

Study of Diaspora in Caryl Churchill's Seven Jewish Children – A play for Gaza

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Abstract

Caryl Churchill is one of the contemporary titan figures in the world of British drama and theater. She effectively handled the Diaspora literature in her play “Seven Jewish Children - A Play for Gaza in 2009”. Children are being a victim in patriarchal society and Warfield. This paper is an attempt to spotlight how the Gaza children or girl children faced the diasporic experiences of the war. So, they scattered from their home, motherland, or ancestral land to refugee camps, rehabilitation centers, hospitals, and the army. They lost their childishness and childhood happiness and became traitors, conspirators, and deserters in the young stage itself. She coined the term “Tell her” and “don’t tell her” often. Because she doesn't want to frighten the children regarding the war, war field, and their past sentimental nostalgia which they did not attain and prohibited in current situations like education, mothers love, fathers care, food, shelter. They are searching for their own lives and identities. It is very pathetic. She narrated the harsh journey undertaken by the children and “homeland” protagonists either adopting or rejecting new cultural codes of their new “sense of place”. The children's Journey is not only towards self-realization, self-knowledge, and self-recognition but also fighting to survive and come out from the past thoughts. Caryl’s pathos writing is reflecting her strong moral support to the children.

Keywords: children, diaspora, migration, homeland, conspirator, survival, nostalgia, rejection, identity.

INTRODUCTION

The Greek word of diasporic writers who were scattered from homeland to shift another place, their work reflects the sufferings and troubles that they have faced during their long journey. They make their own identity by reestablishing the cultural and linguistic behaviors that they carried from their base land. Finally, they create a community, which has its own identity, culture, class, language, tradition, and race. World literature is influenced by the diaspora. It deals with habitat loss, change of nativity, removal of identity, a new set of traditional emergences, mother tongue replacement, and regeneration of mixed culture. It addressed the

rebirth of new cultures from multiple cultures in various situations.

In the process of relocation, one is permanent, it rises to new living styles and culture; they may be the same or different family. With their writing readers can understand the difficulties and hurdles a person and group of people face during relocation. Another one is temporary relocation may not give any rise to new culture or traditions.

The Diasporic literature can have a great difference between the first and second generations. The first generation deals with changes in the dressing style, and food style of the migrated peoples, which they have to

accept. In the name of modernization, changes in food and dress style always happened in normal human life. The acceptance-based is on individuals but when they are forced to change makes them pathetic feel. For example, our ancestors forcefully experienced the diasporic complication when English, Dutch and Portuguese were a part of the Indian economy. They are the migrant but insisting us to follow their cultures to the existing ones and reframe them. We can see the impact in our generation but it accepts by us for a social status now. Our mother tongue was replaced by English and it became a world-ruling language now.

The second generation does not focus on food and clothing but mainly deals with the language, culture, tradition, race, and so on. While we read the various dimensions of diaspora literature, the terms 'Nation' and 'Identity' are very important words.

The concept of nation and identity becomes necessary to know and investigate human existence, and their way of living life in the past and present. It was neither experienced nor imagined by humanity in prehistoric ages. The real problem of nation and identity emerges when such an expatriate finds himself nowhere, even in the middle of the ocean of human beings.

In the Old Stone Age, people moved from place to place to fill their tummies. However, in the age of science and technology, people moved for many reasons example hike in their living standards need for high-salary job opportunities. Sometimes people have moved vigorously, forcefully, and fiercely in the name of the religion, caste, and greed of a particular person. Some persons are avaricious to get ruling power and acquire the land and suck people's blood like a leech. So, people sent out by them, that people have given new birth to culture, language, and tradition.

Women's marriage life is compared to the diaspora in modern trends. According to Dr. Aparna Sharma and Ms. Ruchika Paliwal:

"A woman is forced to adapt to the new family whatever it may be. Her migration is just like a transplanted plant. A plant that grows and

nourishes in its native soil, when transplanted to some other place, takes time to adapt itself. Sometimes it gets success to survive and sometimes it fails. Even in the case of its survival, the tender plant needs proper care in order to make its grip over the soil of the new place. This experience is not different than a diaspora, who too experiences the same struggle to own the new culture and his/her new identity".

