "timeless" character. However, the more important point is, such dramas recur at certain points in history since this category rebels against the status quo, that shows the dark and uncomfortable levels of human experience, so its reception may always be controversial.

Aristotle defines his tragic hero in a more different way. For Aristotle, the hero must be "like us" because we will not fear or pity for someone unlike us. However, Medea is not like that. Medea is no character compounded of good and bad, in whom what is bad tragically brings us down in ruin what is good and we certainly cannot fear for her as for one of ourselves.

Medea is certainly not a villain; she loves her children, loved her husband Jason and she was very popular in Corinth; but it is the essential part of this tragedy that she was never really different from what we see her to be. It is a strong point that she is represented not as a good but a passionate woman who drops into horrors. At the very beginning of the play, when the nurse comes out of the house and tells her wishes about how everything could be different and the current situation that Medea suffers. As she says:

Ah! Would to Heaven the good ship Argo ne'er had sped its
course to the Colchian land through the misty blue Symplegades, nor
ever in the glens of Pelion the pine been felled to furnish with oars

the chieftain's hands, who went to fetch the golden fleece for Pelias;
for then would my own mistress Medea never have sailed to the turrets
of Iolcos, her soul with love for Jason smitten, nor would she have
beguiled the daughters of Pelias to slay their father and come to
live here in the land of Corinth with her husband and children, where
her exile found favour with the citizens to whose land she had come,
and in all things of her own accord was she at one with Jason, the
greatest safeguard this when wife and husband do agree; but now their
love is all turned to hate, and tenderest ties are weak. For Jason
hath betrayed his own children and my mistress dear for the love of
a royal bride, for he hath wedded the daughter of Creon, lord of this
land. While Medea, his hapless wife, thus scorned, appeals to the
oaths he swore, recalls the strong pledge his right hand gave, and
bids heaven be witness what requital she is finding from Jason.(Medea1-
23)”

The nurse draws the quick frame of the mental situation of Medea to the audience and how Jason, her beloved husband, dishonored her. Medea gave up so many things to be with Jason and for Jason, yet he has discarded her and their two sons. Also shows that her passion is strong enough to authorize murder for the man she loves.

In fact, with these words, even the Nurse knows that Medea is not an ordinary woman who lives under the shadow of a man. She has been a warrior and when war is considered, it is all about brutality and the inner self which comes up in the surface. Even Medea accepts this reality as she says *“I would rather stand three times in the battle line than bear one child”*. Medea concealed her Dionysian side

because of her love for Jason. However, her Apollonian side, a life in which she chose to be the “captive”, a life with a husband, house and children considered to be the “normal” actually betrayed her. It is a true fact that she is suffering because Jason betrayed her, but her biggest suffering is about the betrayal she did to herself. That’s why she unleashes the passion and the violence that she has been chaining in her soul for a long time. Indeed she feels like a slave. She even feels that not just she but all women are captives and her actions will bring peace and honor to them. As she says:

“Honor is coming to the female sex.

Women will be free from the bitter tongue of slander.” (Medea 419-420)

Apart from the characterization, the general tone of the play is the deed of violence. The violence which is caused by the crime in Medea is more different than the violence and crime we see in Oedipus or Orestes. Again the nurse states:

And she hates

her children now and feels no joy at seeing them; I fear she may contrive some untoward scheme; for her mood is dangerous nor will she brook her cruel treatment; full well I know her, and I much do dread that she will plunge the keen sword through their hearts, stealing without a word into the chamber where their marriage couch is spread, or else that she will slay the prince and bridegroom too, and so find some calamity still more grievous than the present; for dreadful is her wrath;

(Medea 36-43)”

It is a fair point to state that Medea is not a tragic heroine that we know. She is too extreme but she is also very simple. The definition of the tragic hero finds another meaning with her character and her decisions. She certainly suffers but with

her decisions the people around her including her children suffer. In other tragedies like Antigone or Oedipus, we see the main character or the tragic fall and his or her life is ruined. The other characters suffer because of the fall of the tragic hero or the heroine. Medea, on the other hand, suffers and prepares her fall, yet she drags the other characters with her. She expresses her feeling throughout the play and she actually states her purpose from the beginning of the play. She wants the death of her children, her husband and fall of the whole house. As she states:

“I have suffered in my wretchedness, suffered woes

which call for great laments. O accursed children

of a hateful mother, may you die

with your father, may the whole house fall in ruin” (Medea 112-115)

Medea is a tragic figure but not in the sense that Aristotle mentions. She has a passionate nature, she cannot control her love or hate. For instance, she betrayed her father and killed her brother for the love of Jason. However, when she was betrayed and insulted by Jason, her revenge wasn't directly killing Jason but first murdering his bride and her father who provided Jason's chance for the throne. Then, by murdering the children, she leads Jason to a dead end. Although those children were her own children, her strong decisive mood and the fear of being laughed at by her enemies made her decision stronger. Her maternal feelings were no longer in control. The only controlling body in her soul was the passion of the revenge. She essentially describes some of the reasons behind her actions. As she states:

“Laughter from my enemies is not be endured, my friends. Come what may come! What do I have to gain by living? I have no fatherland, no house, no

refuge from calamity. It was then I made my mistake-when I left my father's house, persuaded by the words of a Greek man who with god's help will pay me the penalty" (Medea 797-803)

Through the end of the play as she speaks to Jason, she completely changes her tone which has been very dominant from the beginning of the play. The violent and the passionate warrior leaves the ground to a woman who is very unhappy about her words and actions. She hides her true colors with her Apollonian side and plays the role of ordinary woman who wronged her husband. She begs for forgiveness from Jason. She says:

"I thought over these things and I was being very foolish and that my rage was needless. And so now I applaud you. You seem to me to show good sense in making this marriage in addition to ours-and I seem idiotic. I ought to be sharing in these plans and helping to bring them to fulfilment, standing beside the marriage bed and taking pleasure in waiting upon your bride"
(Medea 883-889)

However, even with her dignified and miserable self as she shows herself to Jason, her words are still giving hints of her madness. With her words to her children, she behaves as if she made peace with Jason and she is sorry about her ill thoughts, yet she is actually talking about murdering her own children. She says as sees her children;

"O children, children, come here leave the house. Come out here and embrace your father and talk to him with me. Be like your mother and as you greet him be reconciled from your previous hatred towards one who loved you. We have made peace-anger has given way. Take this right hand.-Ah me! One of

my hidden troubles comes to my mind.-Children; will you live a long life and stretch forth your loving arms at your father's grave? How quick I am to weep, unhappy woman, and how full of fear!" (Medea 890-903)

After the tutor brings Medea the good news that her children will not be exiled from their land, she starts to speak her desires. However, the more she speaks, the more she gets away from her plan. She definitely loves her children since she accepts the truth that she wants to be with them and they don't need to die so that their father will suffer. She for a second gives up the idea of killing them.

