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**Female Agency in Diane Glancy's The Woman Who Was A Red Deer Dressed for the Deer Dance ¹****A B S T R A C T**

Agency becomes a condition for other ethnic communities that do not have European roots. Cultural legacy, history, and family are significant in the process of agency. Diane Glancy aims to recount the idea that a native person must give up cultural allegiance to blend in harmony within privileged-class. This study discusses self-agency in *The Woman Who Was A Red Deer Dressed for the Deer Dance* (1995) by the contemporary American women playwright, Diane Glancy. Generally speaking, as a result of racism and ethnocentrism, native Americans are mistreated and are considered as second class citizens. Moreover, this class of people has usually been under the struggle of absorption and conservation their real agency. In her play, Glancy is able to entwine various cultures in the narrative sense and descriptive one. Making use of her pays, Glancy has the ability of manipulating the sides of borderlands for the purpose of creating a sensation of fragmentation that reflected the disunity of the native American culture. She, however, usually attains that by utilizing unanticipated and devious structures of language. Moreover, her play depicts the conflict between two characters that belonged to two generations, Grandmother and Girl. Glancy believe that agency is essential in a society of cultural differences.

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فاعلية المرآه في المسرحية الأمريكية الأصلية

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المستخلص

تصبح الفاعلية شرطاً للمجتمعات العرقية الأخرى التي ليس لها جذور أوروبية. الإرث الثقافي والتاريخ والأسرة مهمة في عملية الفاعلية. تهدف ديانا كلانسي إلى سرد فكرة أن الشخص الأصلي يجب أن يتخلى عن الولاء الثقافي للاندماج في وئام داخل الطبقة المتميزة. تناقش هذه الدراسة الفاعلية في " المرأة التي كانت في رداء الغزالة الأحمر لرقصة الغزالة " (١٩٩٥) للكاتبة المسرحية الأمريكية المعاصرة ديانا غلانسي. بشكل عام ، نتيجة للعنصرية والمركزية العرقية ، يتعرض الأمريكيون الأصليون لسوء المعاملة ويعتبرون مواطنين من الدرجة الثانية. علاوة على ذلك ، كانت هذه الفئة من الناس عادة تحت صراع الاستيعاب والحفاظ على وكالتهم الحقيقية . في مسرحيتها ، تستطيع كلانسي دمج الثقافات المختلفة بالمعنى السردى والوصفي. من خلال الاستفادة من أجراها ، تتمتع كلانسي بالقدرة على التلاعب بجوانب المناطق الحدودية لغرض خلق إحساس بالتشردم يعكس انقسام الثقافة الأمريكية الأصلية. ومع ذلك، فإنها عادة ما تحقق ذلك من خلال استخدام هياكل غير متوقعة وملتوية للغة. علاوة على ذلك، تصور مسرحيتها الصراع بين شخصيتين تنتميان إلى جيلين ، الجدة والفتاة. يعتقد غلانسي أن الفاعلية ضرورية في مجتمع من الاختلافات الثقافية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفاعلية ، الامريكيين الأصليين ، ديانا كلانسي .

Introduction

Diane Glancy, born in 1941 is a native American poet, author and playwright his father is a Cherokee and his mother is an English –German –American. She is a descendant of the Cherokees (Birchfield, 1997), whose name means the real people (McClinton, 2007). Glancy graduated from high school, in St. Lewis, in Kansas furthermore. Later she went to Missouri University where she got her college degree in English, in 1964. She had her M.A. at Central State University in Edmond, Oklahoma, in 1983. She procured her M.F.A. in 1988, when she applied to and was acknowledged by the Iowa Writers' Workshop in Iowa City. In Iowa Glancy wrote poetry collections including *Trigger Dance* (1990), *Iron Woman* (1990), and *Long Dog's Winter Count* (1991 (McClinton, 2007).

