

On *Seven Jewish Children* – Explicitation and implicitation in terms of ideology

*We are all actors. Being a citizen is not
living in society, it is changing it.*

AUGUSTO BOAL¹

1) Introduction

This article explores four Spanish translations of *Seven Jewish Children* —a short play written by the English playwright Caryl Churchill in 2009—, based on models of textual analysis designed for drama translation, and with special emphasis on the shifts between implicitation and explicitation. In the application of these models, we will draw on concepts such as heteroglossia

¹ Boal was in charge of writing the annual speech for the World Theatre Day in 2009, the year in which Churchill wrote *Seven Jewish Children*. In its opening lines, he says: “All human societies are “*spectacular*” in their daily life and produce “*spectacles*” at special moments. [...] Human relationships are structured in a theatrical way. One of the main functions of our art is to make people sensitive to the “spectacles” of daily life in which the actors are their own spectators, performances in which the stage and the stalls coincide.” See “The World Theatre Day Blog”, accessed in March 16, 2011, in <http://wtd09.wordpress.com/2009/02/26/the-2009-world-theatre-day-international-message/>. In league with this but from a different perspective, Aaltonen (2010) writes: “Plays are a site for self-study, gaining information and deepening our knowledge of ourselves and the others who inhabit our world. They open up windows to societies and cultures, helping us to make sense of complex realities. Their coming into being is always tied to a particular socio-cultural context. Their translations have the same time. Once a play is translated/performed, new interpretations become inevitable.

and polyphony; performability, and public or personal narratives, as well as on a three-pronged approach to texts based on semiotic, pragmatic and communicational layers.

We intend to explore the hypothesis that ideology may act as a triggering and catalyzing element in the explicitation process—which could be posited as a probable universal in translation, and has several drives other than ideology—, using contrastive analysis to observe how shifts in transitiveness and explicitation, in the context of translation strategies, can be permeated by the translator's ideological position, *skopos* and personal narratives, and how the interaction between the ideological contents in the playtext and the ideological positioning of the translator lead to create different theatrical potentialities in the texts.

In the general context of audiovisual translation, video will also be used a research tool to complete our exploration with the direct observation of performative elements, such as orality and paratheatrical contrivances, and the transformations affecting dramatic texts in their transposition for onstage production.

We will make this study more comprehensive by providing several Appendices with tables, theatrical references, press articles related to reception and response, correspondence with the author, reference materials and a video compilation with 16 recorded performances of the play in several languages and from eight different countries reviewed in our research.

Churchill, a brilliant presence in contemporary drama

Seven Jewish Children is a short play written by the English playwright Caryl Churchill, who defined it as a political act of solidarity with Palestine people, in response to the Israeli attack on Gaza in December 2008.

The play is unique in many relevant ways which turn it into an apt study object for theatrical translation research and for exploring theoretical models and propositions; these unusual aspects lie not only in its conspicuous ideological dimension, which shows in Churchill's particular stance about copyrighting and fundraising, or in its cryptic formal dramatic structure, but also in the wide scope of heated reactions and reception it has harvested around the world, both from those in favor and from its bitter critics.

Caryl Churchill (1938) is an English playwright who likes exploring broad and diverse themes in her plays. Far from constraining her writing to one recurrent topic, in her more than twenty-eight major plays Churchill visits transversal interests: power rhetoric and praxis,

stereotypes, feminism and sexuality, socialism and capitalism, intergenerational bonds, financial and business world, marriage, family—and Palestine. We read in the *Cambridge Companion to Caryl Churchill*: “The first aspect of her work that is widely admired is her refusal to repeat herself [...]. Just as frequently commented on is Churchill’s continual engagement with form, finding new structures and shapes to address her concerns”.²

This diversity is also revealed in her formal resources: theatre-dance and opera coexist in her repertoire with radio-theatre and traditional playwriting, much in the same vein as epic theatre techniques melt with oneiric association, surrealism and post-modernism.

