

VIOLENCE IN AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY DRAMA: A JOHAN GALTUNGIAN READING OF LYNN NOTTAGE'S RUINED

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ABSTRACT:

The study explores many types of violence placed on the female characters in Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*. The researcher attempts to reach the results by conducting a thorough examination of the chosen work. The research investigates how Nottage uses the plot, setting, and characters to convey complex concepts and themes about violence. The study examines the manifestation of violence in Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Ruined* (2008) through the lens of Johan Galtung's theatrical framework of violence. Galtung's tripartite model encompassing direct, structural, and cultural violence provides a critical tool for analyzing the systemic and multifaceted nature of conflict in the play, which portrays the brutal realities of woman in war-torn Congo. By applying Galtung's theory, the study highlights how Nottage dramatize not only visible acts of physical and sexual violence (direct violence) but also the entrenched socio-political inequalities (structural violence) and the normalized ideologies that perpetuate oppression (cultural violence). The findings of this study add to the existing body of knowledge of contemporary American Drama and the role of violence in reflecting the social and cultural context of modern American society or even other societies that American Playwrights use to add more universality to the concept of violence. Finally, this study provides a thorough investigation of the use of violence in Contemporary American Theater, using Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* as an example. By investigating the role of violence in the aforementioned play, taking into account the social, cultural, and historical conditions in which the play was introduced. The study gives a nuanced understanding of the concept of violence's significance and its influence on contemporary American Drama.

KEYWORD: Violence, Ruined, Lynn Rattage, Women Suffering, War, Modern American Drama.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Violence has existed from the dawn of time. It is ingrained in the nature of humans. Women were frequently the victims of violence at all periods of their lives and in a variety of settings, particularly during warfare. Many of us are misled into believing that physical violence is the worst of all forms. Lynn Nottage has her own take on violence against women, she says. "Violence against women is not just physical; it can be emotional and psychological, leaving scars that may never heal". (Saleh, 2016)

Lynn Nottage's play *Ruined* explores the devastating impact of violence, particularly sexual violence, during the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Nottage traveled to Uganda in 2004 to interview Congolese refugee women who had endured rape, torture, and displacement during the war. One woman, Salima, shared a harrowing story of being abducted, raped by soldiers, and losing her husband and children a narrative that profoundly shaped the play. The play is set in a little bar and brothel located in a conflict-stricken area, exploring the tenacity, suffering, and compassion of its people as they strive for survival amid turmoil. (Kaur and Raina, 2015)

For a greater abundance of genuine illustrations of the repercussions of the civil war Nottage conducted field visits to several refugee camps housing women who were victims of the conflict, where she conducted interviews. The outcome was very disturbing: the majority of the victims experienced sexual assault from several perpetrators, while some were forced to witness the brutal murder of their children. (Muhiadeen, 2017)

The narrative revolves around Mama Nadi, an astute and pragmatic individual who operates the bar and brothel. Mama Nadi offers sanctuary to women who have been victimized by troops and ostracized by their families as a result of their experiences. Her establishment functions as neutral territory, accommodating both government soldiers and rebel combatants while maintaining a barrier against bloodshed. (Muhiadeen, 2017)

The paper examines how Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* depicts structural, cultural, and direct violence through Johan Galtung's theory of violence, and what this elucidates about the larger socio-political context in modern American play.

Despite Lynn Nottage's *Ruined* achieving critical acclaim for its depiction of wartime violence and gendered trauma,

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few studies have systematically analyzed the play using Johan Galtung's tripartite model of violence. This gap neglects to acknowledge how *Ruined* reveals not just explicit acts of violence but also the institutional and cultural frameworks that perpetuate damage, both in the play's context and inside American theatrical discourse.

1-2 Biography and Literary Background of Lynn Nottage:

Lynn Nottage was born in 1964 in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from high school in 1982 and earned her B.A. from Brown University in 1986.

She completed her studies and earned her M.F.A. in playwriting from Yale University. In 1989, I graduated from the School of Drama. Nottage is a theater associate professor at Columbia University, as well as a playwriting lecturer at Yale University. Her short play earned the *Heideman* Award in 1993. Her drama debuted in 2003. *Intimate Apparel* earned numerous honors, including the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Steinberg Award, the Francesca Primus Prize, and the Circle Award. *Ruined* earned her the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2009. Nottage's plays are being produced and manufactured on a global scale. Her paintings frequently deal with the lives of African-American women descent. Her grandparents, mother, sister, female nurses, teachers, activists, and artists who worked in her childhood neighborhood in Brooklyn were her inspirations. (Ibrahim, 2017).