Caryl is also an immigrant writer and expatriate during the war and exile. Her play *Seven Jewish Children* is a response to the 2008-2009 Israel military strike on Gaza. She is lighting the Israeli military campaign devastation in Gaza and turns the floodlights on the confusion within Jewish identity. The Jewish's history of innocence change into ruthless barbarians is not a revelation. She is portrayed in a sensitive manner.

It is minimalistic and short format because she needs immediate acting for the humanitarian crisis. Caryl presents clearly, what was left behind and what transformed through her play. She granted free performance rights and collected the money for medical aid for Palestinians. Her main intention, the issue is to be examined and expected thought about by the general public of the world. She cleverly coined the concept of the illocutionary and perlocutionary way of advising the children. The victory of the play lies in the efficient alluded, eluded way of communication. Holocaust, distribution of anti-Semitic materials presents in some scenes of the play. In this play, the time-space structure is not provided by her in each scene. It is a six-page, seven scenes, ten-minute play that deals with 70 years of past events. Every event in the scenes is significant.

"Israel has done lots of terrible things in the past but what happened in Gaza seems particularly extreme" - The Guardian

Children who are recipients of the tentative and offered explanation but never take active players. Churchill uses the family members to advise and discuss what to tell or not to tell to the children to explore perspective on the

history of Israel and the conflict with Palestinians but the conversation between characters in different time periods and places.

The word “children” arises uncertainty. It refers girl or a boy or both, that quest rose in the readers' minds. It is very sensible and causes gender issues. However, here girl child got a dominant gender role often. Sometimes, it is compared with newborn Jewish nation rightness and innocence. Caryl top-notched how Palestine holocaust the Jew people.

The play is built with a dialogue of “tell her / Don’t tell her” adults exchange particular words from the binging to the end. Different adults character discusses among themselves in a colloquial way, not based on any literary manner, how to tell a child (her) about the right to the land, identity, violent death, survival, persecution, victimhood, displacement, fear, hope, and the plight of Jewish people along with history. “Don’t frighten her” and remind her “they’re bad in-game”. “Don’t tell her Arabs used to sleep in her bedroom”. The game of war leads the sexual abuse, sexual assault, atrocious slavery, and brutal death to her. Here it refers to the girl child. Sometimes the child is used in common gender.

Caryl focuses on the painful diasporic life of Gaza children. Even the children are not able to play with their friends, own toys, watch TV, sing a song not even sleep peacefully in their bed, live without their parents, family members, and close relative. Through her writing, she tried to make the readers and audience feel to realize the torment and torture faced by the children. The play is full of ascetic and poetic expression and much space for ambiguity as admitted by her. Children have immigrated to the desert and are victims of nostalgic, lonely, homeless, and alienated feelings. They were making new farms in the desert with olive trees. “Tell her about camels in the desert and dates”. Aloofness and struggle for adaptation to the new land are basic surrounding of the play.

The seventh scene is an outburst of loud and violent vindication. The psychological link between the past trauma and present brutality is

portrayed by her very tenderly. Some of the characters embodied, consistent heteroglossia, polyphony, and interpretation of the Jewish community. Israeli think of diasporas in terms of their traditional association with moral degradation, insecurity, and persecution.

In a socio, psychological sense the diaspora has not ended because the state of Israel is itself in a “diaspora” condition globally. Political consequences are having, advantageous and disadvantageous for the diaspora. Diaspora people or children find themselves restricted in their own house and motherland.

Jew children are encountered by war. Children lose their habitual activities, removal of identities, have multilingual problems, and forfeit of mother tongue. Caryl's aim is to convey their suffering, orphaned, lamenting, heart sickness, wailing and widowed which they have met during the exile or scattered down by the war. Their life is full of blood and violence.

Refugee camp and rehabilitation center becomes the epitome of permanent migration. Migrants' shift not only gave physical pain but also lead to mental illness. Elders are not accepting easily immigration, think about the children of Gaza in a gunpoint environment without their parents' presence, and are not aware of their living status.

