



The Identity Crisis in "*Indians*" by Arthur Lee Kopit

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ABSTRACT

What we mean by is the trouble made by Identity Crisis is about the social role of the individual and gives the meaning of losing of the individual personality goes on . it was ranging from the person to the culture as a reason to the U.S. Society. The persons become symbolic of the crises of America.

One of the era's most prolific and successful dramatists who reflected the identity crisis in his writings is Arthur Kopit (May 10,1937). He is a writer and actor. He is a two - time Pulitzer Prize Finalist (**Indians** and **Wings**) and a three- time Tony Award nominee: Best play **Indians** (1970), Best play **Wings** (1979), and Best book of a musical for **Nine** (1982).

This research discusses the work **Indians** (1969). The play reflects the social and political realities in 1968. The United States had just experienced explosive racial tension in the wake of Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War was one of its bloodiest periods. The play transcends its immediate political context. It raises questions about American identity and self image.

Keywords: Indians, identity crisis, native American, white men, massacre.



I- Introduction:

"I'd like to write a play a year, I admire those who write a lot: Osborne, Albee, and others. You're less vulnerable to critics that way- no matter how one play is received. You've always got another on the way. In any race, the important plays come by accident. You can't sit down and write an important play."

(Bradish, 1973: 444)

In England *Indians* was the first introduced 1968, and in 1969 introduced for the second time in New York 1969. That time is a disorderly time in the history of the United States. It is a disturbing discover , in the search of American's history (Wellworth, 1964: 84).

The part of absurd eschews traditional plotting and featuring . the science numbered 13 introduced by the form of actual view at a vicious and hard period in the united states history .. "The Indians were Americans' first Vietnam." (Lahar, 1969: 64)

It introduced to the audience a rave and irrational trip by the main character of the play Buffalo Bill's imagination (Wellworth, 1964: 70). The "Indians" a play of only one act that tells killing America people Red Indians) , and the story of past about of how white people killed Red Indians in the late 60s.

"This collective categorizing allowed white men to generalize about the Indians and thereby diminish the value of each Native American tribe and ignore the fact that each tribe had language, mathematics, and a social hierarchy and morality pertinent to its individual social structure."

(Berkhofer, 1977: 159-160)

They are different from each other, and show an confession of Indian view to the world , where history perceives as cyclical. *Indians* is a play of hard feelings history . Barbaric story colonist win this battle . It introduces the life as in real .

Kopit says as Lewis Funke wrote:

"Such are the quirks of the creative process, that if General Westmoreland had not make some remarks about the accidental tragedies of the war in Vietnam. I might never have written *Indians*. For a long time I wanted to be dealing with subject I knew would have to be epical in scope. But I didn't know how to do it. After the experience of reading Westmoreland's remarks. I knew almost instantly that I would write a play that would explore what happens when a social and political power imposes itself on a lesser power and creates a mythology to justify it, as we did with Indians, as we



have tried to do in Vietnam, what others have done elsewhere. And the manner of a symphony, it would be a kind of mosaic, a counterpoint of memory and reality."

(Wellworth, 1964: 75-76)

The minorities such as Red Indians fight for their civil rights equals the whites; such as make their conditions better, maintain the traditions and lands, keeping away from police fierce acts and remove bad caricatures from sports (Kopit, 1969: 51).

It concentrate on bad use, the crime of guilt feeling in culture, regret by using a method of cinema in making the play. Pictures frames is used by the play scene. each scene takes the audience to the end of the play

characters develop in parallel with actions development. Buffalo Bill the play main character, as a white person introduces a lesson to audience, with recognize that he represent the view of whit person about Indians. He attempts to give them a hand, but he can not maintain the rights for them. He wants to be a the hero that end their problems. He wants to be a famous and not for their good

Generally, It does not speak about certain problem of a certain group. It talks about so many Red Indians tribes. The basic problem of America native people is the identity which is the basic them of the play

II- Identity Crisis in "*Indians*":

Kopit's *Indians* is a call for justice, as Rawls (1999: 3) says that justice is considered as the basic moral of social organizations, in the same way as fact is of thinking systems.

In the modern and documentary forms, the documentary has always make the differences and contrasts between formal and rhetorical language, between good art and biggest culture, and between studying, popular traditions and public thinking. The documentary is kind of essentially a transport way: it takes parts of social realities from people, age, and in its transport introduces a local dialect into a langual franca (Kahana, 2008: 11)

Curtain is not used the places are not used as representation of reality the It is the reality tradition

The play introduces our world as none common location. Audience can see what is happening in the play from their places. Non understanding the complete sense of the odd elements of what is happening such as the people can see the life that in the state they do not know well its language (Esslin, 1966: 3).



By the use of the several direction form , the them is around the traditional course of the story . The course of occurring is reordered and disconnected in the method that represent the state of mind of for the basic character or the subject of the play . So it is used to create the things in the thoughts of the characters that have nontraditional way of or has no ability to deal with data (Morgan, 2016).