1-3 Johan Galtung's Violence Triangle

Despite the wide range of approaches to violence studies as the thematic analysis, the psychological approach, Feminist and gender studies, and other approaches but Johan Galtung, a socialist and theorist from Norway considers one of the most well-known authors who has made the most significant contributions to violence studies. (Demmers, 2016) In his essay *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research* (1969), Galtung developed a definition of violence. He identified three different sorts of violence in his seminal 1990 article titled "Cultural Violence" published in the journal "*Journal of Peace Research*", the three types are the direct, structural, and cultural violence. He coined the phrase "the triangle of violence theory" after claiming that the three arms of a triangle could be used to illustrate these three different sorts of violence (Cravo, 2017).

Galtung's notion of violence must be understood in order to fully appreciate the triangle. Violence, in the words of Galtung, is "the opposite of peace" (Galtung 1969, p. 168). Galtung, on the other hand, disagrees with a straightforward definition of violence that limits it to merely causing direct bodily injury, or what is known as the reductionist approach. Reductionist approaches to violence in literature simplify complex portrayals of violence by attributing them to singular causes or frameworks such as psychological, sociological, biological, or ideological factors often at the expense of broader context or nuance. Without a doubt, the reductionist mindset still prevails, particularly in the language of law and policy. For instance, the World Health Organization defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community,

that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, or other negative consequences." (Galtung 1969, p. 168)

Galtung actually came up with a technique to widen the definition of violence because he wanted to explain it in terms of peace. According to him, even the most intolerable social structures can survive in peace if violence is evaluated extremely rigorously and peace is defined as the absence of violence. In other words, if peace is merely the absence of physical violence, other forms of aggression that could cause starvation, death, or other consequences will be disregarded. Regarding this idea of violence, two points are crucial. First, it is important to emphasize that Galtung's idea defines violence as a type of social connection that has an impact, in contrast to many psychiatric interpretations of violence that identify violence as having an unconscious or unconscious-like component. Second a comprehensive view of violence encompasses not just overt "behavioral" violence but also systemic violence, which frequently operates unconsciously. Structural violence arises from unfair and inequitable social and economic systems, resulting in phenomena such as poverty and other forms of deprivation.

In contrast to many psychiatric interpretations that characterize violence as a type of behaviour or words that regard violence as a type of activity, it is crucial to underline that Galtung's notion defines violence as a form of social connection that has an impact. Violence, in his opinion, occurs whenever "an influencer, an influence, and a mode of influence" are present (Galtung 1969, pp. 168–169). To put it another way, when violence is characterized in this way, with performances and interests that go beyond the real things, it becomes a far more difficult social phenomenon to investigate because it has a subject, an object, and an action.

Furthermore, as the Galitung notes, violence is seen as "the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is" (Galtung 1969, p. 168). The gap between possibility and reality is widened by violence. Some incidents that were previously not considered to be indicators of violence may alter as a result of new social interactions, particularly in terms of whether they can be averted or not. Galtung was well aware of the difficulties that the phrase "potential realizations" brings up, especially when it comes to expanding the meaning of the phrase beyond the most basic physical aspects of human life. Potential realizations are ways that societies or groups can move toward positive peace by addressing structural and cultural violence and realizing their full potential for coexistence and cooperation. He didn't suggest a solution, but he did say that some societies have agreed on certain rules or ideals. He adds:

If a person died from tuberculosis in the eighteenth century, it would be hard to conceive of this as violence since it might have been quite unavoidable, but if he dies from it today, despite all the medical resources in the world, then violence is present according to our definition... A life expectancy of thirty years during the Neolithic period was not an expression of violence, but the same life expectancy today (whether due to wars, or social

injustice, or both) would be seen as violence according to our definition. (Galtung 1969, pp. 168-169)

Galtung's notion of violence focuses on why certain individuals are unable to fully realize their physical and psychological potential. Violence can be seen as the act of stopping an individual from reaching their full potential. Galtung (1965, pp. 228–230) believes that violence can be responsible for a person's life expectancy falling short of their ideal life expectancy, but only if it can be prevented. Tuberculosis-related fatalities can be either avoidable or inevitable; nevertheless, breakthroughs in science have rendered them preventable. Violence, under the Galtungian framework, may contribute to tuberculosis-related fatalities by obstructing patients' access to appropriate treatment at an era of scientific progress.