Glancy's works relied on Native American life and how customary qualities and lifestyles were associated and compared with those of present day United States. Glancy focused on presenting stories that concentrated on the wealthy and carrying the tradition of her lineage. She is able to change several opinions in order to make an effective and bright social fabric of Native life (Birchfield,1997). In her writing, Glancy deals with different social aspects such as ethnicity, religious identity, gender differences, drunkenness, incest, kinship relations, lovers' dispute...etc. (Dawes, 2007).

Glancy has a prominent position among Native American playwrights. In *Footpaths and Bridges* (2011), Monique Mojica believed in a cultural need to create a theatre that has at

its center the way movement, oratory and song are used, using the structures of Native American stories, and the symbols that connect to the sacred (Mojica, 2011). Glancy blended her experience at the stage with innovative theories (Glancy, 1987), and negotiated the conflicts between different cultural influences, forms, and styles, between script and performance, and between oral and written traditions (Glancy, 2012). In the greater part of her plays, there is “the intercalation of the physical worlds, the dream world ... the spirit beings ... the ancestors, the imaginative experience, which is a strip of all between” (Mojica, 2011).

Glancy was awarded several times. In 1990, her nonfiction manuscript, *Claiming Breath*, won the inaugural North American Indian Prose Award. She was a two-time winner of the biannual Best Play Competition of the Five Civilized Tribes Museum in Muskogee, Oklahoma. In 1995, she won the one-act play competition sponsored by Gary Former’s *Aboriginal Voices* magazine in Toronto, Canada. In 2014, she won the prize of Lifetime of Americas litterateur (Birchfield, 1997).

Glancy depends on storytelling as a significant resource for the theatre, not only because it transcends the contradiction between the oral and the written, but because it is as a strong cultural resource of historiography, memory, and identity which empowers the community and provides healing (Dawes, 2010). Her poetic style in writing plays requires a specific reader response. Also, her works include performances, readings and acts of interpretations. In her works, Glancy presents various perspectives and their ethics of dialogues concerning political and cultural differences, and most of her characters have multicultural backgrounds. Besides that, her writings reflect her position between the two cultures (Dawes, 2010). Glancy’s dramatic works have transcendent dimension of the material sphere of nature. They refer to her Christian foundation and her spiritual native background. She searches for meaning in her Christian beliefs and native American ones. That quest is often depicted in her plays, such as, *The Words of My Roaring* (2006) and *Stick Horse* (1997) (Dawes, 2010). She states in *Claiming Breath* (1996) that “Our humanness is the same whatever the ethnic group. We just have different medicines for carrying those differences” (Glancy, 1992). She is strongly conscious of the significance of language; in “The Cold-And-Hunger Dance”, she mentions how much she likes the experimentations she does with the American language which contain “changing syntax” (Glancy, 1998) and “opening the language to accommodate minority and women’s voices” (Glancy, 1998). She often experiments with the structure of her plays to communicate her ideas. Her language is highly imaginative and the dramatic structure she uses is very diverse (Glancy, 1998).

In her plays, Glancy usually works with the techniques of preserving memories and telling stories. Those techniques represented two of the most powerful features of native American drama. She uses the past as a key term in her dramatic works. However, that does not mean that Glancy is interested in the past in an attempt to rewrite it. She is interested in the contemporary world; the past is used by her to improve the present. In an interview with Jenifer Andrews, Glancy mentions how much her character and her life are affected by her heritage (Andrews, 2002). She states “we carry racial memory, generational memory, with her us, a spirit DNA that brings us into line” (Andrews, 2002). She always presents personal experience with the general experience of the Cherokee tribe. Glancy, who is considered a

representative of an oppressed ethnic group, presents race and tragic past for the complicated process of re-building the identity of contemporary native Americans (Andrews, 2002).

When she was asked by James Mackey in an interview about the reasons of her choice to be a writer, she simply replied:

I think the lack of words, the lack of identity, the lack of place. ... I was born between cultures, my mother was English and German, my father Cherokee: none of those heritages went together. Who was I? What was I? I was also very shy. I kind of felt on the outside of things and so words. Written words especially, because I didn't like spoken words for long time. But it was when I began to write, just the feel of putting words on the page made some sort of trail to the place I wanted to go (Mackay, 2010).