She is counted among of the most talented playwrights in England, and is generally signaled out as of the best female voices in contemporary drama. Her plays are frequently staged at London’s Royal Court Theatre and in prominent American theatres, where they usually get raving reviews. Churchill views drama writing as a socially-engaged activity and she publicly stands by controversial causes, though she prefers her plays speak for themselves and she tends to leave the answers to her public and readers.

In “Appendix D: Caryl Churchill and her sayings”, a textual collection of statements and comments by Churchill about *Seven Jewish Children* has been gathered, mainly extracted from private correspondence available as well as from my own personal written exchanges with her. It must be said, however, that Churchill does not usually grant press interviews and has adopted a stance against explaining herself beyond what is written.

Seven Jewish Children

Seven Jewish Children is a controversial, poetic and singular play, written by Caryl Churchill in virtual synchrony with real events, while Israeli troops were attacking Gaza. It was conceived of as “a political event, not just a theatre event”.³ The international press published the first news about the Gaza incursion on December 27, 2008; it took Churchill just one week to write the whole play, in mid-January 2009, and next week she was making arrangements with the Royal Court Theatre for a fast staging; two weeks later the actors were rehearsing, and the premiere

² REBELLATO, Dan (2009): “On Churchill’s influences”, in ASTON, Elaine and DIAMOND, Elin (eds) (2009): *The Cambridge Companion to Caryl Churchill*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 164.

³ BROWN, Mark: “Royal Court acts fast with Gaza crisis play”, in *The Guardian*, January 24, 2009, accessed March 16, 2011 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/jan/24/theatre-gaza-caryl-churchill-royal-court-seven-jewish-children> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #1.

was staged in February 6th to a full house. So the whole drama cycle, from writing to premiere, was completed in a mere less than 30 days. This, by all justice, must be acknowledged as an astonishing feat, whatever our appreciation about the contents and reception may be.

British people (and, soon after that, American public) were viewing *Seven Jewish Children* in London just a few weeks after the real events inspiring the play had actually occurred in Gaza. This unusual sprint put in the forefront the speedy reaction which theatre is able to offer in the face of reality, in much shorter turnarounds than other artistic media such as cinema, which require longer and more complex production cycles. The quick response was commented by critics, not so much as an example of the usual scenario, but as to highlight the potentialities inherent in theatrical art when intention and decision-taking are fueled by a strong political or ideological determination.⁴

In contrast, some expressed their concern about the audacity of such a fast staging, with real events so close in time that there was no chance of a poised, balanced approach to historical events in a broader context, inclusive of consequences in the longer run. Pathos is an essential ingredient in this short play, as a reflection of Churchill's strong moral position toward the attack. In *Seven Jewish Children*, the immediate is related to the urgency of Churchill's intervention. It's a play "for Gaza" not about Gaza, pregnant with anger, empathy and disapproval. As one of her critics has said, "She has leapt into action over something she feels passionate about".⁵ In this regard, immediacy and urgency are part of the play's architecture and are thus expressed in its peculiar rhythm and textual austerity, as if to contain the undercurrent of intense feeling running below.

Churchill's intention was twofold: on the one hand, she wanted the issue to be examined and thought about by the general public; on the other, she wanted her play to be an opportunity for fund-raising in support of the Palestinian people. She granted free performance rights on the condition that the tickets were free and that a collection of money was made at each performance to be donated to Medical Aid for Palestinians. Here lies another ingredient of the play's singularity. And while the author didn't initially want the play to be staged in Israel, she

⁴ Ib.