Galtung defines violence along six dimensions, highlighting the need for a distinction between physical and psychological violence. Physical violence causes bodily harm, including death, while psychological violence affects the mind, leading to falsehoods and diminished intellectual capabilities. The dual meaning of "hurt" and "hit" is deeply ingrained in Galtung's vocabulary.

Another distinction to be made, and the most important one, is on the subject side: The fourth and most critical difference is about the subject. As Galtung states, direct violence occurs when there is a single perpetrator, and structural or indirect violence occurs when there is no single perpetrator (Cobb & Federman & Castel 2019, p. 99).

In both cases individuals may be killed or mutilated, hit or hurt in both senses of these words, and manipulated by means of stick or carrot strategies. But whereas in the first case these consequences can be traced back to concrete persons as actors, in the second case this is no longer meaningful. There may not be any person who directly harms another person in the structure. The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as un-equal life chances (Galtung 1969, pp. 170-171).

The above quote highlights the importance of the subject or perpetrator distinguishing between the difference between personal or direct violence, which is carried out by the perpetrator or criminal, and the violence in which there is no single transgressor but it occurs in the form of collective violence committed to individuals. Therefore, structural violence is systematically built into society, which takes different forms such as poverty, exploitation, inequality in education and healthcare, and lastly, there is the classic division between manifest and latent forms of violence. Manifest and latent forms of violence are distinct concepts. Manifest violence is observable, indirectly due to potential realization, while latent violence is triggered and occurs when a situation is volatile enough to reduce actual realization intensity. Latent personal violence, for example, occurs in situations where a small provocation leads to mass murder and outrage, such as race conflicts. Nottage skillfully interweaves manifest and latent violence to illustrate how they perpetuate and intensify one other. War's physical violence inflicts mental trauma, but the underlying violence of societal frameworks increases the probability of explicit violence. Ultimately, Ruined

underscores the strength of women who withstand such abuse while condemning the institutions and situations that enable its continuation. The interaction of overt and covert violence guarantees the narrative is profoundly significant, highlighting the human toll of battle. Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist, formulated an extensive theory of violence that transcends mere bodily injury. He delineated three interconnected forms of violence in his seminal study. All three categories of violence under the triangle theory of violence are employed in the analytical process to enhance the identification of both explicit and implicit forms of violence.

(Galtung 1969, pp. 171-172).

1-4 The Civil Wars of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Lynn Nottage's play *Ruined* is based on the plight of women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the ruthless civil wars time (1964-2003). The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has suffered from numerous wars and conflicts over many years, which have claimed a large number of lives. It is crucial to remember that these confrontations have been complicated, including numerous armed groups, government troops, and other elements like racial tensions, political conflicts, and resource exploitation. As a result, depending on the source and the time period under consideration, casualty statistics can vary greatly. (Al-Humoud, 2016)

The Second Congo War (1998–2003), one of the most brutal civil wars in modern history, featured many nations and armed factions and is often regarded as the most devastating conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Millions of people perished during this battle as a result of violence, displacement, disease, and other causes. Although exact numbers are impossible to ascertain, some estimates claim that the war caused 5 to 6 million casualties. (The Guardian, 2008)

There have been additional battles and acts of violence in the DRC other than the Second Congo War, both before and after that time. This includes continuing conflict between militias, rebel organizations, and government forces in various parts of the nation. A significant number of people have also been killed as a result of hostilities in the eastern half of the nation, particularly in the provinces of North and South Kivu. (The Guardian, 2008)

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) civil conflict, often known as the Great conflict of Africa, has been characterized by a wide range of human rights crimes, particularly heinous violations against women. Multiple armed groups, government forces, and nearby nations have all been involved in this conflict, which has produced a complicated and unstable situation that has given rise to many types of violence against women. Throughout the conflict, there have been substantial violations against women that exemplify all forms of violence outlined in the triangle theory of violence, which include:

Abduction and Forced Labor: Armed groups have kidnapped women and forced them to work as domestic slaves, porters, or "wives" for soldiers. This practice has destroyed women's social and familial bonds in addition to

subjecting them to physical violence and exploitation (Walk Free, 2023, p.6)

Child Soldiers: Young girls have been kidnapped and enlisted as child soldiers against their will. They serve a variety of functions, such as fighting, serving as sexual slaves, and providing support. These girls are subjected to both physical and psychological abuse, and the experience frequently leaves them scarred (Rakisits, 2010).