Nevertheless, she faces the truth by stating:

But what is wrong with me? Do I want to make myself ridiculous by letting my enemies go unpunished? I must face the deed. Shames on my cowardice in even letting my mind dally with these thoughts. Go into the house, children. Those for whom it is not right to be present at my sacrifice-that is a matter for them. My hand will not weaken. (Medea 1049-1054)

The dualities in her heart are in a big combat fighting, but her passion wins over and over even defeats her maternal feelings for her children. She strongly believes in the idea that she gave birth to the children and she has the right to end their lives. Her passion and desire are above her children. After she learns about the deaths of the princess and her father, the king, she decides to fulfill the last part of her plan, killing her children. Actually, it can be said that she is not "the victim" here. She is trying to use the primitive forces or the "madness" to critique the patriarchal oppression. The violence and "madness" grant her a sort of power to challenge the existing situation and she succeeds.

The audience doesn't feel the same pity as they feel for Oedipus. At the end of the Greek plays, the protagonist suffers alone, yet Medea drags all the characters to her suffering. She is in pain because of the death of her children and although she killed them, she thinks what killed them is the arrogance and mistake of Jason, his fault of getting married to another woman. Nevertheless, knowing that her passion and unlimited love dragged her to such an end, seeing that she is the victim of the primitive forces, the audience do pity her even if she murders her own children.

When all these ideas and feelings of Medea are analyzed, it can be said that the dualities in her character makes her suffer more through the end of the play. She wanted to change her true self and silence the voices in her heart by marrying Jason. For a while, the love she had, directed her for a "settled" life with Jason and her children. Her role as an independent warrior shifted to being a mother and a wife. This situation didn't bother her, but when Jason married another woman, Medea realized that she is in a cage that she built around herself. The bars in her cage were her children, her marriage even the bride and the king. Jason's behavior unleashed the indignation, rage and revenge which were captives in the dark side of her soul. It can even be said that it was not just Medea who was left behind. The children were also left behind and by slaughtering them; Medea avenged their right against their father.

3.2. THE 'ORESTEIA' and "THE MIND"

Aristotle defines the limits of the tragedy very clearly and he claims that for successful tragedy, these lines should be followed by the playwrights very clearly. It is a fact that these lines are still accepted in literature, yet if the lines are precise, then what is the role of the playwright? How can he be sure that his plays are different than another playwright? I think the answers to these questions have different angles.

The three great playwrights of the time were not only competing with each other but they were also challenged by the difficulties of their time. However, each one of them presented admirable plays in spite of the challenges and it can be said that these challenges glorified them in the eyes of the audience back then and even now.

It is an Aristotelian fact that a tragedy should have one main character that we call the tragic hero; also, the playwright should develop an action that develops gradually. The entire dramatists essentially follow these rules, yet they adapt these rules according to their perspective. For instance, in the first play "*Agamemnon*", it can never be stated that there is only one main character since all the characters are very much linked to each other.

The way Aeschylus presents drama is very much different from Sophocles and these qualities make him one of the great examples that show us that drama has a very wide nature and how it is shaped in spite of the boundaries that are drawn. It is for sure that Aeschylus gives dramatic power in his scenes and his characters are not "ordinary". The way he presents his characters and his plot is so unexpected that makes the audience stop and think. In some scenes, as an audience you expect one thing, yet Aeschylus presents another perspective such as the characters Herald and

Cassandra in *Agamemnon*. However, this doesn't show that he is not a very good playwright. This shows the narrative complexity of the playwright.

It is a fact that Aeschylus doesn't show the audience a much linked plot line as Sophocles. However, he tries to present and combine different plots in one plot and I think this method brings richness and novelty to the idea of tragedy. For example, in the play *Agamemnon*, we can see the story of Helen and Paris which caused the Great War "Troy" and he constructs the first play on this event. In addition to the war, we learn about the sacrificing his daughter to Artemis for a great wind. We also observe the storyline of Cassandra and how she is also adopted to the play. The play is like a sea and the different stories that are told flow into it. It can also be observed that as the events are all connected to each other, all of the events also share one important similarity which is violence. The very first event which the play is constructed on, the Trojan War, reminds the audience of the slaughter and death. Also, the king Agamemnon, he sacrificed his own daughter, Iphigenia, to appease the Gods and this event triggers Agamemnon's death and justifies Clytemnestra murdering Agamemnon. Even Cassandra's tragedy is based on violence as she is the priestess but captured and enslaved by Agamemnon. The most violent event was done by Agamemnon's father who killed and cooked his brother's children and served them to him. All of these atrocities show us the passionmanic side of the human beings which is violent and barbaric. Although it seems they all had been done for a reason, which is offering to Gods, I think the only reason they happened is dominance of the dark side in one's soul.

As one of the most important themes in the trilogy is violence, it is very important analyze the importance of the Gods. Apollo, the God of sun and harmony, seems to play an important role in this tragedy, yet he may seem to fail in bringing

that harmony to the characters. For instance, we basically see Cassandra who was a Trojan priestess worshipping Apollo, but when she refuses to bear him a child; she cannot escape from his rage. She utters a few words at the end of the play, they are about Apollo and she calls him “my destroyer”. She believes that it is Apollo who brought her here to see so much violence. However, she doesn’t accept the reality that it is her passion that brought her here. She doesn’t do anything to stop the violence, instead she watches. By doing nothing, she supports the violence as well. Apollo represents her dark side.