⁵ Ib.

later changed her mind, and *Seven Jewish Children* was performed in Tel-Aviv streets in June that year.⁶

So the illocutionary and perlocutionary workings in the play, both as attributed by other parties and as self-admitted by Churchill, offer interesting areas for research in the context of ideology in theatrical translation. What she meant, what she is believed to have meant, what she actually said, and the response that the text created on the public with its respective effects, all form a matrix which is complex enough by itself, and which best shows in the astonishing variations among each staging and performance in English. Furthermore, we should examine how this matrix jumps to the next level in the case of *Seven Jewish Children's* translations, where the translator's own situation, cultural identification and his or her own illocutionary purpose behind the translation work must also be considered. If translation is always ideological, in the sense that all translations are interpretive metastatements, we are dealing here with no less than the ideological translations of an utterly political play. How many more things can be possibly added and loaded in translation, upon a text which is already overloaded with purposeful statements? Isn't everything already said in the original? (More of this in the Contrastive Analysis of Translated Versions, in relation with Tymoczko's study.)

“Unfortunately” unquestioned value

The literary worth in *Seven Jewish Children* is not questioned even by her adamant detractors. It's a play in one act, with seven short scenes in “an incredibly distilled and economical way”,⁷ “disarmingly, and maybe even unfortunately, so well-written”,⁸ “deftly constructed, evocative, elusive and provocative”.⁹ It is not the literary value but the politics within the play what

⁶ See “Appendix C: Theatrical Performances of Seven Jewish Children”.

⁷ Ib.

⁸ GOLDBERG, Jeffrey: “Caryl Churchill: Gaza's Shakespeare, or Fetid Jew-Baiter?”, in *The Atlantic*, March 24, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2009/03/caryl-churchill-gaza-apos-s-shakespeare-or-fetid-jew-baiter/9823/#more>] and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #17.

⁹ HESSE, Monica: “'Jewish Children' Comes to D.C. Already Upstaged by Controversy”, in *The Washington Post*, March 17, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/16/AR2009031603255.html?referrer=emailarticle> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #14.

created a tsunami of social reactions,¹⁰ mainly from a loud sector of the Jewish community in London and New York, who considered the play blatantly anti-Semitic and kept on rebuking Churchill's attempts to deny these accusations.

Churchill said: "I am not going to pretend that I am not critical of Israel, or that the play was not written out of anger about Gaza. But it was also written out of a more complicated anguish about the whole history, which I know is shared by many Jewish people outside Israel as well as many Israelis".¹¹

Possibly to confirm her impression, some of the performances were staged by Jewish artists and movements which saw in it more than mere agitprop; some of these productions are listed in my "Appendix C". In this regard, we recommend to read the long but extremely interesting and lively dialogue between American critic Jeffrey Goldberg (who definitely rejected the play) and director Ari Roth (who staged it at Theater J in New York, affiliated to the Jewish Community Center), included in "Appendix B".¹² Both Jewish, in their lengthy debate they bring to life a deep-rooted discussion about politics, art, theater and ideology in connection with anti-Semitism, which has links with the issues discussed in this paper.

Being so, as both the dramatic effectiveness and the ideological layers deserve a close approach, we may tentatively conclude that the play is extraordinary in both regards.

Let's first examine the structure of the play and the strategies underscoring its highly praised dramatic impact and deftness, borrowing from Ezpeleta (2007) and her three-level analysis for theatrical texts.

2) A model-based analysis

In "Modelo de análisis de los textos dramáticos para la traducción" (2007), Pilar Ezpeleta focuses on the communicational, pragmatic and semiotic perspectives, which will be our instrumental roadmap to explore the text.

Seven Jewish Children is a brief, minimalistic play whose performance generally does not take more than ten minutes, although we have reviewed in our report productions of more than

¹⁰ A reading of the whole collection of reviews and critical articles as provided in "Appendix B".

¹¹ See CHURCHILL, Caryl: "Correspondence with Ari Roth", in "Appendix B", article # 21.

¹² See GOLDBERG, Jeffrey: "Caryl Churchill: Gaza's Shakespeare, or Fetid Jew-Baiter? ", op. cit.