Vulnerability and Displacement: Due to the conflict's widespread population displacement, women and girls are especially at risk of being exploited and mistreated in crowded displacement camps. Their vulnerability is made worse by a lack of security, restricted access to essential services, and insufficient security measures (Rwamparagi, 2025)

Lack of Healthcare: As a result of the fighting, healthcare systems have collapsed, limiting access to medical treatments, especially reproductive and maternity healthcare. Pregnant women now face greater health risks, and efforts to address sexual violence-related injuries have been hampered (Doe, 2023).

Stigmatization: Victims of sexual assault frequently experience stigma in their communities, which can further isolate them and impede their healing. Additionally, the stigma may deter survivors from seeking justice or medical attention (Orogon, 2002),

Impunity: Because of the conflict-related chaos, ineffective judicial systems, and weak government institutions in the DRC, those who commit violence against women frequently go unpunished. The cycle of abuse has been sustained by this lack of responsibility (Schmitt, 2021).

The complexity of the conflict and the pervasive instability have made it difficult to effectively address these crimes and protect women in the DRC. International organizations, NGOs, and regional initiatives have worked to support women's rights, offer survivors physical and psychological care, and advance peace and stability in the area. However, resolving the conflict's underlying roots and creating a long-lasting framework for justice, security, and growth are necessary for long-lasting reform. (Banwell, 2020).

2-1 Violence in *Ruined*

Nottage's *Ruined* is a compelling theatrical work that explores the distressing ordeals faced by women amidst the civil violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The drama exhibits a significant and all-encompassing presence of violent elements, which exert a profound influence on the lives of the characters.

The title *Ruined* undoubtedly alludes to the profound physical and emotional destruction endured by the characters in the play as a result of the persistent conflict in the region. The female characters in the play have experienced profound repercussions from the violence and savagery of war, resulting in significant damage to their lives and physical well-being. The term also conveys the overarching concept of how conflict has the potential to devastate not only individuals but also entire societies. (Al-Humoud, 2017)

Nottage vividly portrays the profound and destructive consequences of violence on individuals and societies,

emphasizing the ability to persevere and remain human in the face of extreme brutality.

The application of Johan Galtung's violence theory, specifically his notion of structural violence, to Lynn Nottage's play "*Ruined*" helps enhance our comprehension of the play's themes and the characters' experiences. Galtung differentiates between direct violence, which refers to physical harm inflicted by a specific individual, and structural violence, which refers to suffering caused by social systems that sustain inequality and injustice. Galtung's theory can be applied to the play "*Ruined*" in the following manner, and according to its three primary types, direct, structural, and cultural violence.

2-2 Direct Violence

The play prominently depicts structural violence, but it also vividly portrays instances of direct violence. The play delves into several forms of direct violence, such as sexual violence, physical assault, threats of violence, coerced involvement, and the harsh reality of war. The occurrence of physical violence, such as rape and mutilation, is a direct consequence of the underlying structural problems. The activities of the armed factions in the area provide a clear illustration of overt aggression, while Nottage also demonstrates how individuals, including the protagonist Christian, can cause harm to other people as a consequence of the trauma and dehumanization that they have experienced in their own lives. (Panta, 2023)

Often referred to as the tacit voices of the conflict, women have endured many forms of harsh mistreatment as victims of the civil war. The drama commences with one of numerous prohibited narratives, specifically the tale of the destitute woman. The story and its characters could serve as symbols, representing not only the female victims in the Congo, but also extending to a universal issue (Panta, 2023).

Nottage explores how Congolese women are not secure inside their own community, not at times of conflict, nor even in times of peace. Men have subjected them to both physical and mental exploitation. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo persists as civilians, military, and police engage in a struggle for authority over the country's governance, its population, and its vast natural resources. Throughout this conflict, Congolese women have been subjected to victimization, terrible acts of rape, and torture at the hands of militias, rebel soldiers, police forces, and the criminals. The civilians, including their spouses, subjected them to torture due to their preoccupation with social standing. They lack empathy for these girls and deliberately provoke them. They believe that cohabitating with girls who have been harmed would bring them humiliation and disgrace (Kaur & Raina, 2015).