The other important character that should be analyzed is the queen, Clytemnestra. She is one of the main characters in this tragedy and even from the beginning of the play, the audience can feel that she will play an important role in changing the course of the events. Her actual role in the play starts even before the play when Agamemnon her husband sacrifices their daughter to the Gods for a wind. It can be said that her vengeance started and has piled up. At the beginning of the play, she announces the victorious result of the war to the audience and she definitely “pretends” to be happy about it. However, when she sees Agamemnon bringing Cassandra with him, her rage just gets bigger in her heart. It can also be interpreted that she had Aegisthus as lover just to destroy Agamemnon, yet he used his anger and put it in action.

It is important to see link between the first and the second play the *Choephoroi*. Although it seems that at the end of the first play *Agamemnon*, the events are sorted out by the characters, the chorus actually gives hints about how the second play will be. As they state:

Thou losel soul, was then thy strength too slight

To deal in murder, while a woman's hand,
Staining and shaming Argos and its gods,
Availed to slay him? Ho, if anywhere
The light of life smite on Orestes' eyes,
Let him, returning by some guardian fate,
Hew down with force her paramour and her! (Agamemnon)

The leader in the chorus says these words after Agamemnon is killed by Clytemnestra. Even though Agamemnon was not entirely seen as the just king in Argos, he was still the king and being murdered by a woman even made him greater. Therefore, the chorus is definitely sure that Orestes the son of Agamemnon will come and avenge his father's death by killing his own mother. However, Clytemnestra doesn't accept the reality by saying:

Nay, enough, enough, my champion! we will smite and slay no more.
Already have we reaped enough the harvest-field of guilt:
Enough of wrong and murder, let no other blood be spilt.
Peace, old men! and pass away unto the homes by Fate decreed,
Lest ill valour meet our vengeance--'twas a necessary deed.
But enough of toils and troubles--be the end, if ever, now,
Ere thy talon, O Avenger, deal another deadly blow.
'Tis a woman's word of warning, and let who will list thereto. (Agamemnon)

Clytemnestra believes that Agamemnon's death was the only purpose that she wanted to achieve and it is done. Therefore, there is no need for murder or violence. She definitely doesn't want any blood to shed and she cries for peace now. In fact, these lines are not just the indicators to show that Clytemnestra is in peace now. With

these lines, we see that she is trying to balance the two opposite sides in her soul. She has been so angry and vengeful towards Agamemnon for so long and she was very successful in disguising her true feelings. She was the “queen” that ruled when her king was away. However, as Agamemnon returned from the war, it became more and more difficult for her to hide, so with the violent side on her nature that she repressed for a long time, she murdered her husband. She thinks the murder justified her guilt. After the murder, she is trying to restore her well-ordered side not only to rule the country as a queen again but also to regain her balance inside. However, even though she has strong motives for murdering Agamemnon, it is still violence that she is using to deconstruct order.

The second play, as promised from the first one, is a kind of bridge between the first and the third play. Orestes as stated comes to avenge his father’s death by killing his mother. He is very determined about killing her and this scene is similar to what we see in the first play, *Agamemnon*. The air in the play is full of danger and violence.

In the second play, the acts of Orestes are very similar to his mother’s actions in the first play. Orestes just like his mother puts on a quite an “effective” show. He plans everything in a very detailed way and he uses the dream that Clytemnestra had. His disguise and the story he made up helps him to face his mother Clytemnestra. As Orestes kills her mother’s lover, he hesitates when it was time for his mother. This hesitation may mean two things. The first one, Clytemnestra states that she is his mother and it was and has been her who took care of him. As she states:

Stay, child, and fear to strike. O son, this breast

Pillowed thine head full oft, while, drowsed with sleep,

Thy toothless mouth drew mother's milk from me. (Choephoroi)

In spite of her “motherly” words, Orestes is still very eager to avenge his father since he thinks his mother Clytemnestra murdered his father and she also committed adultery by being with another man.

The second reason why Orestes hesitated is that he was scared of the fact that although he has all the right motives to kill his mother, still the Erinyes of his mother will hunt him down. As Clytemnestra says:

Beware thy mother's vengeful hounds from hell. (Choephoroi)

Even though these words stop Orestes for a while, he feels very confident about the promise the Apollo gave him. So, he kills his mother and as he stands beside his mother and her lover’s body, he justifies the murder by saying:

There lies our country's twofold tyranny,
My father's slayers, spoilers of my home.
Erst were they royal, sitting on the throne,
And loving are they yet,-their common fate
Tells the tale truly, shows their trothplight firm.
They swore to work mine ill-starred father's death,
They swore to die together; 'tis fulfilled.
O ye who stand, this great doom's witnesses, (Choephoroi)

Even though some of the audience might think that Orestes did the right thing to avenge his father’s death by killing his mother, yet it is a fact that blood is shed and it needs to be repaid. Also, these actions cannot be justified since they are not done under the control of the reason, yet they seem to highlight actions that show the

ineffectiveness of reason in illuminating certain rituals of passion. Also, before Clytemnestra died, she wished the same end and in spite of the promise given by the god of Sun, Apollo. At the end of the play Chorus states the audience the punishment which Orestes will face because of the murder. As they state:

Woe for each desperate deed!

Woe for the queen, with shame of life bereft!

And ah, for him who still is left,

Madness, dark blossom of a bloody seed!

Madness is the punishment that Orestes will get because of killing his mother and he just can't get rid of the images of snakes and hell-hounds. The ending gives the audience a feeling of despair and unknown feeling of not knowing what is going to happen next, but still the audience knows that the events need to be sorted out and dignity and peace must be restored again. However, this will just be the appearance of order, according to the lurking passions within.

The third part of Oresteia, the "Eumenides" begins as if it is a separate play from the trilogy. Now, Apollo's temple in Delphi is seen assuring the audience the feelings of dignity, order and peace. However, the screams of the Priestess are heard and fear and terror are reminded to the audience that there have been many murders and now Orestes needs to suffer because of his murder. Erinyes are now after Orestes and they seek blood for blood even though Orestes is under the protection of two Gods, Apollo and Hermes.