20 minutes, which included live music, or performances with preliminary speeches and conferences which filled a full-length 90 minutes show. On wondering why she did not develop her drama beyond its minute length, some have proposed that the play is so short because “Churchill means to slap us out of our rehearsed arguments to look at the immediate human crisis”.¹³ Indeed, its short format has a lot to do with its immediate impact. No time is lent to the public to elaborate on the words: it’s a direct and precise homeopathic dose of theatre into the public’s awareness. Other remarkable plays, such as *Breath* by Samuel Beckett or *Mountain Language*, by Harold Pinter, have preceded *Seven Jewish Children* in their brief, minimal length with great reviews, impact and success, as some theatre critics have pointed out.

Orality and communication: Two discursive levels

In terms of its communicational potential, orality acts as a vector in the play: different adults discuss among themselves in colloquial, non-literary speech, how to tell a child [a girl] about violence, persecution, victimhood, rights to the land, identity, survival, death, displacement, fear, hope, otherness and other representations and realities associated to the plight of Jewish people along history.

The device contrived to trigger the dramatic intensity is the structure “Tell her/Don’t tell her”, which is found at the beginning of most of the sentences. Adults discuss what to tell or not to tell in an exchange of oral opinions on which the play is built. But orality works in two layers: the language spoken by adults in their addresses to other significant adults (which can be other actors on stage, or alluded, implicit characters), and then the evoked orality used to address children. The indictments “Tell her/Don’t tell her” are addressed to other adults; the contents of the subordinate enclosed propositions express the orality of the indirect language addressed to children: “she’ll have cake if she’s good”, “she can stay until late and watch *Friends*”, “she can make them go away by magic”.

How this orality is actually staged on scene is deeply related to the director’s interpretation. Thus in the Texas reading staged by Cambiare,¹⁴ orality in the last, seventh scene is tainted by a surprisingly contained and cold performance, withholding rage, while in the

¹³ KUSCHNER, Tony and SOLOMON, Alisa: “Tell her the truth”, in *The Nation*, March 26, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://www.thenation.com/article/tell-her-truth> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #15.

¹⁴ See “Appendix C: Stage Productions of *Seven Jewish Children* in Eight Countries”.

GritTV production Kathleen Chalfant plays the same part with broken voice as if holding tears, trembling with anguish, pain and shame, and in the Argentinean production by El Infierno de los Vivos, the last scene is an outburst of loud, violent vindication.

Scene Five explores how to tell children about a military victory which led the Israelis to conquer new lands. The way to talk about armed victory also reflects ideological justifications and validations of violence as a means to an end or perhaps, more simply, joy in the face of survival and expansion. In the staging by El Infierno de los Vivos the character urges the implicit other to tell her about the victory with triumphant tones, brimming with elation at the victory. The staging by Rooms Productions shows as a half-numb young man who tells an implicit other about the victory with sad undertones, in which there is nothing close to joy or exaltation. The Cambiare production features a kneeling man conveying the good news of the triumph, but also bereaved about a dead son or soldier. These different scenic outcomes reveal to which extent Churchill's text is shrewd, rich and skilled in its implicit potential: the text is always the same, but it is only completed in the hermeneutic motion by the director and, then, by the public, who cleave their own ideology onto the sentences and words.

"All plays require that directors and actors make considered choices", comment Tony Kushner and Alisa Solomon on the play. "Performance produces meaning. If an actor stresses 'tell' in the line "Don't tell her that," it might suggest, "That's true, but don't let her know'. But if 'that' is emphasized, it might mean, 'How can you even think such an outrageous thing?' And much will depend on how the actor strikes the first word, "Don't"--collegially or adversarially. Churchill ups the interpretive ante by leaving everything, beyond the lines themselves, to her interpreters".¹⁵ In fact some have called *Seven Jewish Children* "Churchill's Rorschach of a playlet".¹⁶

Ezpeleta points out in "De la traducción teatral": "Dramatic text and theater, seen both as scenic art and multi-sensory spectacle, are related in the sense that performance facilitates the enacting of several aesthetic vectors (intellectual, visual or sound-oriented) embedded in the

¹⁵ KUSCHNER, Tony and SOLOMON, Alisha: "Tell her the truth", op. cit.