Saleh and Al-Humoud (2016) further explains the core of referendum on female violence during times of armed conflict. The bodies of women are once again the target of assault. The statement illustrates that women's bodies are regarded as a source of honour. Consequently, both militias and government soldiers intentionally victimise women in order to undermine the strength of their adversaries' families and communities.

According to a UN report in 2009 over 200,000 females have experienced sexual assault in the Democratic Republic of Congo. According to Van Woudenberg, this country is among the most unfavourable sites globally for women and girls. He further notes that a significant proportion of the reported sexual assaults target adolescent females aged 12 to 17. (Wilson, 2011)

The play's setting contributes to the illustrating the primary form of violence, which is direct violence. The events depicted are presently unfolding in the rural areas of Congo, as well as in other African nations, the Middle East, and various other global locations. (Wilson, 2011)

Nottage elucidates her reliance on authentic accounts and firsthand experiences of victims. She says "I believe in engaging people emotionally, because I think they react more out of emotion than when they are preached to, told how to feel. It was important that this not become a documentary or agitprop." (Wilson, 2011)

The entirety of the two-act play unfolds within a bar and brothel situated in a secluded tiny mining town amidst the tropical Ituri jungle in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Here, the combination of violence and poverty generates a hazardous blend, resulting in a nightmarish setting. The bar serves beverages and meals to its patrons, but it also operates as a brothel that offers comfort services. This establishment is frequented by opposing factions of rebel militias, government soldiers, as well as miners, and traveling salespeople. (Nottage, 2009)

Perhaps it is straightforward to identify instances of explicit violence throughout the events of the play. The majority of female characters in the play are subjected to both physical and psychological assaults. In Act One, a prominent instance of explicit violence occurs when Christian, the salesman, attempts to offer one of the ladies he brought to Mama, the proprietor of the bar and brothel. However, this particular girl is rejected due to her damaged state, rendering her unfit even for a brothel.

CHRISTIAN: Take her on, just for a month. You'll see she's a good girl. Hard worker.

MAMA: But damaged, am I right?

CHRISTIAN: Yes..... Look, militia did ungodly things to the child, took her with..... a bayonet and then left her for dead. And she was- (Nottage, 2012. p.13)

This description implies a calculated and brutal assault, in which an individual was stabbed or seriously harmed with a bayonet and subsequently left behind, apparently with the intention of causing their death. This statement highlights the severe and cruel character of the conflict and the acts of direct violence committed against individuals, including women, who are frequently the victims of such brutality in countries affected by war. Nottage enhances the portrayal of the scene by referring to the victim character, Sophie, as a "child," thereby eliciting greater empathy from the audience. Additionally, she leaves the audience with an ambiguous description, using the word "was," allowing them to imagine the distressing situation Sophie was left in based on their own perspectives and life experiences. This "child" young girl symbolizes millions of individuals both locally and globally. Her situation serves as a microcosm of a widespread pattern of direct violence.

Sophie and Salima endured severe physical and psychological trauma. These moments are described as instances when individuals transform into monstrous entities, motivated by their desires for sexual gratification and dominance.

SALIMA: one of the soldiers held me down with his foot. He was so heavy, thick like an ox and his boot was cracked and weathered like it had been left out in the rain for weeks. His boot was pressing my chest and cracks in the leather had the look of drying sorghum. His foot was heavy, and it was all I could see as the other... "took" me. My baby was crying, screaming. "Shhh," I said "Shhh." And right then...(Close her eyes) A soldier stomped on her head with his boot. And she was quiet. (Nottage, 2012. p. 68)

Through the repetition of the word "boot," which represents the soldier, Salima vividly portrays the most terrifying scenario for any woman in existence. Similarly, by retelling the same narrative with Sophie, Nottage emphasizes the disturbingly commonplace nature of such experiences for women during times of conflict. In another representation of traumatic violence, Salima adds: "They made me watch as they killed my baby. Then they took turns on me until I passed out." - (Nottage, 2012. p.19) This quotation aims to prompt the audience to critically examine the moral and ethical conduct of soldiers in conflict areas, regardless of whether they belong to an official army or are part of a militia.

Eriksson and Stern (2009) present how Congolese soldiers talk about the widespread rape committed by the military in the recent DRC war. It examines soldiers' rape justifications. The soldiers differentiate between "lust rapes" and "evil rapes" and suggest that their theories of rape must be understood about distinct masculinities. Through the soldiers' statements, we can see the logic perhaps guided by the increasingly globalized environment of soldiering that make rape acceptable and even "normalized" in some war spaces.