The first part of the play gives the audience the feeling of comfort and hopes that although Erinyes are threatening Orestes, he is under the protection of the Gods and Gods will help him survive the vengeance. However, Erinyes accuse Apollo of protecting a murderer but Apollo promises to support by stating:

But I will stand beside him; 'tis for me
To guard my suppliant: gods and men alike
Do dread the curse of such an one betrayed,
And in me Fear and Will say Leave him not.

In the second part of the play the goddess Athena seems to be the leader who tries to save Orestes and bring order again between the Erinyes and Apollo. She tries to bring “order” to Apollo who is the God of Order and Peace. The third part of the trilogy is full of double sides. These conflicts actually construct the whole play. There is the conflict of the people of Athens. Will they suffer disorder or will they get back their social order? However, the answer to this question is risky to answer since it is not the gods who try to punish or destroy them but it is the ghost of a woman, Clytemnestra, who is pushing Erinyes for more blood. Another conflict is about the God of order, Apollo. He is the bringer of order and peace, yet he himself is not in peace. He is even very violent against the Erinyes. It is Athena the goddess of war who brings order and peace.

In all three of the plays, violence, murder and retribution play the essential roles, yet if the three of the plays are considered as one play, we see that the tension keeps rising and rising throughout the plays. In *Agamemnon*, we feel that everything is over when Clytemnestra murders Agamemnon, but we clearly see that even Agamemnon needs to be avenged by his son Orestes. As Orestes avenges his father's death, still he is chased by Erinyes who seek blood for blood. Orestes, who “seems” to be under the protection of Apollo, still faces the Erinyes. In the third play, the passion and the conflicts are ruling the play. The passion of Apollo or the ghost of Clytemnestra is seen more dominant than the main character Orestes.

Apollo supports the idea avenging Agamemnon's death throughout the play since Apollo sees marriage as a contract between two people and Clytemnestra violates that contract by murdering Agamemnon, yet Clytemnestra is not chased by the Furies at the end of the first play after she commits murder. On the other hand, the Furies seek revenge of Clytemnestra's death just after she is murdered by Orestes. According to Furies, Orestes is guiltier because Orestes killed a person with whom he shares the same blood with.

4. MADNESS AND REASON IN AMERICAN REALISM

4.1 THE UNTOLD STORY OF ELECTRA

Even though it seems to different times and different set of ideas, the essence of the drama looks unshakable. In the previous part of the study, the characters were analyzed and on the contrary of the general belief, Greek drama and Modern drama share many similarities in terms of character. This might be explained by one reason that despite time and different conditions in the society, the human subject is constructed in similar ways. I will try to prove this claim with two examples from the American drama, “*Mourning Becomes Electra*” and “*The Streetcar Named Desire*.”

O’Neill first tries to answer one important question which is that if the modern psychological approximation of Greek sense of fate into a play intended to move the audience which no longer believes in supernatural retribution. O’Neill makes an important decision and he wants to give Electra a good story. This can be considered as a weakness in Greek tragedy since we see Electra just in the second play when Electra is next to Agamemnon’s grave mourning for his death. She encounters Orestes and in a way she makes Orestes’s decision stronger about avenging their father’s death by killing their mother.

O’Neill’s timing was perfect, too. In *Oresteia*, the plot was constructed on a great Trojan war and most of the events were related to this war. O’Neill placed the story in an American setting. The civil war with its heroic setting is the best period to use and this war provided the best time and modernity for the tragedy. The

similarities between these two wars also draw the attention to the parallelism of these plays. Both of these wars were fought to get power and control. Also, they changed the course of history and lives of people as we see in our plays.

The supernatural retribution, which was the essential part of the Oresteia, needed to be used in the modern version as well. Therefore, New England and the Puritan sense of retribution were used in the new play. The connection between the trilogies was established successfully, yet the murder which is one of the most important motives of the plays needed to be created. He created thrilling scenes to compensate with the murder scenes in Greek version of the trilogy. The original trilogy contained so much passion and desire, so O'Neill tried to give that passion in the family through make up and different dialects.

It will be better if the analysis starts with the house of the Mannon family. At the beginning of the first play "Homecoming", O'Neill gives the audience a very detailed description of the house. As it is mentioned:

SCENE--Exterior of the Mannon house on a late afternoon in April, 1865. At front is the driveway which leads up to the house from the two entrances on the street. Behind the driveway the white Grecian temple portico with its six tall columns extends across the stage. A big pine tree is on the lawn at the edge of the drive before the right corner of the house. Its trunk is a black column in striking contrast to the white columns of the portico. By the edge of the drive, left front is a thick clump of lilacs and syringas. A bench is placed on the lawn at front of this shrubbery which partly screens anyone sitting on it from the front of the house.

It is shortly before sunset and the soft light of the declining sun shines directly on the front of the house, shimmering in a luminous mist on the white portico and the gray stone wall behind, intensifying the whiteness of the columns, the somber grayness of the wall, the green of the open shutters, the green of the lawn and shrubbery, the black and green of the pine tree. The white columns cast black bars of shadow on the gray wall behind them. The windows of the lower floor reflect the sun's rays in a resentful glare. The temple portico is like an incongruous white mask fixed on the house to hide its somber gray ugliness. (Homecoming)

As it can be understood from the description of the house, it is a majestic structure which is thought to be the reflection of the strength in the family. However, the Mannons' house is accepted to be built to hide the repressions of the family members. The house is one of the biggest houses in the town and from outside although it seems to be a "glorious" mansion and giving the impression that the family living inside it has solid relationships, inside it is a family with shattered relationships. The family members basically share relationships which are based on insincerity and lack of trust. Even the house is hiding its true nature which is ugly with a kind of "white mask". This can be seen as one of the biggest dualities that the play embodies and it leads us to another duplicity which is shown with the masks in the characters.

The house itself is like a Grecian temple with its white columns. The imagined continuity of western culture from ancient Greece to modern America was used to imply a cultural superiority that was used to rationalize racism, colonialism and class superiority. A gentleman's education included classical languages in 1850.