¹⁶ See the quote in the "Theater J Blog", accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://theaterjblogs.wordpress.com/2009/03/>.

written text. These aesthetic vectors may refer to a wide set of contextual networks and may create multiple semantic references, giving place to a diversity of meanings.”¹⁷

This embedded frame of aesthetic implicit layers is exceptionally open and undetermined in *Seven Jewish Children*; behind its cryptic, ascetic and poetic expression, there is much space for ambiguity, as admitted to by Churchill herself. We read: “*Far Away* addresses itself to global conflict, *A Number* to human cloning, *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* to US foreign policy, and *Seven Jewish Children* (2009) to the history of Israel. In each case, however, Churchill’s positions are ambiguous, because the structures of the plays ask questions that they do not themselves answer. [...] Churchill’s reluctance to impose upon the meanings of her plays is not new. The lack of commentary reflects itself both in her avoidance to guiding the audience to particular interpretations of the work and in her reluctance to supply meta-textual commentary in the form of articles and interviews about her own work”.¹⁸

Indeed, following Ezpeleta, the play creates multiple semantic references, also by osmotic contact with the ideology carried by readers, players, directors and spectators themselves.

Whom do the characters speak to, when they discuss how and what to tell the girl? Some performances have been resolved in monologues as if spoken to the public, such as in the Slack Space staging; otherness is thus supported by the public. Other productions have turned the scenes into conversations among two or three characters present on stage. And yet others have included communicational objects and media to enact dialogue with an absent, implied other.

¹⁷ EZPELETA PIORNO, Pilar (2009): “Introducción: De la traducción teatral”, *TRANS. Revista de traductología*, 13, Málaga: S. P. Universidad de Málaga. pp. 12-17. The original Spanish text reads: “El texto dramático y el teatro, entendido éste último como arte escénico y espectáculo multisensorial, establecen su relación en tanto que la representación posibilita la actualización de una serie de dominantes estéticos (intelectuales, visuales, sonoros, etc.) que se hallan incardinados en el texto escrito. Los dominantes estéticos pueden referirse a un amplio conjunto de redes contextuales y generar múltiples referencias semánticas y, por tanto, muy diversos significados”. The English translation in the article is mine.

¹⁸ REBELLATO, Dan (2009): “On Churchill’s influences”, in ASTON, Elaine and DIAMOND, Elin (eds.) (2009): *The Cambridge Companion to Caryl Churchill*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 174-175.

Most remarkable in this regard is what we see in the Rooms looping installation:¹⁹ This production has made a creative use of communication media (phones, pens, typewriter, computer, recorders and cameras) to solve aspects of otherness and to set the communicational perspective in an efficient way. The other is always present in an open frame of interaction, as the whole array of object and media embody alterity, stage the alluded presence of other characters and enact reciprocity, as well as ownership in terms of speech, discourse and truth. More of this will be discussed later, in relation to heteroglossia and polyphony.

External communication in the text also takes place in implicit and subtle terms. What is alluded, eluded and implicit weighs heavily, while ambiguity is a sort of hermeneutical insistent bee which buzzes against our consciousness all along the scenes. As Ezpeleta points out, the spectators complete the meaning with their own reading. It is titled *Seven Jewish Children*, but the children who are recipients of the tentative, offered explanations never take part as active players. There is a veiled, implicit and conjured presence, as there is explicit, written indication by Churchill that no children should be visible onstage. This interplay of absence/presence, explicitness and implicitness, stance and ambiguity, is a strong ingredient in the original English play, but its complexity is much enhanced and magnified in translation, with the translational motion possibly acting as a catalyst.