2-3 Structural Violence

In 1969, Johan Galtung established the notion of structural violence. Structural violence is a type of violence in which certain societal structures or organizations cause harm to individuals by obstructing their ability to fulfill their fundamental needs. Structural violence, in contrast to direct violence, is inherent in the fundamental structure of society and may not be immediately apparent, yet it is just as detrimental. (Galtung, 1969. p.175)

The Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly known as Zaire) has been plagued by widespread war as a direct consequence of colonialism. Similar to other African nations, its establishment was totally contrived, with Belgian colonizers deliberately forming a single expansive state to facilitate the administration and control of its abundant natural riches (Scherrer, 2002, p. 329). The amalgamation of several diverse nationalities inside a single 'state' has resulted in areas asserting independent sovereignty, disputes over resource ownership, and five devastating civil wars (Kok, 2009). Sierra Leone, Burundi, Uganda, Sudan, The Ivory Coast, and Liberia, albeit a significantly distinct case study, have all experienced

internal wars, partially due to their colonial past. (Reno, 1999. Mamdani (1996) and Scherrer (2002).

It would be simplistic and narrow-minded to just attribute the high levels of conflict in the region to structural violence. The enduring impact of colonialism and the societal fabrication of ethnicity and identity have undeniably led to numerous conflicts. Although not addressed in this article, the resource curse, the patrimonial character of politics in the region, and unusual weather phenomena have also posed significant challenges. Sub-Saharan Africa's poverty is a result of deliberate choices made by its leaders. It is indeed accurate to state that a succession of corrupt administrations inclined towards conflict have contributed to this situation. The prevalence of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa is a significant issue, partly stemming from both global and local instances of structural violence. Mitigating this violence would contribute to enhancing stability and diminishing conflict, so creating an environment conducive to addressing other pressing concerns (Mills, 2010)

The play delves into the profound consequences of structural violence on people especially women in the Democratic Republic of Congo during a time of conflict. Structural violence encompasses the systematic mechanisms by which societal systems inflict harm or create disadvantages for people. The concept is powerfully depicted in *Ruined*, mostly via the experiences of the characters, notably the women who endure sexual abuse and exploitation.

Mama Nadi assumes an executive position in the play. Nottage bestows on her the capacity for sagacity and impartiality. She capitalizes on the continuing strife by serving troops from both factions, while also offering sanctuary to women who have suffered from sexual abuse throughout the war. Mama Nadi's acts provoke ethical inquiries on survival and morality under a harsh and merciless setting. The protagonist's personality epitomizes tenacity, the intricacies of staying alive, and the indistinct boundaries between being a victim and complicit.

MAMA: "I provide a service. I keep the men happy, and the women alive." (Nottage, 2012. p.45)

Mama Nadi's comment succinctly captures the brutal truth of surviving in a nation ravaged by conflict, when women's bodies are reduced to objects traded inside a transactional system. It emphasizes the intricate relationship between the act of staying alive and taking advantage of others in a structurally violent setting.

The majority of the violent activities in the play are directed at the female characters, who serve as the primary victims of various forms of violence. Salima exemplifies the grim reality of conflict, which has resulted in a nation plagued by structural violence. Salima is a living example of what happened at the time of war, she says: "I'm already dead. When they took me into the bush, something died. I am nothing. I am worth nothing." (Nottage, 2012. p.68)

Salima's statements expose the profound psychological trauma caused by rape and the cultural marginalization of women who have experienced sexual violation. Her feelings of insignificance are a result of internalizing the effects of structural violence.

Nottage addresses the profound and distressing reality of the gun's influence, specifically focusing on its social and structural impact rather than its physical force. One of the most detrimental consequences is the legitimization of violence through the use of guns. This attitude is exemplified by several female characters, such as Mama Naida, who courageously defends women against the oppressive force of guns.

MAMA: "You think because you have a gun, you can take anything you want. I won't let you." (Nottage, 2012. p.74)

Mama Nadi's refusal to comply with the soldiers' requests symbolizes an act of rebellion against the hierarchical power relations that support systemic violence. Although she is partly responsible for the system, she affirms her ability to act independently in this particular situation.