However, that superiority is associated exclusively with reason, order and all the gifts of Apollo. That cultural snobbery begins to be questioned in Modernism.

In the previous paragraphs, it is mentioned that O'Neill tried to use masks just like a Greek play, yet changed his mind and tries to give the same impression with the make-up. The description given by O'Neill about the one of the major characters, Lavinia, is actually showing us the true duality in both her physical and psychological situation. As it is stated:

She is twenty-three but looks considerably older. Tall like her mother, her body is thin, flat-breasted and angular, and its unattractiveness is accentuated by her plain black dress. Her movements are stiff and she carries herself with a wooden, square-shouldered, military bearing. She has a flat dry voice and a habit of snapping out her words like an officer giving orders. But in spite of these dissimilarities, one is immediately struck by her facial resemblance to her mother. She has the same peculiar shade of copper-gold hair, the same pallor and dark violet-blue eyes, the black eyebrows meeting in a straight line above her nose, the same sensual mouth, the same heavy jaw. Above all, one is struck by the same strange, life-like mask impression her face gives in repose. But it is evident Lavinia does all in her power to emphasize the dissimilarity rather than the resemblance to her parent. She wears her hair pulled tightly back, as if to conceal its natural curliness, and there is not a touch of feminine allurements to her severely plain get-up. Her head is the same size as her mother's, but on her thin body it looks too large and heavy.

(Homecoming)

Lavinia shares some similarities from both of her parents, yet she is trying to hide her similarities that she has from her mother. She resembles her mother more, but she is trying to hide the similarities as if she doesn't want to be like her mother. From the description of Lavinia above, it can also be said that her parents are two different people from each other, both physically and mentally. The stiffness that Lavinia has is probably from her father who is a soldier. She speaks and gives orders just like a soldier or an officer. Her father is the representation of the order and unity. On the other hand, her physical resemblance to her mother is fresh and free. Even when she is observing her mother, Lavinia seems quite jealous of her random walk and behaviors and she is struck by the manner of her mother. She wants to be like her mother and in the following acts even her mother tells her that:

CHRISTINE--I know you, Vinnie! I've watched you ever since you were little, trying to do exactly what you're doing now! You've tried to become the wife of your father and the mother of Orin! You've always schemed to steal my place! (Homecoming)

No matter how hard she tries to hide the resemblances that she shares with her mother, Lavinia is deeply obsessed with her mother and she wants to be like her or she wants to be her. The unity and order that she has from her father doesn't satisfy her personality like the freedom that her mother has in her nature. Even when she threatens her mother about her affair with Captain Brant, Christine's confession of loving him is a sign that Christine is so sure about herself. Even though she refuses, Lavinia deep down wants to have that relationship with Captain Brant. As Christine says:

CHRISTINE--You wanted Adam Brant yourself!

LAVINIA--That's a lie!

CHRISTINE--And now you know you can't have him, you're determined that at least you'll take him from me!

LAVINIA--No!

CHRISTINE--But if you told your father, I'd have to go away with Adam. He'd be mine still. You can't bear that thought, even at the price of my disgrace, can you? (Homecoming)

It can be seen that Lavinia gradually becomes her mother and this is something certain that this has been her desire from the beginning. In the last part of the trilogy, the “Haunted”, when she comes back with Orin her transformation seems to be completed. As she is seen in the first act of *The Haunted*:

They go in. There is a pause in which Peter can be heard opening windows behind the shutters in the downstairs rooms. Then silence. Then Lavinia enters, coming up the drive from left, front, and stands regarding the house. One is at once aware of an extraordinary change in her. Her body, formerly so thin and undeveloped, has filled out. Her movements have lost their square-shouldered stiffness. She now bears a striking resemblance to her mother in every respect, even to being dressed in the green her mother had affected. She walks to the clump of lilacs and stands there staring at the house. (*The Haunted*)

Even Orin her brother is aware that Lavinia is becoming his mother. He thinks that Lavinia is not just trying to be like their mother, but her soul has begun to

transform into Christine. Actually, Lavinia reveals her true feeling for a second and she voices her desire about being as pretty as Christine. As she states in *The Haunted Act One Scene Two*:

ORIN—(*grimly*) Mother felt the same about —(*then with a strange, searching glance at her*) You don't know how like Mother you've become, Vinnie. I don't mean only how pretty you've gotten —

LAVINIA—(*with a strange shy eagerness*) Do you really think I'm as pretty now as she was, Orin?

ORIN—(*as if she hadn't interrupted*) I mean the change in your soul, too. I've watched it ever since we sailed for the East. Little by little it grew like Mother's soul — as if you were stealing hers — as if her death had set you free — to become her! (*The Haunted*)

Even Peter is shocked when he sees Lavinia since he thinks that for a moment, she is Christine. However, Peter realizes that it is Lavinia and he is quite happy that Lavinia is not wearing black anymore. According to Orin, it is because Lavinia stole their mother's colors. As he states:

ORIN—(*in a sudden strange tone of jeering malice*) Did you ask her why she stole Mother's colors? I can't see why — yet — and I don't think she knows herself. But it will prove a strange reason, I'm certain of that, when I do discover it! (*The Haunted*)

Lavinia is very happy and satisfied about this transformation because it has been what she wanted throughout her life. She has always been jealous of her mother even after Christine is dead. Her strongest desire was replace her and to own the Mannon men, both Ezra and Orin. Since Ezra is dead, she has no limitations of

babying Orin just like Christine used to do. Here is O'Neill rewriting a dramatic cycle from the ancient dramatic tradition. Lavinia is trying to construct her personality, yet she knows that in order to feel whole and health, as an individual she needs to uncover the dark denizens of her mind in which the madness and unreason dwell.

As it is stated in the previous paragraphs of the study, Lavinia was in between. She had her father who was the symbol of order and unity, on the other hand Lavinia envied her mother who was free and in peace both with her body and her desires. All the oppositions tie in here: reason vs. passion, Apollo vs. Dionysus, order vs. chaos. However, Lavinia is not the only person who stuck in between. Orin, her brother is also struggling between these two opposite sides. The first appearance of Orin and the description by O'Neill gives us some hints about Orin.

