

Abstract

The thesis is concerned with the two concepts of myth and history in the drama of Marina Carr and Suzan Lori Parks. Both playwrights regard myth and history as two major elements in the process of subjectivity. They propose a psychoanalytic approach to the process that depends on different psychoanalytic theories of identity development. Their plays clearly reflect that they draw heavily upon Freud's theory of trauma, his theory of the murder of primal father, Jung's theory of collective unconscious and Kristeva's theory of abjection. Carr and Parks suggest two psychoanalytic models of identity building that parallel and complement each other: Jung's theory which depends upon the two steps of revelation and revision and Freud's theory of trauma resolving. Jung suggests that to build subjectivity, one has to go back to the past to resurrect old identity through the myths underlying it and then to suggest a rewriting of these myths by depicting them as imperfect and misleading. This marks a go beyond the old identity and a suggestion to build a new one. Freud, on the other hand, suggest that a successful subjectivity depends upon a further step of trauma resolving through which the individual can restore back old traumas of the past and see them differently to strip them of agony and pain to help the individual to rid himself of those experiences that held him back and hinder his subjectivity building. However, Carr and Parks gave no evidence that their characters succeeded because they fail to achieve what Kristeva calls an intertextuality between the symbolic and the semiotic. The thesis also suggests that Carr and Parks's plays are therapeutic rather than redemptive because they suggest a destabilizing of the trauma itself by depicting it from different perspectives and through their ritualistic presentation of actions.