2-4 Cultural Violence

Cultural violence encompasses elements of culture such as religion, philosophy, language, art, science, and education that are employed to rationalize or validate acts of direct or structural violence. Johan Galtung (1969) created this notion to elucidate how national ideas, norms, and values might be employed to normalize or justify damage, therefore rendering violence appear acceptable or imperceptible. The risk in this form of violence lies in the tendency of individuals to embrace it only due to its inherent presence within their own cultural framework. Cultural violence renders direct or structural violence appear permissible or unavoidable. Specifically, sexist beliefs that depict women as inferior rationalize acts of violence based on gender. It frequently presents itself through symbols, words, and pictures that diminish the humanity of specific people, therefore rendering violence against them appear rational or acceptable. Cultural violence has the potential to perpetuate systemic disparities by integrating prejudiced behaviors and ideologies, such as racism, sexism, or classism, into commonplace society. (Galtung, 1969. p.163)

Nottage illustrates the risk of cultural violence via many victims, particularly the female characters. Mama Nadi serves as the voice of wisdom in the play, commenting on war and cultural violence when she states, "It's not my war." I keep my head when others do not. I keep the business running when everything around me is falling apart." (Nottage, 2012. p.62)

This statement illustrates the pervasive social violence that has infiltrated the protagonists' existence. Mama Nadi's disengagement from the fight exemplifies the normalization of war and cultural violence in her environment.

Sophie, another victim of cultural abuse, vocalizes the anguish of her internal wounds, referencing the scars imprinted by her prior experiences. Sophie singing "They left me ruined like the hollow of a tree with nothing left inside just scars" (Nottage, 2012.p.64). Sophie's song encapsulates the personal ramifications of cultural violence on women, illustrating the physical and psychological traumas inflicted by sexual abuse in a war-torn culture. The impact of cultural violence extends beyond female characters to include the male characters as well.

CHRISTIAN: A man does what he must to survive, but we can't survive on shame. (Nottage, 2012. p.81)

This quotation underscores the detrimental expectations imposed on males in a situation of war, illustrating how violence impacts not only women but also alters male identities.

Conclusion

The research study examines the various forms of violence inflicted against the female characters in Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*. The significance of the research lies in its examination of many forms of violence, particularly structural and cultural violence, across diverse contexts. The research asserts that wartime violence against women in Nottage's *Ruined* differs from that experienced during peacetime. War institutionalizes some forms of violence as integral components of daily life and society. War exacerbates the plight of women, as they are often utilized as instruments for strategic and military objectives. The female body, particularly the womb, becomes a battleground in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The study indicated that Nottage in *Ruined* effectively shifted the feminist perspective on violence by framing war violence against Congolese women as a crime against humanity rather than only as an issue affecting women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She raises awareness that rape perpetrated during wartime is not an incidental outcome of conflict or violent acts, but rather a well-orchestrated program aimed at achieving certain objectives. In her play, she emphasizes the instrumental and strategic application of violence as a weapon that is as effective as bullets and rockets.

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العنف في الدراما الأمريكية المعاصرة: قراءة يوهان جالتونج لمسرحية لين نوتاج "المدمرة"

الملخص:

تستكشف الدراسة أنواعاً عديدة من العنف الممارس على الشخصيات النسائية في مسرحية "المدمر" للكاتبة لين نوتاج. وتحاول الباحثة الوصول إلى نتائجها من خلال دراسة متعمقة للعمل المختار. وتبحث الدراسة في كيفية استخدام نوتاج للحبكة والمكان والشخصيات لتوصيل مفاهيم وموضوعات معقدة حول العنف. وتدرس الدراسة تجليات العنف في مسرحية "المدمر" (2008) الحائزة على جائزة بوليتزر للكاتبة لين نوتاج، من خلال منظور الإطار المسرحي للعنف الذي وضعه يوهان جالتونج. يوفر نموذج جالتونج الثلاثي، الذي يشمل العنف المباشر والبنوي والثقافي، أداة حاسمة لتحليل الطبيعة المنهجية ومتعددة الأوجه للصراع في المسرحية، التي تصور الواقع الوحشي للمرأة في الكونغو التي مزقتها الحرب. ومن خلال تطبيق نظرية جالتونج، تُسلط الدراسة الضوء على كيفية قيام نوتاج بإضفاء طابع درامي ليس فقط على أعمال العنف الجسدي والجنسي المرئية (العنف المباشر)، ولكن أيضاً على التفاوتات الاجتماعية والسياسية المتجذرة (العنف البنوي) والأيدولوجيات المُسوَّغة التي تُديم القمع (العنف الثقافي). تُضيف نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى المعرفة المتوفرة حول الدراما الأمريكية المعاصرة ودور العنف في انعكاس السياق الاجتماعي والثقافي للمجتمع الأمريكي الحديث، بل وحتى المجتمعات الأخرى. وأخيراً، تُقدم هذه الدراسة بحثاً مُعمقاً في استخدام العنف في المسرح الأمريكي المعاصر، مُتخذةً مسرحية "المدمر" للكاتبة لين نوتاج مثالاً. ومن خلال دراسة دور العنف في المسرحية المذكورة، مع مراعاة الظروف الاجتماعية والثقافية والتاريخية التي عُرضت فيها، تُقدم الدراسة فهماً مُعمقاً لمفهوم أهمية العنف وتأثيره على الدراما الأمريكية المعاصرة.