Then footsteps and voices are heard from off right front and a moment later Orin Mannon enters with Peter and Lavinia. One is at once struck by his startling family resemblance to Ezra Mannon and Adam Brant [whose likeness to each other we have seen in "Homecoming"]. There is the same lifelike mask quality of his face in repose, the same aquiline nose, heavy eyebrows, swarthy complexion, thick straight black hair, light hazel eyes. His mouth and chin have the same general characteristics as his father's had, but the expression of his mouth gives an impression of tense over sensitiveness quite foreign to the General's, and his chin is a refined, weakened version of the dead man's. He is about the same height as Mannon and Brant, but his body is thin and his swarthy complexion sallow. He wears a bandage around his head high up on his forehead. He carries himself by turns with a marked slouchiness or with a self-conscious square-shouldered

stiffness that indicates a soldierly bearing is unnatural to him. When he speaks it is jerkily, with a strange, vague, preoccupied air. But when he smiles naturally his face has a gentle boyish charm which makes women immediately want to mother him. He wears a moustache similar to Brant's which serves to increase their resemblance to each other. Although he is only twenty, he looks thirty. He is dressed in a baggy, ill-fitting uniform — that of a first lieutenant of infantry in the Union Army. (The Hunted)

Orin is trying to be a soldier like his father Ezra, yet his soldierly bearing is not as natural as Ezra or Brant. Even his words don't seem his and his uniform seems to be owned by someone else and clearly doesn't belong to Orin. Orin is more attached to his mother Christine since when he enters the house, he asks for Christine. If Lavinia is like his father, Orin then is definitely like his mother and he seems to be happy inside about sharing the resemblances of his mother unlike Lavinia. Orin's transformation starts with his father's death and surely Lavinia plays a key role in this change.

The military plays a very significant role in the play especially for men. Military stands for order and discipline but takes an aggressive stance against difference. Violence is accepted, indeed celebrated, when protecting the home culture from an enemy. It requires and reinforces strict oppositions. Ezra Mannon and Adam Brant are the characters that fulfill the complete role of the military. They seem tough and satisfied as being soldiers. They are the great examples of reason and order, especially Ezra Mannon. However, Orin although wants to be like his father, finds it difficult to accept that order since he sees violence and aggression against his own nature.

After Christine's death in "the Hunted", now Lavinia has all the power both in her own life and over Odin. Odin seems "crashed" after his mother's suicide, but Lavinia says "It is justice!". After Christine's death, Orin starts to lose his control, yet Lavinia is in control now and she says:

ORIN—(*frantically — trying to break away from her*) Let me go! I've got to find her! I've got to make her forgive me! I—! (*He suddenly breaks down and weeps in hysterical anguish. Lavinia puts her arm around him soothingly. He sobs despairingly.*) But she's dead — she's gone — how can I ever get her to forgive me now?

LAVINIA—(*soothingly*) Sssh! Sssh! You have me, haven't you? I love you. I'll help you to forget. (The Hunted)

In the last part of the trilogy, the Haunted, the audience sees the true change in Orin just like Lavinia. He is now like the copy of Ezra Mannon. O'Neill gives us the detailed description of Orin at the beginning:

He comes slowly and hesitatingly in from left, front. He carries himself woodenly erect now like a soldier. His movements and attitudes have the statue-like quality that was so marked in his father. He now wears a close-cropped beard in addition to his mustache, and this accentuates his resemblance to his father. The Mannon semblance of his face in repose to a mask is more pronounced than ever. He has grown dreadfully thin and his black suit hangs loosely on his body. His haggard swarthy face is set in a blank lifeless expression. (The Haunted)

By the third part of the trilogy, Orin is transformed to his father and Lavinia to her mother. However, with Orin's hesitation, it can be seen that he is like an actor

performing in another person's life. It is true that his appearance is much more similar to his father now, but still he is not bold enough to act like him or face the life and reality that his father is murdered by his mother and his beloved mother committed suicide. Orin is again in between about himself. Actually, this can be told about Lavinia as well. It is a fact that Lavinia envied her mother even after her death, yet now she has taken her mother's place both physically and socially. Behind her strong will and ambition, she is still in between. These transformations indicate the wish to gain the order and reason back in life since both Lavinia and Orin are in the search of the life they used to have. However, deep inside both of them know that it is not possible anymore because it the chaos and violence that is controlling their lives.

As it is stated above, Lavinia has a stronger personality, on the other hand, although he seemed very determined about coming back home, Orin's mental situation got worse. He keeps reminding Lavinia of their parents and it is obvious that he is still obsessed with the past. Lavinia wants to forget everything about her parents and move on with her life by marrying Peter and she clearly wants the same things for Orin, but Orin is not very willing to forget what happened as he states:

LAVINIA—(*forcing a smile*) Good gracious, why wouldn't I be? You've acted so funny lately, locking yourself in here with the blinds closed and the lamp burning even in the daytime. It isn't good for you staying in this stuffy room in this weather. You ought to get out in the fresh air.

ORIN—(*harshly*) I hate the daylight. It's like an accusing eye! No, we've renounced the day, in which normal people live — or rather it has renounced us. Perpetual night — darkness of death in life — that's the fitting habitat for guilt! You believe you can escape that, but I'm not so foolish!

LAVINIA— Now you're being stupid again!

ORIN— And I find artificial light more appropriate for my work — man's light, not God's — man's feeble striving to understand himself, to exist for himself in the darkness! It's a symbol of his life — a lamp burning out in a room of waiting shadows!

LAVINIA—(*sharply*) Your work? What work?

ORIN—(*mockingly*) Studying the law of crime and punishment, as you saw.
(The Haunted)

Although Orin's words seem to be irrelevant for Lavinia, actually his words reveal his true feelings. He is trying to find himself because he believes that he is living in shadows now. He also believes that he is responsible for Christine's suicide and he is now being punished because of his crime. Through the end of the play, Orin loses his control over himself and it starts to be clear that his behaviors are not rational now. In the dialogue between Lavinia and Orin, we can see that Orin's mind is not "healthy" anymore.