An elusive time-space frame

In terms of time-space structure, the author does not provide information about the time settings for each scene, though they are meant to signify a journey along different moments in Jewish history, during this and last century. This omission in the text strikes the reader as an audacious choice for implicitness: unless the reader or the public are familiarized with the history of Jewish people and their circumstances, they will not find explicit time milestones in the text itself. But if the play was written as a political intervention, why leaving such an important contextual reference as an implicit setting? We propose that Churchill wanted to leave the time setting of her play in the directors' hands, so that they decide how to hint this element, probably using costumes, music, photos or surtitles. Or not hinting it at all.

However, Churchill has commented on the historical context of her play: "The first scene is set at some time of persecution, which could be nineteenth century Russia (as I think I was

¹⁹ A two-part video of this staging is available, among other recorded stage and radio theatre performances, in a video companion to this paper.

inclining towards when I wrote it) or (as we chose at the Royal Court) in thirties Germany”.²⁰

Churchill goes on: “The second scene is some time after the Holocaust in England (or indeed America.)”. Though the after-Holocaust is the time frame, there is no restrictive indication about place. America or any place where survivors had settled after the Holocaust, somewhere during the Shoah, could serve the dramatic purpose.

“The third scene, a few years later, has people from England (or America) deciding to go to Israel”, says the author. So this corresponds to a time after 1948, when the State of Israel was established.

“In the fourth scene a (different) family has just arrived in Israel”, explains Churchill. “So in none of those scenes is the child who is spoken of an Israeli. In the RC [Royal Court] production the child in scene 6 wasn’t Israeli either as we imagined she was coming from England to visit relatives in Israel, which is why so many things would have to be explained to her, but of course she could be an Israeli child. So it is called *Seven Jewish Children*, because that is what they all have in common. I find it astonishing that anyone would think [...] that it means that all Jewish people are being blamed for what happened in Gaza.”

The video produced by *The Guardian* includes photographic documentary testimonials which act as dividers and set each scene into context; this contrivance is also used in the production by *Another Jewish Voice*, in New Mexico, and by the *Waiheke Theater* staging in New Zealand; on its part, the Montreal staging by Stéphane Jacques uses sounds (shootings, sirens) and objects (suitcases, lines of shoes left behind) to hint the time setting of the scenes; other performances, such as those of Argentina, New Zealand or Texas, do not include any indication of historical context.

But despite Churchill’s explanations about not-so-tight time references, critics have set their own historical settings for the play in their reviews. Hoffman’s commentary reads: “...First in Nazi Germany, then by stages in the aftermath of World War Two; on the way to live in Israel; in the civil strife before the War of Independence of 1948; after the Six Day War in 1967; probably around the first Intifada (1987-93); and finally today, after Operation Cast Lead”.²¹

²⁰ See “Appendix D: Caryl Churchill and her sayings”, in this article.

²¹ HOFFMANN, Jonathan: “‘Seven Jewish Children – A play for Gaza’ – by Caryl Churchill at the Royal Court”, in *Harry’s Place*, February 8, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in

Heteroglossia, “homoglossia” and polyphony

The distribution of the text among characters and actors is entirely left to directors and producers. No fixed characters take ownership for the voices and positions portrayed in the play. This is the deliberate open structure which Churchill chose for her play.

Casts of any size may represent the play, and as it turns out in the observation of the different video performances, it's easy to see how this single element is directly instrumental to configuring the ideological and emotional perception by the public. Churchill addressed my questions about the way she used punctuation,²² and we will delve into this further below; but in connection with polyphony we may infer, based on her own explanation, that the reason why she did not use periods at the end of her phrases was to create a sense of continuity among sentences, an uninterrupted open and linked flow into the minds of the public.

As it happens, the open nature of the text distribution creates possibilities and trouble at the same time. It paves the way to a free staging in terms of polyphony and discursive heteroglossia, precisely because the text is inhabited by contradictory propositions. Following Aaltonen (2009), I will use the term *heteroglossia* “in the Bakhtinian sense of the multiplicity of social voices linked and interrelated dialogically in a novel”, while “homoglossia”, as an opposite term, will be applied to stage productions which present discourse in each scene as a single (though self-contradicting) voice. Even though Aaltonen considers that “heteroglossia is a more accurate word for the study of narrative construction”(2009), polyphony also fits into this study, as many different voices express diverse views about how to say children, and what to tell them.