Glancy describes her works as "a combination of retrieval, restoration, and preservation of the culture in all its layers, ... of what Indianness is about, and how it can be presented on stage" (Glancy, 2013).

This play was published and re printed reprinted several times Glancy (2012). The theme that was presented and described in this play was a form of conflict between a Girl and her Grandmother. The character of the Grandmother refers to the traditions of the tribes in the past life. She continues narrating her ancestors' mythical tails and tries to compare them with their present life. She says that she was a kind of superstitious deer. By telling these tails to her granddaughter, she wants the Girl to learn how to know and find her true agency. The Girl, symbolizes the young generation who has no idea of their agency. The reason of the struggle is that the Grandmother wants the Girl to live with such an honorable agency in the society; but, the Grandmother cannot persuade the Girl as she still pays no heed to her heritage. At the end, the Girl was able to accept the ideas of her legacy as well as she accepts her self-agency. At the very beginning of the play, Glancy clarifies saying that this literary work is mixture between the old cultures and traditions and the contemporary ones (Glancy, 2002).

Her plays have autobiographical overtones. In "*The Woman Who Was a Red Deer Dressed for the Deer Dance*", bringing up with an English-German mother and a Cherokee father, Glancy talks on her own personal cultural displacement and forced assimilation; "it was my mother who portrayed her white part of my lineage as full," she says (Glancy, 1987). Her writing is still inspired by the remembrance of her Cherokee grandmother. Girl, like her author, discovers her genuine self-agency in the end. The experience of diaspora is triggered by a sense of dislocation. Girl is portrayed as a character with dispersion agency, which Hall defines as those that are continuously making and renewing themselves new, via metamorphosis and difference (Hall, 2003).

Analysis and Discussion

This play is structured in a sequence of soliloquies and conversations between an old lady and her mixed blood granddaughter. Despite their being together, their interactions are forced. As they appear on the stage, the granddaughter is separated from her grandmother by a clear line that has been painted between them. The difference in meaning between monologue and dialogue is that the first refers to a style of speech in which one speaker tells or narrates a story while the second stands for a form of interaction in which a number of participants' exchange speech and there is an audience involved in that interaction. The soliloquy and discussions depict the two women's exasperation (Stanlake, 2009). Ahw'uste and the spirit are mentioned by Grandmother. Grandmother asserts she has seen Ahw'uste, a legend that is related to Cherokee tribe which resembles a spirit of a deer that has wings by which it moves between materialistic world and the spiritual one. The story talks about the red dressing she designed to convey the spirit of the deer. The granddaughter shows her desire to meet the Ahw'uste and to see the spiritual realm, in spite of the fact that the girl considers her Grandmother's lifestyle conflicts her own. She says; "I want to wear a deer dress; I want to deer dance with Ahw'uste" (Glancy, 2012).

Native playwrights that embrace storytelling as a technique attempt to correct historical events by bringing the neglected and ignored Native Americans' tales to light, who played a significant part in forming the modern world. Glancy embraces storytelling, which is a crucial component for actors since it has an impact on future events as well as shaping the past (Stanlake, 2009).

Gerald Vizenor, as a well-known Native American playwright and theoretician, explains his feelings towards Indian as follows:

The Indian is the invention, and Indian cultures are simulations, that is, the ethnographic construction of a model that replaces the real in most academic references. Natives are the real, the ironies of the real, and an unnameable sense of presence, but simulations are the nonattendance, thus the Indian is a nonappearance, not a presence ... The reproductions of the other have no genuine beginning, no unique reference, and there is no genuine put on this landmass that bears the significance of that name. The Indian was mimicked to be a nonattendance, to be without a spot (Vizenor,1999).

According to Vizenor, the term "Indian" is associated with colonialism. It will always be linked to the establishment of borders and stereotypes. He emphasizes two key aspects of the impersonation of Native American: the capability in visualizing the cultural aspect of people in the specific place and times in which they exist, the awareness of the mixture of cultures that are generated as a result of different related geographical, historical and linguistic factors, not merely genetic (Vizenor,1998).