الكلمات الدالة: العنف، الدمار، لين نوتاج، النساء المعذبات، الحرب، الدراما الأمريكية الحديثة.

توندوتيتزي له درامای هاوچهرخی نهامریکیدا: خویندنهوهی جو هان گالتونگ بو لین نوتیج تیکچوو

پوخته:

تویژینهوهه لیکۆلینهوه له چنبدین جوړی توندوتیژی دهکات که لهسه کارمکته ژنهکانی فیلمی Ruined ی لین نوتاج دانراوه. تویژمر ههول دهکات به ئهجامدانی پشکنینی ورد بو کاره ههلبیژ دراوهکه بگاته نهجامهکان. تویژینهوهه لیکۆلینهوه لهوه دهکات که چۆن نوتاج پلوت و شوین و کارمکتههکان بهکاردههینتی بو گهاندنی چهک و تهوه نهالوز مهکان سهبارت به توندوتیژی. تویژینهوهه له چاویلکهی چوارچیوهی شانوی توندوتیژی یوهان گالتونگ، دهکهوتنی توندوتیژی له شانوانامهی لین نوتاج که خهلاتی پولیتزمری وهگرتهوه، (2008) Ruined دهکۆلینهوه. مودیلی سێ قۆلی گالتونگ که توندوتیژی راستهوخ و پیکهاتهیی و کولتوری لهخۆدهگریت، نامرازیکی گرینگ بو شیکردنهوهی سروشتی سېستماتیکی و فره لایهنی ململانی له شانوانامهکهدا دابین دهکات، که واقیعه درندهکانی ژن له کۆنگۆی جهنگاویدا نیشان دهکات. تویژینهوهه به بهکارهینانی تیوری گالتونگ تیشک دمخاته سهه نهوهی که چۆن نوتاج نهک تهغه کردموه دیارمهکانی توندوتیژی جهستهیی و سیکسی (توندوتیژی راستهوخ) بهلکو نایهکسانی کومه لایهتی-سیاسی چهپاو (توندوتیژی پیکهاتهیی) و نایدولوزیا ناساییکراوهکان که ستهمکاری بهردوام دهکهن (توندوتیژی کولتوری) دراماتیکی دهکات. دۆزینهوهکانی نهه لیکۆلینهوهیه زیاد دهکهن بو جهستهی زانیاری هههوهکهیی له درامای نهامریکی هاوچهرخی و رۆلی توندوتیژی له رهنهگدانهوهی چوارچیوهی کومه لایهتی و کولتوری کومه لگهی مۆدیرن نهامریکی بان تههانهت کومه لگهکانی دیکه که شانوانامهوهسانی نهامریکی بو زیادکردنی گشتگیری زیاتر بو چهکمی توندوتیژی بهکاری دههین. له کۆتاییدا نهه لیکۆلینهوهیه لیکۆلینهوهیهکی ورد له بهکارهینانی توندوتیژی له شانوی هاوچهرخی نهامریکیا دمخاته روه، به بهکارهینانی فیلمی ویرانکراوی لین نوتاج وهک نموونهیهک. به لیکۆلینهوهه له رۆلی توندوتیژی له شانوانامهی پێشودا، به بههه چاگرتهی نهه بارودوخه کومه لایهتی و کولتوری و میژووبیهی که شانوانامهکه تیییدا ناسینراوه. تویژینهوهه تیکههشتنیکي نوانس له گرنگی چهکمی توندوتیژی و کاریگهه بیهکانی لهسه درامای نهامریکی هاوچهرخی دهکات.

وههه سهههکی: توندوتیژی، ویران، لین نوتاج، نازاری ژنان، شهه، درامای نهامریکی مۆدیرن.