Does Churchill view Jewish community as a monophonic, monolithic group of people who share one same voice, even if this voice carries heavy contradictions within? Or does she portray a diverse community where individual families or groups read history and future with different eyes and hold dissident voices in connection with reality?

One character may voice contradictory positions (“Tell her” / “Don’t tell her that”), thus expressing an inner self-hesitation as to what to say, and how to say it. But this pair of antithetic

<http://hurryupharry.org/2009/02/08/seven-jewish-children-a-play-for-gaza-by-caryl-churchill-at-the-royal-court/#comments> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and reviews”, article #4.

²² See my correspondence with Churchill in “Appendix D: Churchill and her sayings about *Seven Jewish Children*”.

views may be played by different characters, suggesting that a diversity of interpretations and criteria do exist among Jewish people: while some hold fast to one position and propose to “tell her, why not”, others identify with opposite discursive practices and suggest they’d rather not “tell her that”.

The Guardian, for instance, produced a short film featuring Jeannie Stoller in a solo performance of the play. It is a “monologue for Gaza”. The fact that one single character plays the whole spectrum of voices or opinions, in a continuum, has been seen as objectionable (“psychobabble”) by some critics,²³ as a scenic device to enhance the anti-Semitic message.

David Rich and Mark Gardner have offered incendiary interpretations of this “homoglossic” approach: “There are no distinct characters: any Jew can speak any of the lines, in combination with any of the other lines, without distorting the narrative. This homogenising is bad enough, but the *Guardian*'s production goes a step further. By presenting the play with just a single performer, speaking every Jewish voice in each time and place, the *Guardian* distils the play into an internal conversation inside the head of every Jew – the increasingly manic neuroses of a screwed-up people”.²⁴

There are other outlooks as well: “She suggests a psychological link between past trauma and present brutality. [...] The constant “tell/don't tell” refrain —the central device of the play—lays bare the inability of the adults to explain terrible events to their children. It's a sign of confusion in extreme circumstances. Far from being “dishonest and amoral”, these people are only too human”.²⁵

It is interesting to see how characterization triggers a much different reception in the public. For instance, the staging by Warwick Drama School ascribes consistent positions to same characters, so, in Scene Two we see a character holding fast to the “not-hate” discourse, while

²³ Howard Jacobson identified Stoller’s monologue as “a fine piece of fashionable psychobabble that understands Zionism as the collective nervous breakdown of the Jewish people”. The opinion is quoted by Rich and Gardner in their review of the play. See footnote 24.

²⁴ RICH, David and GARDNER, Mark: “The blood libel brought up to date”, in included in *The Guardian*, May 1, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/mar/16/bbc-rejects-caryl-churchill-israel?intcmp=239> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #18.

²⁵ LERMAN, Antony: “Antisemitic alarm bells”, in *The Guardian*, May 4, 2009, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/jun/15/caryl-churchill-seven-jewish-children> and included in “Appendix B: Reception and Reviews”, article #19.

others represent the opposite view, the collective narrative of “being a hated people”. This is a consistent heteroglossia or polyphony embodied by separate characters, and so it entails a polyphonic, diverse interpretation of Jewish community. There are those who hold fast to their opinions, and others are clearly differentiated with the opposite views. The production by Cambiare approaches characterization through stichomythia, a resource originated in Ancient Greek theatre with single alternating lines given to alternating characters. All the characters address to a silent young woman sitting in the center of the stage, who stands up and speaks only in the final, climactic scene as in response to all the previous historical discourses.