By connecting together the many parts once with no consideration to the time sequences, is called the history of the play , so it is based on the recorded events not on the odd historical fairy tales (q.v.). First models are Persians by Aeschylus, and Octavia, attributed to Seneca, war scenes . But some writers think of the ability of introducing history However, some playwrights saw the possibility of playing history. Bell wrote King John (c. 1534). The two important plays transferred from the periods (q.v.) and play of morals (q.v.) to the Sackville, Norton Gorboduc (1561) and Preston's Cambises (1569). Marlowe, then acknowledge the possibilities of this introducing , benefits from Holinshed, who explained the life of Edward II (1593), as he show kingdoms of England from Richard the second to Henry the eighth. Shakespeare introduces King John (1523) complete this course in successful way . Then these place became scares , though many writers attempted in Roman historical themes in the 18th and 19th centuries. From Second World War many plays have been appears in this theme . For example, Arthur Miller The Butchable (1953), Robert Bolt "A Man for All Seasons" (1960) and the "State of Revolution" (1977).

(Cuddon, 1998: 136)

It begins with three examples museum carrying greater than the volume of Buffalo Bill, Sitting Bull & Indian impressions.

(Kopit, 1969: 8)

"On stage: three large glass cases, one holding a larger-than-life-size effigy of Buffalo Bill infancy embroidered buckskin. One, an effigy of Sitting Bull dressed in simple buckskin or both, no headdress, little if any, ornamentation. The lost case contains some artifacts: a buffalo skull, a bloodstained Indian shirt, and an old rifle." (Scene 1, 8)

The figures of the statues reflect old time , requirements of of precise history and losing of identity . Thus, the audience references by the its title and its uncorrupted situation, makes the mind of common to directly accept the reality.

Cynical facts and bitter real situation takes dominate the story of the play. The problem of identity of Indians restructured in the last decade. The critical problem which made the hard suffer for the r for the Native Americans what they belong to. They wanted to make stable definition for the identity in forms of legal ,social and personal aspects . (Funke, 1969: 37).



"I am Uncas, chief of the Pawnee Indians, recently killed for my lustful wags. Yet, before the white men come and did men, I had this vision: the white man is great, the red man nothing. So, if a white man kills a red man, we must forgive him for God intended man to be as great as possible, and by eliminating the inferior. The great man carries God's work. Thus, the Indian is no way wronged by being murdered. Indeed, quite the opposite: being murdered is his purpose in life." (Scene 7, 128)

The Red Indians are the frame for tribal people , relation in blood , reservation, accommodation, native groups (Schmidt, 2011: 2).

"Of course it was harsh. I do not like it anymore than you. But if we had evaded our responsibility, the skirmishes would have been going on for years, costing millions of our country, as well as an indescribable life. Of course our hearts go out to innocent victims of this." (Scene 13, 165)

This play wants to determine the self-identity . So the work hard for traditions , ands and morals . They want to affirm that they had their own culture and identity :

"I do not feel they have the right to say those of us without the registration number that we are not Indian heritage, only we are not registered ... to say that I am not Indian and to sue me to tell people about Indian heritage is to deprive some of my civil liberty ... constitutes racial discrimination"

(Brownell, 2001: 302)

United States decides that , the Red Indians have no rights of their own . They are not similar to the White . And all the reach with them is cancelled or not recognized (Parsons, 1961: 57).

Consequently an effort have been made to advance American Indians rights . They confront fighting anti-discrimination laws that are not good and do not introduce their rights, as real people of American (Keupp, 1946: 8).

Indians introduces the most critical problem in the United States history. It is essentially political , it introduces hard social facts that led the audience feel emotions the Red Indian victims and fight to maintain the identity .

"The Great Father told us to give up hunting and start farming, so we did as he said and our people grew hungry, for the land was suited to grazing, no farming, so the Great Father said he would send us food and clothing, but nothing came of it... before we give gone more of our land, or more from here, we want you to tell the



Great White Father to give us, who still live, what he promised he would, no more than that." (Scene 6, 120)

Kopit introduce the problem of Red Indians to the viewers and how the exploitation on them by the Whites . Poor situation hunger ,suffering unmoral treatment , death of Red Indians ,all of them are the real situation in the History of united States . n the late 60s.

"Now, I said, you will never know what it is to be an Indian, for you will never again have a gun or pony... only later did I realize what I'd said. These things, the gun and the pony- they came with you."
(Scene 13, 168)

Indians introduces other types of facts , by the explain the past time realities. The play deals with history and it's the accompanying events a metaphorical view of legend in the country identity identity (O'Neil, 1982: 494).

Buffalo Bill consider himself as a hero, "I am a Goddom hero" (Scene 1, 8). Hero of legend who attempts to fill the gap between the two parties that ked to killing the leaders of Red Indians (Sitting Bull, John Grass). In addition to Sitting's tribe.

Ironic juxtaposition is the main form which it based on Buffalo Bill, a man of myth brave, not man as hero. Really he represent the view of Whites on Red /Indians , and the Indians' emotions that bring them together through centuries.

(Peithmann, 1964: 17)

The contrast evokes to support and damage Red Indians in the same time as well (O'Neil, 1982: 494).