LAVINIA—(*shrinking from him*) What do you mean? What terrible thing have you been thinking lately — behind all your crazy talk? No, I don't want to know! Orin! Why do you look at me like that?

ORIN— You don't seem to feel all you mean to me now — all you have made yourself mean — since we murdered Mother!

LAVINIA— Orin!

ORIN— I love you now with all the guilt in me — the guilt we share! Perhaps I love you too much, Vinnie!

LAVINIA— You don't know what you're saying!

ORIN— There are times now when you don't seem to be my sister, nor Mother, but some stranger with the same beautiful hair —(*He touches her hair caressingly. She pulls violently away. He laughs wildly.*) Perhaps you're Marie Brantôme, eh? And you say there are no ghosts in this house?

LAVINIA—(*staring at him with fascinated horror*) For God's sake —! No! You're insane! You can't mean —!

ORIN— How else can I be sure you won't leave me? You would never dare leave me — then! You would feel as guilty then as I do! You would be as damned as I am! (*then with sudden anger as he sees the growing horrified repulsion on her face*) Damn you, don't you see I must find some certainty some way or go mad? You don't want me to go mad, do you? I would talk too much! I would confess! (*Then as if the word stirred something within him his tone instantly changes to one of passionate pleading.*) Vinnie! For the love of God, let's go now and confess and pay the penalty for Mother's murder, and find peace together! (The Haunted)

From this dialogue, it can be seen that Orin wants to be “clear” in his mind since he knows that this uncertainty is making him insane and the only way to be certain again is explaining the truth. On the other hand, he knows that if he explains the truth, Lavinia will leave him and he will lose the only person who is very much like his mother. However, he can't stand the lies anymore and he kills himself. The passionmanic situation that he experiences offers him one way to get rid of his agony and reach purification and peace.

In the scene very Lavinia sees Orin's dead body; her confusion about herself starts to be clearer:

LAVINIA—(*sags weakly and supports herself against the table — in a faint, trembling voice*) Orin! Forgive me! (*She controls herself with a terrible effort of will. Her mouth congeals into a frozen line. Mechanically she hides the sealed envelope in a drawer of the table and locks the drawer.*) I've got to go in —(*She turns to go and her eyes catch the eyes of the Mannons in the portraits fixed accusingly on her — defiantly*) Why do you look at me like that? Wasn't it the only way to keep your secret, too? But I'm through with you forever now, do you hear? I'm Mother's daughter — not one of you! I'll live in spite of you! (*She squares her shoulders, with a return of the abrupt military movement copied from her father which she had of old — as if by the very act of disowning the Mannons she had returned to the fold — and marches stiffly from the room.*) (The Haunted)

Lavinia is aware of her faults, yet she justifies herself by thinking that she is protecting the Mannon secrets. However, after Orin's death she now understands that everything she did was in vain and she yells at the portraits about not being one of the Mannon's, but she is her mother's daughter. Still as she denied the Mannons and accepting her mother, she is back to her old posture and walk that she copied from her father. She is still a Mannon and to be a Mannon means to be tough and strong. There is no place for emotions since they are the opposite of reason.

She cannot run away from being a Mannon. She says that she is last Mannon left and after she marries Peter, they will disappear forever. However, her marriage

with Peter is prevented by Orin and Hazel. When she understands that she cannot escape from this fate, she starts acting like she used to be.

4.2. A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE: A PLAY ABOUT MADNESS AND DESIRE

“Desire is something rooted in a longing for companionship, [it is] a release from the loneliness that haunts every individual”.

Tennessee Williams

A Streetcar named Desire was written to mean more than entertainment to the audience. It aimed to present desire which is the result of the loneliness and every individual is chased by it. Throughout the play, Williams is trying to demonstrate a great conflict that an individual suffers from. The conflict is how an individual sees himself or herself and how the society sees the individual. This conflict is very successfully connected to plot of the play by Williams. He also analyzes another conflict which is more related to this study. He thinks of the results of the personal struggle that occurs when a person's reality does not match with their inner-fantasies. Although for Williams, desire sounds like a socializing influence, it is like a ring in a chain that brings an individual face the dark force inside.

In the play, there are two characters that seem to be always in a conflict with each other. These two characters are Blanche who is poorly disguising her real life and personality; on the other hand, there is Stanley who is quite real in showing who he really is in the society. It can be said that Stanley represents the new idea and order of the society which is dominated by men; however, Blanche is the natural female side of the society that wants to be destroyed or eliminated.

Another conflict is the fantasy that Blanche has in her mind and the reality of the real life. Throughout the play, she talks and acts like she didn't lose her home and not living in the house of a man that she despises. She still gets dressed as if she has money.

In *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947), Tennessee Williams exploits the expressionistic uses of space in the drama, attempting to represent desire from the *outside*, that is, in its formal challenge to realistic stability and closure, and in its exposure to risk. Loosening both stage and verbal languages from their implicit desire for closure and containment, *Streetcar* exposes the danger and the violence of this desire, which is always the desire for the end of desire. Writing in a period when U.S. drama was becoming disillusioned with realism, Williams achieves a critical distance from realistic technique through his use of allegory. In Blanche's line about the street-car, the fact that she is describing real places, cars, and transfers has the surprising effect of enhancing rather than diminishing the metaphorical parallels in her language. Indeed, *Streetcar*'s "duplicities of expression" are even more striking in the light of criticism's recent renewal of interest in allegory. For allegory establishes the distance "between the representative and the semantic function of language," the desire that is in language to unify (with) experience. *Streetcar* demonstrates the ways in which distance in the drama can be expanded and contracted, and what spatial relativism reveals about the economy of dramatic representation. (The Space of Madness and Desire: Tennessee Williams and *Streetcar*)

Williams's use of the elements of expressionistic drama is a kind of rebellion against the realistic drama. The playwright is trying to break the order and strict lines with the usage of space and language. Considering the time as well, Williams is very successful in representing the realistic drama through expressionism. This element gives the audience to think that drama doesn't need to be stuck in certain lines of realism, but it can also reflect the emotions and feelings which can go beyond the defined boundaries. This gives us the idea that American tragedy just like Athenian drama wants to reflect what is beyond and doesn't want to live between certain lines. As it borrows some techniques from Athenian drama, American drama also updates some of the techniques to offer a new understanding of tragedy for more recent theatre. For instance, by offering more freedom to the form, it has helped the playwright to be more creative and discover new areas in theatre.

