



The New War Plays: From Kane to Harris

Julia Boll

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How can war be represented on stage? How does the theatre examine the structures leading to violence and war and explore their transformation of societies? Springing from the discussion about 'New Wars' in the age of globalisation, this study demonstrates how these 'New Wars' bring forth new plays about war. These plays examine the state of war in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century by introducing the traits of the New Wars and the state of exception as crucial frames of reference. Exposing the *homo sacer* as one of the remaining taboos of our stages and the political taboo of our society, they attempt to find the truth about war in testimonies that nurse western society's vicarious and actual traumas, and reveal the 'war palimpsest' on stage by demonstrating how the New Wars are underwritten by the Thirty-Years War and ancient warfare. Looking at well-known plays such as Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, Caryl Churchill's *Far Away* and Gregory Burke's *Black Watch*, Boll also discusses works such as Zinnie Harris's war trilogy *Midwinter, Solstice and Fall*, David Greig's *Dunsinane* and Elfriede Jelinek's *Bambiland*.

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