Buffalo Bill, cause the creation of negative elements and not positive. Indians affirm that white people are the government their attempts only cause death and loss of their lands . Buffalo Bill suitable man to this mission . Figure of hierocracy, as he claims the right for American Indians, he thinks the solution is in in unity and compromise , which agree the domination of the White people Indian culture.

The affirm of Red Indians identity is considered one of the great cases in the society that is featured with multicultural and ethnics

(Brownell, 2001: 255)

The play in a play is Scouts of the Plains. That discusses the character of Buffalo Bill and the bad role in support the Red Indians . Buntline the Indian writer writes this play and he is member Sitting's tribe. It was introduced in the White House for the O'l Time President and the First Lady. *Scouts of the Plains* is the



attempt to block Pawnee tribe's celebration of the Moon mission to rescue girl Teskan Javila (the Indian girl of Nobel which Buntine created)(Kopit, 1969: 125).

"The enacted scene-within a scene depicts the western heroes rescue of a virgin Indian maiden from torture, sacrifice, and certain violations by an evil Indian chief."

(Scene 7, 125)

The story includes the basic concept of the affirmed fate of n which American settlers benefit from these non-use lands .

What Buntline's wants to tell is Indian's identity is not the task of Bill's. The characters attempts to do their best to make this make the idea he is not great as hero. He is one of the government members that steal Red Indians good lands and attempts to vanish Indians culture .

"My plan ist' help people. Like you, Ferinstance. Or these people I'm with more... even... than that, may be. And, and whatever... it is I do't help, for it, these people may someday jus' possibly name streets after me."

(Scene 3, 107-108)

The wealth of Red Indians is the fertile lands they consider themselves as the guardian of the lands . They think that the lands is is living creature every one can benefit from .Lands represents their identity ,pride and culture . Thus any agreement between the two sides must maintain their rights not to take their rights .

Due to Red Indians the lands is a present given by the Great Spirit and they do not belong to any person .

Indians recognized by the critics as the best work of Kopit's view it as recall doing that not made the important chronology but rather in serial important elements a dream the structure of the play is of players and the hearings United States commission's damage the situation of Red Indians . They all developed together (Wellworth, 1964: 75-76).

The play is filled of complex thoughts and insights that discusses Native American Indian treatment. Kopit uses the main character Buffalo Bill as a tool to teach the audience (Deloria, 1969: 51). He is symbolic of the white men and their judgment about the Indians, that bases on European judgment and allows today to ignore the Indians' right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. (Berkhofer, 1977: 21)



Around my neck is a string of white men's genitals! MEN I HAVE KILLED!.... Around my waist, the scullocks of white women's genitals. WOMEN I RAPED AND KILLED!...

No Indian has ever killed or raped

More than I! Even the Great Spirits can not count the number! ... My body is painted with blood! I am red from white men's BLOOD!... NO ONE LIVES WHO HAS KILLED MORE WHITE MEN THAN I!

(Scene 5, 115)

The Rend Indians consider the lands as present from the Great Spirit, and they represent their rights, their tradition and luxury . In the all scences with actions agreements and contracts between Indians and U.S. government, Kopit wrote the grieved live of Indians through Buffalo Bill figureof the white men. (Irvin 18)

The glory of American government is just like the glory of devil. Sitting's tribe and the disastrous end imposed by colonel Forsyth who does not have any emotions for their dead bodies that become without tombs . For him to kill Red Indians is wining battle not a crime , because the Red Indians are the victims .

"I'm sorry, but if I seem a trifle edge to you, it's only 'cause I've just come from a truly harrowing engagement, seems my Manager, a ... rather ancient gentleman made a terrible mistake on booked me int'." (Scene 2, 93)

The crises of the identity in *Indians* is about existence. It is not easy matter. In fact, ithe strive to take all the rights from the Whites who deny Indians' identity, and give them certain location identity

Identity crisis in *Indians* is a trip in thin and old boat , which does not make Indians a live . On the contrary it draw them to an odd destiny . Their identity is dreadful dream , and a horrible nightmare. Thousands of people were killed , more and more rights are deleted .

The story reaches to its end and no solution. Step by step , the stage proceed into the dark, and return to the extreme right in hard turn. When the lights are maintained, the stage begins with boxes made of glass in the start of the play.

The red Indians were deceived and violated. The European settlers take and stole their lands and kill many of Red Indians were killed.

(Wellworth, 1964: 76)



Conclusion

American society and culture are much more fragmented. The individual in the United States generally depends on the social class and the political orientation of many demographic characteristics such as religion, background, occupation, and membership of the ethnic group.

Kopit's form of action strengthens the identity crisis. Each play merges and deforms fixed species, and techniques that destroy their aesthetic identities. Moreover, the dramatic impact of each play matches the experience witnessed by the characters of the play, as well as the causes and the cultural dimensions of their personal crisis.

Identity crisis in Kopit's plays paves the way for applying the social structural approach, since it covers the problems of identity by marking the mysteries of it in the rise of an industrialized society.



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