Desire is the most important emotion that is interwoven throughout the play and the Streetcar is the representation of “violence” and “danger” which will result in the madness of Blanche at the end of the play. We see the fall of Blanche from being the protagonist to the victim of the play. At the beginning of the play, she is actually asking for directions to Stella’s house, but her words describe her life. As Blanche states:

BLANCHE [with faintly hysterical humor]:

They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at--Elysian Fields! (A Streetcar Named Desire)

Elysian Fields is another direct reference to Greek mythology. Elysian Fields were accepted to be paradise by the Ancient Greek. This can also be interpreted that for Blanche “Elysian Fields” were the paradise that she deserved. She suffered a lot. She lost everything and her paradise was waiting for her. However, it didn’t turn out to be like she thought. Elysian Fields became her hell but not a paradise.

It can also be seen that these two characters, Blanche and Stanley represent two different genders that are in a clash. Blanche is the fragile female character who is destroyed by the brutal male Stanley. Before the violence and danger shown by Stanley, Blanche accepted him as a positive feature. This can be interpreted as the fact Blanche lost Belle Reve, her husband and her reputation. She needed something to hold on to or to start her new life with and she thought Stanley is the right person for this fresh start. Actually this action doesn’t just show the full trust for Stanley, it shows the confidence that Blanche has faith in her sister, Stella. Stella managed to

have a fresh start and this happened with Stanley; therefore, Blanche has the faith that she can have that fresh start, too. As she states:

BLANCHE:

Oh, I guess he's just not the type that goes for jasmine perfume, but maybe he's what we need to mix with our blood now that we've lost Belle Reve. (A Streetcar Named Desire)

Violence, anxiety and conflict are not used as means to reach a kind of climax just like it is done in realistic drama. These features are repetitive, yet sometimes they are just meaningless clashes and sometimes they don't reach any conclusions, but they are always in the play and this gives a thrilling feeling to the audience. These features empower the meaning in drama and make it more lifelike.

The most violent scene is definitely when Blanche is raped by Stanley. In that scene, all the boundaries between these two characters are shattered. Also, the conflict seems to be over, too. The visible border that used to be between Blanche and Stanley is destroyed and with the destruction of this line, the desire is more apparent now in the play. Stanley is very determined to show Blanche the reality and the fact that he is aware of everything from the beginning. As it is seen in scene ten:

Blanche: But then he came back. He returned with a box of roses to beg my forgiveness! He implored my forgiveness. But some things are not forgivable. Deliberate cruelty is not forgivable. It is the one unforgivable thing in my opinion and it is the one thing of which I have never, never been guilty. And so I told him, I said to him, "Thank you," but it was foolish of me to think that we could ever adapt ourselves to each other. Our ways of life are too different. Our attitudes and our backgrounds are incompatible. We have to be

realistic about such things. So, farewell, my friend! And let there be no hard feelings....

Stanley: Was this before or after the telegram came from the Texas oil millionaire?

Blanche: What telegram? No! No, after! As a matter of fact, the wire came just as –

Stanley: As a matter of fact there wasn't no wire at all!

Blanche: Oh, oh!

Stanley: There isn't no millionaire! And Mitch didn't come back with roses 'cause I know where he is –

Blanche: Oh!

Stanley: There isn't a goddam thing but imagination!

Blanche: Oh!

Stanley: And lies and conceit and tricks!

Blanche: Oh!

Stanley: And look at yourself! Take a look at yourself in that worn-out Mardi Gras outfit, rented for fifty cents from some rag-picker! And with the crazy crown on! What queen do you think you are?

The madness of Blanche becomes her only reality after the rape since she can't give any meaning to the incident that happened to her. She is trying to regain her order and wish for desire. Michel Foucault has argued, in *Madness and Civilization*, that the containment of desire's excess through the exclusion of madness creates a conscience on the perimeters of society, setting up a boundary between inside and outside: "[The madman] is put into the interior of the exterior, and inversely." Blanche desires for freedom, yet her freedom becomes her imprisonment.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, human beings challenge the society, the rules even themselves by presenting chaos or madness. In this study, it is seen that the characters in the plays use passion and violence to change sometimes the circumstances around them. This chaos and madness is used as the deconstructive side in drama no matter what time is whether Athenian or American.

Plato presents the story of the coach driver to indicate the proper balance between logos, thymos and epithymia. Curiously, it is thymos (spirit) that he designates as the driver of the coach. The two horses are logos (reason) the docile horse, and epithymia (appetites) the wild horse. Spirit uses reason to control appetites in the well-balanced soul and thus the coach drives smoothly. If spirit aligns itself with appetites, the coach goes off the road. It can be seen as the typical privileging of reason. Plato considers that all human souls are made up of these parts in different degrees. We are all subject to fits of passion when reason is not strong enough to suppress it.

Although for Plato, reason is the unique power that should control everything, it cannot define itself without madness and chaos. Madness vs. reason, chaos vs. order. The oppositions are meant to define each other. Without reason, it is impossible to understand madness. These elements help human beings understand the world, each other and themselves. As these features are categorized, some of them are accepted as the “dangerous” or “violent”, and they are considered harmful both to the society and the individual. However, these violent and dangerous features are needed.

When Athenian theatre is considered, Medea had to create chaos and violence to deconstruct a new way or if we analyze Clytemnestra, her violent actions changed the course of events in the story. For American drama, Lavinia in “Mourning Becomes Electra” discovered her dark side and this dark side changed not only her life but her entire family. Blanche in “Streetcar Named Desire” had the reality and imagination conflict which led her lose her the meaning of reality and live in her imagined world.

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