Caryl insists the children see the photograph of grandmother and her uncle. She presents a vivid picture of their root culture and host culture with her characters like grandma and adults. She described her grandmother as clever, brave, not feeling for her sons' death, and who died in the war field. She did not feel sad about it instead she felt very proud. “Tell her grandmother was clever / Don’t tell her what they did / Tell her she was brave”. Grandmother would be delighted when grandchildren are silent and not afraid of host land people.

Children do not easily embrace a new culture of the host land. However, war brings them into a new world. It is difficult for children to become a part of new situations and circumstances. When we read the play, we are not able to compromise and phantasm. Lots of

freedom and aspiration are restricted to the children playing with their friends and toys, singing a song, video games, and watching TV because war relocated them. Even, though life is questionable to them, thinking about their identities is unimaginable. Nevertheless, here they need painless, fearless life. The children will become robotic and obey their orders. "Tell her to curl up as if she's in bed"

"Tell her she'll have cake is she is good" Children like cakes, ice cream, and chocolate naturally. Here children are even not able to get eatable things. Such a situation was made by war. Meanwhile, we have to see the pathetic incident here if the child hides and keeps silent themselves they will get the cake. "Tell her it's a game / Tell her it's serious/ But don't frighten her". War is compared to hide-and-seek games because does not want to affect children's hope for future life. They transform their old heritage to the young generation, how their grandmother, aunty, and mothers prepared a cake. They want to carry over their traditional variety of food and taste from generation to generation. "Tell her she taught me how to make cakes".

The term "nation and identity" does a dominant role and it is exposed by the character of the grandmother and uncle. Their life value, braveness, patriotism, devotion, and superiority are memorialized and transformed to the young generation by the characters like parents, adults, and other relations of the children. They tried to reframe it with their confident advice, which alter the children and explain that they lost their life. They want to preserve the cultural heritage for their future generation. Their conceit identity is necessary for human existence in the past and present.

The words like "land" and "home" have eluded meaning. It refers to the political and historical meaning and highlights the element of national identity. They were not able to forget their "holy land" where their "great great great great lots of greats grandad lived there". It is recalled to children. "Tell her for miles and miles all round they have land of their own". Now their enemy captures it. Jewish narratives, native, identity, and discourse, and tries to claim the

land which they occupied by territories is connecting to the "Promised land". Promised Land is a central element and major issue in history that is handled by Caryl ambiguously.

In the third scene tell her of course "tell her everyone was driver out and the county is waiting for us to come home" the voices express the feeling of urgency about returning to the native land of Israel or Gaza. Because children do not easily embrace the new culture, religion, food, language, and tradition of the host land. The true diverging interpretations in the play handled by Caryl it about "home" or "not home", telling her they are going away. It exposed their thought of Diaspora of thinking of their past home native place.

Some diaspora persists and their members do not go "home because there is no homeland to which to return. Sometimes homeland may be existing but it is not a welcoming place and it would be inconvenient and disruptive, not traumatic to leave the diaspora".

A cartoon appears in *Le monde* several years ago, showing an old man who says: "I have never lost hope of returning to my homeland someday. However, I no longer remember where I came from".

The inability of the adults bares the monologues "tell/don't tell" explains terrible events that happen in their life. That confusion is flowing throughout the play. They exile from natal land to Bedouin life in desert tents, they cannot live in their home, not play with their friends and they have been forced to adapt to the desert life, food like dates, climate, not fright and rude to them. The adaptability does not come naturally but Diaspora pulls them to accept it. They did not have the freedom to show they are angry towards their brutality.

They promised the children whose friends may come and visit them when they return to their homeland. It is land given to them by God. It is an adventure and no one teases her. "The country is waiting for us to come home". Unfortunately, they were attacked by the rockets fortunately few of them were only killed. The emotional imbalance is also faced by the children. However, it is not aware of

them and Caryl is not allowed to say to them to save the children's life from past thinking and psychological issues. Children's cousins were severing in the army but they were not interested in it. Many of them lost their lives at a young age.