Vizenor's postindian philosophy challenges colonial stereotypes of Native Americans. Bhabha (1994), in the same vein, has used the word combination in describing the process of bridging the cultural divide. According to Bhabha, combination is a sort of resistance:

Obstruction isn't really an oppositional demonstration of political goal, nor is it the straightforward invalidation or prohibition of the substance of another culture, as a distinction once saw. It is the impact of an uncertainty delivered inside the principles of acknowledgment of ruling talks as they articulate the indications of social contrast and reimplicate them inside the respectful connection of pilgrim power (Bhabha,1994).

The play employs storytelling as a means of depicting Native representation and transitions. Glancy argues that when drama just goes ahead with the norms of dispute, determination, storytelling, sequential order and so on, then it becomes somehow difficult to define. The movable elements migrate and interact with the plot in this process. It can also be regarded as a characteristic of the Native American oral conventions that are conveyed in a form of speech rather than being written (Glancy,1999).

Native American playwrights employ humour to portray the post-Indian character. It emphasizes Native Americans' agency and survival while acknowledging the terrible reality of modern Native American life. Glancy employs humour to build bridges between the legendary and the mundane worlds (Stanlake,2009). "How can you be a deer?" the girl asks Grandmother. Grandmother responds, "You only have two legs" (7), "I keep the others beneath my dress" (7). The respond of the Grandmother is amusing. Furthermore, the Girl is mocking her Grandmother's idea when her grandmother asked the girl to become a deer as she wants, saying, "What would I do with a tail?" Do you want me to put it like a sheep behind me? (10)

Transmotion is a dramatic component that brings people and nature together, with a focus on the spiritual value of animals and other things (Stanlake, 2009). Glancy has this to say about the usage of transmotion:

Native plays are frequently orbiculate. To return to terminology, realized improbabilities most likely characterizes the network of possibilities for the Native stage's unusual topography. The improbabilities that are acceptable. The oblique directions Blizzards, cold and heat, thunderstorms, humidity, humour and bleakness... all of Native theatre's other upheavals (Glancy, 1999).

Grandmother understands the significance of Native culture in having a prestigious agency. "Making medicine from songs" is how Grandmother describes her storytelling (17). She conveys the spiritual component of her agency through her deer dress: "My deer dress is the way I felt, transformed by the power of ceremony" (14). According to the Native American customs, the dress has some sort of signification in dancing and ceremonial. The dress that is red in colour, and which has been many times, signifies a sort of spiritual rootedness since it is inherited from my grandmother (14) and it has been the dress of Ahw'uste. The

Grandmother does not believe Girl is ready to wear the dress, so it has become a metaphorical representation of the of spiritual agency (Dawes, 2007).

In every part of the play, the Girl has been found attempting to signify her own agency and to make the Ahw'uste convention to get along with her modern life. The Girls finds her Grandmother's ideas unsuitable for her in this scenario. She wants Grandmother's help and guidance. In fact, it can be seen that her Grandmother's main focus is on her red dress, which she made for the deer dance, Ahw'uste, and the spirits (Stanlake, 2009). The Grandmother talks to the girl indirectly. Grandmother's words could be more personal, says the girl:

GRANDMOTHER: I have no desire in this world. We're restricted to what can be seen.

GIRL: she fought to live where we aren't tied to table and fork and knife and chair.

It was her struggle against what happens to us.

Why can't you let me in just once and speak to me as one of your own? You know I have to go into the seeable---live away from your world. You could give me more. (8)

Girl wears Grandmother's ceremonial red deer dress to show that she is ready to be like her. "Open your deer mouth and talk ... I could change into a deer like you". (7) The grandmother realises her Granddaughter is careless:

Why can't my granddaughter wait on the spirit? Why is she impatient? It takes a while sometimes. She says:

Hey, spirit, what's wrong? Your wings broke down? You need a jumper cable to get them started?