She emphasizes the Pride of their armies, and the different images of Jewish people's victory, inclination to war, and self-contented nature in the fight. "Tell her how big their armies are Tel her we're fighters". They felt very proud and emphasis their elders like uncle, father, and grandfather are great fighters and warriors. "Tell her her brother's a hero" their army gave a strong promise to capture a new land to them. That kind of hope and pride has been given to the children.

Before starting a war every one follows international humanitarian law, it is to prevent unnecessary and avoidable collateral damage. It aims to protect civilians, including children from tragic impacts. Both countries might agree to stop a war or declare war allowing each other's citizens to cross borders freely but here human rights are violated.

People of Gaza struggle for the basic needs of drinking water but their enemies occupied their water for swimming pools. "Tell her it's not the water for their fields. Don't tell her anything about water". Their houses were knocked and pulled down by the bulldozer; the building site became a Warfield. To exile, they stand in queues at the checkpoint for a long time. They migrated to the desert and build new towns in the wilderness. Even though their armies behave in animalistic ways, throw stones, and set off bombs in cafes. Gaza needs peace but the small boy is explosively forced to join the military because they killed their elders. The children's young cousin was refused to serve in the army, but the government insisted and forced them to serve the nation. Education is prohibited for small children. Jew killed the babies by mistake for that it never felt pity but pride in its army. Jewish were rejoicing in the murder of little children. She reflects on the shock and enormity of what happened in Gaza. They did not feel for the death of the policemen but they laughed. Palestinians' intentions of

driving them to sea and they need a wall to keep them safe and end with the same initial allusion to the swimming.

As a commentator, she deals with the issues of Jewish identity and is a good observer of the elastic qualities of Jewish history reality, and identity. We can realize the qualities of Jewish identity politics do not stop from celebrating their aspiration at the expense of the Palestinian people. Caryl conveys theatrically Jewish identity in a very flexible realm. She doesn't want to say, "don't tell her they were killed" and keep up but at the next moment better," tell her they were killed". Therefore, she rushes back to the Ghetto. She tried to spread death amongst and enemies of Israel and asked them 'don't frighten her' because if she is not frightened enough already.

They never shared a common origin at different stages in history, they adopted the Jewish religion. At a certain stage, they have invented their own nation's identity. The identity is a tactical detachment and in a methodical creates an imaginary symbolic order with a clear pragmatic agenda. Caryl traces the disastrous toll of Jewish identity politics achieved in turning out the Jewish state into a cold-blooded murderer.

conclusion

She thought that it is a direct homeopathic does to public awareness. It is a play "for Gaza" not about Gaza, fraught with anger, disapproval of food, shelter, and homeland. Why are the young children punished and victims of that crucial aliment from natal families? They did not realize what kind of sin they committed to the same humankind. She carried over a psychological link between past trauma and present brutality. Assimilated fear occupied the mind of elders. The constant central device "tell/don't tell" is tell as the inability of the adults to elucidate the terrible events past and present to their children. We are not accepting condoning brutality. Children undoubtedly suffered from the diaspora. Moreover, up to 2021 Palestinian and 139 Israeli children were killed in the war. 10,000 families were exiled

from Gaza, women in a refugee camp. On earth Gaza, as a hell, their children lived now. Diaspora creates new literature but gives more pain and leaves a pathetic impression on the human soul.

The girl at the end of the play conveys an image of naivety and blamelessness. The young nation or girl's metaphorical innocence makes Israel's crimes so sinister. In Israel's propaganda that the Jewish state is a vulnerable innocent guiltless entity, Israeli devastating brutality leads to the inevitable cognitive dissonance. Israelis' delusional innocence makes frightened people out and they themselves proved to be sadistic. It is called behavioral projection. "Tell her we love her/ Don't frighten her". End of the play Jews have a correct reason for being frightened. Their national state is a racist entity of genocidal.

After the 1947 Shoah, Jews transform their fate; explore the nation of forgiveness and mercy. A few intellectual Jew insisted that themselves as the forefront of the battle of racism and oppression.

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