My granddaughter wants to do what she wants. Anything that rubs against her, well, she bucks. Runs the other way. I'm not going to give her my deer dress to leave in a heap on some dude's floor. It comes from long year from my grandmother. (15)

Instead of recounting stories, the girl wishes Grandmother could speak with her personally.

GIRL: Speak without your stories. Just once. What are you without your deer dress? What are you without your story of Ahw'uste?

GRANDMOTHER: We 're carriers of our stories and histories. We're nothing without them.

GIRL: We carry ourselves. Who are you beside your stories?

GRANDMOTHER: I don't know--- No one ever asked. (14)

Grandmother starts praying.; "Gu- s-di i-da-da-dv-hni My Relatives". (17) after learning about Ahw'uste's story the Girl could, at last, adopts Grandmother's teachings and started

accepting embracing the heritage her Cherokee by constructing her own linguistic expressions and declaring her capacity to see Ahw'uste (Darby, 2007).

The Girl strives to comprehend the tales of her Grandmother, the legacy and traditions and everything that has an obvious impact on her:

GIRL: My grandmother was a deer. I could see her change before my eyes. She caused stories to happen. That's how I knew she could be a deer.

At the fifth I continued –I'm sewing my own red-deer dress. It's different than my grandma's. Mine is a dress of words. (18)

The way a girl tells a story reveals her understanding of the value of her ancestors. Native traditional arts, according to Allen (1983), have an essential position:

The clans look for through tune, function, legend consecrated stories (fantasies), and stories to encapsulate, lucid, and share reality to bring the detached, confidential organization into amicability with this reality, to express the feeling of the magnificence and respectful secret, everything being equal, and to actualise, in language, those insights that give mankind its most noteworthy importance and nobility (Allen,1983).

As the girl states in her employment interview, she has now understood the spiritual agency, "I see Ahw'uste also" (18). The Girl is able to realize her true agency. She recognizes her actual power. Girl, by learning from Grandmother, has the ability to make a bridge between her grandmother's traditions and her recent ones. She recognizes the importance of hybridity in the formation of a distinctive agency. "Our proximate self-agency, our public image," writes Bhabha, "comes to be revealed for its discontinuities, inequalities, and minorities." (Bhabha, 1994).

The Girl attempts to convince her boss to be with her in the white world. Nonetheless, she respects the heritage of her Grandmother. The Girl has the ability to gain a respective position out of the mundane world of money and work, that position extends into a spiritual realm where she joins her ancestors. Her agency is a rebuke to her environment's harsh surroundings (Stanlake, 2009).

Glancy portrays Girl's agency changing over time. Grandmother's spiritual realm offends the girl. "You stuff twigs in your shoes to make them fit your hooves. But I know hooves are there" (10). The girl's attention is drawn to the tangible world. "I already know I don't fit anyplace," she says, referring to the fight between the spiritual and physical worlds. (11) Grandmother informs Girl that she will only be able to live a fuller life if she has a link to the past. She begins by informing Girl about her encounter with Ahw'uste. Girl, on the other hand, fights her inner desire as she tries to abandon the earthly world for a spiritual one. She has told her Grandmother to stop narrating stories (Darby, 2007).

The symbiotic interdependence between human life and nature is described by Glancy. Grandmother can be a deer who will occasionally let go of her four legs and dance in

order to communicate with the ancestors. Girl's understanding of transmittion is cultivated through her mythological deer story and other natural stories. The Grandmother tries explaining the fragment of the native agencies (Stanlake,2009). Grandmother also narrated a story about the leaves:

The leaves only get to be red for a moment. Just a moment, and then the tree grieves all winter until the leaves come back. But they're green through the summer. The maple waits for the leaves to turn red. All it takes is a few cold mornings. A couple of days avoided with regard to the glow. Then the maple tree has red leaves for a brief time (11).

The Grandmother hopes to motivate her granddaughter to create her own agency. Her tribe's culture is likened to a tree of maple which has red leaves during specific period of the year. The tree keeps waiting for the time in which the red leaves appear and never gets tired of her waiting, that is because it has hope and belief that these leaves will appear one day. The Grandmother tells her Granddaughter that they can believe in the presence of things they cannot see (Stanlake, 2009). "We count on what not there as though it is because the maple has red leaves," Grandmother adds (12). Girl, on the other hand, does not comprehend the meaning of stories at first. In a conversation during the recent work, she says:

At the rest of interviews, I started right in ---Let me talk for you--
-that's what I can do.

My Grandmother covered her trail. Left me without knowing how to make a deer dress. Left me without covering. But I make a covering. She could have left me if only she knew how.

I think I hear sometimes---that crevice you see through into the next world. You look again, it's gone.

My heart has red trees.

The afternoon must be filling up with leaves. You know, I've learned she told me more without speaking than she did with her words. (18)

As she tells Grandmother, the meaning of storytelling is important to her:

Like the accounts that rode on her quietness. You realized they were there. Be that as it may, you needed to choose what they implied.

Perhaps that is what she empowered me to fly when I realized I had no wings. At the point when I was avoided with regards to the old world that moved in her mind. At the point when I needed to happen without her accounts.

They get squashed in this world.

Be that as it may, they're still there. I hear them in the quietness in some cases. (8-9)

Glancy depicts both visible and invisible worlds. Grandmother, a follower of Cherokee mysticism, does not like the idea of dwelling in a society such people are "reduced to what can be seen" (8). She attempts to direct her toward spiritual domain and holy agency, but she is unsuccessful. Simultaneously, Girl, who mirrors contemporary American life, begs Grandmother to focus on the visible world. Coworkers steal her possessions and the supplies from the storage where she works as a manager of a church soup kitchen. She will have to spend a significant amount of her earnings to replace the storage door lock. Either the girl's rent or the truck's loan must be paid off. The girl still has four more payments of a debt of ten years, she picks the truck over her house. She admits when she visits Grandmother: "I already know I don't fit anywhere--- I don't need to be reminded--- I'm at your house, Grandma, with my sleeping bag and old truck--- I don't have any place else to go" (10). The girl feels perplexed among her desire to become an element of this ethereal lineage and the current circumstances, in which agency appears to be a necessity for existence (Darby, 2007).

The points that make up female agency are the similarities and variances. In the play, Glancy takes the audience on a journey in pursuit of self-agency. By recognizing her background and past, the girl is able to discover her inner agency. Grandmother teaches Girl the value of their traditional spirituality in confronting her hard reality and reclaiming her powerful self-agency. She learns how to represent herself through her culture, which serves as a bridge for her initial condition of in-betweenness. Glancy gives her legacy agency through this self-discovery.

Conclusion

Ethnic theater becomes a means for expressing cross-cultural experiences. Diane Glancy relates to a different ethnic group, Native Americans, and she wants her agency, culture, traditions, and ways of survival to be reflected in her work. Resistance to enforced stereotypes and entrapment achieves through agency. Glancy investigates the viaduct between two cultures. Storytelling, spirituality, and traditions served as a means of bridging the cultural divide. In a society with so many cultural diversity, she believes that agency is crucial. Girl is in a state of cultural denial in the play. Grandmother emphasizes the importance of storytelling and spiritual legacy in bringing the isolated self into agency with reality as a method of survival. The conflict between the girl and her grandmother represents the girl's lonely agency. Glancy is very respectful of their culture. Girl's hesitation causes her to disavow her own heritage and ethnicity. She gradually realizes the importance of her agency and culture. Girl's final speech demonstrates her understanding of the importance of spirituality, which she used to blame on Grandmother. Glancy emphasizes the importance of storytelling in preserving Native American traditions. In this case, the girl is able to overcome her grief and loss in their homeland. Glancy uses several forms of agency to transform stereotyping's negative meanings into positive pictures. Finally, in a multi-cultural society, this writer imagines the process of developing agency.

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