But we find yet another approach in those productions which simply split the seven scenes into seven actors, so that each scene, with its own contradictory contents, is played as a monologue by a single character, such as the one by the Slack Space Festival. Thus, the characters do not represent diverging “positions” among the Jewish people, but the “spirit of the time” within the Jewish community as a whole, as each actor represents a collective single voice reflecting the social discursive (contradictory or hesitant) interpretations of that historical event. (This interpretive reading is also much criticized by the Jewish community, as mentioned elsewhere.)

The choice about the number of actors also determines how discursive positions circulate on the scene creating a more or less complex construction of reality. Scene Six shows different contradictory positions about the armed clashes between Israelis and Palestinians. The background is an issue about a swimming-pool built by the Israelis using their huge water reservoirs in an environment where Palestinians were suffering from lack of water for living.²⁶

The scene is played by four actors in the Maccleod-Verkerk staging, enhancing the tense exchange of opinions and showing a complex polyphonic construction of the scene; changing opinions circulate among characters as the dialogue increases momentum, so we see a dynamic evolution of each character’s ideas. Characterization here does not convey a stereotypical distribution of fixed opinions among the Jewish community but what occurs when people observe the events and try to make sense of them, while exchanging their own uncertainties and moral conflicts. On the contrary, a monologue such as Jeannie Stoller’s in *The Guardian* production creates a feeling of an inner mental discourse by a person pondering and guessing

²⁶ See <http://www.metachannels.com/feeds/show/2056/PalCast-video>, accessed in March 16, 2011, for further reference about the water issue in Palestine and Israel. It must be warned, though, that the video is biased in favor of the Palestinians.

what to say and in which way, permeated by hesitation and self-doubt. The dynamics is quite more closed and alienated.

Performability and transposition

Bassnett (1991) comments on how “performability” was installed in the 20th century as a theoretical concept, mainly as a leeway to legitimate free-style translations of post-naturalistic theatre texts. “Performance, which means inevitably interpretation, interrupts the relationship between writer, text and reader, and imposes an additional dimension which many writers have found undesirable”, she says. This idea led post-naturalistic playwrights such as Pirandello to propose that the dramatic text belonged “primarily to the writer” and that performance was “a form of attack on the writer's intentions”, as Bassnett explains.

Thus, post-naturalistic theater expected from translators, directors and producers a high degree of fidelity to the fixed, immutable written text. “Bound in this servile relationship”, Bassnett goes on, “one avenue of escape for translators was to invent the idea of 'performability' as an excuse to exercise greater liberties with the text than convention allowed. That term has then been taken up by commentators on theatre translation, without regard for its history, and has entered into the general discourse of theatre translation, thereby muddying the already murky waters still further”.

Ezpeleta draws a distinction between dramatic text (seen as a dialogical, literary work of fiction) and theatrical text, which is intended for the stage, being performative and contextual in nature.²⁷ Although they essentially constitute one same inseparable entity in mutual interrelation, each containing the other, they are presented as two separate objects in the context of scholarly analysis.

Dramatic text is usually subject to a dynamic process of “completion”, in connection with “performability” and stage rehearsal, undergoing a stage-oriented adjustment to become a theatrical text.

But in the case of the English-language theatrical productions of *Seven Jewish Children*, an unusual, suggestive finding came up—the complete absence of textual transformations in the theatrical text, which shows absolute fidelity to the dramatic playtext. Dramatic text and

²⁷ Adapted from EZPELETA, Pilar (2007): *Teatro y traducción*, Madrid: Cátedra.

performative transposition are exactly the same thing, no matter if the directors were American, Lebanese, Canadian, New Zealander or British.

Upon reviewing a dozen videos of English-spoken stage productions, in all cases we have found the theatrical text to be a literal transposition of the published original drama. The concise, precise, formulaic writing which can be read almost as a poem, endowed with undeniable effectiveness, probably has had to do with the directors' decision of strict adherence to the written text of the play.

Textual transformation, however, was detected in the Spanish-language version, which shows not only interpretive appropriation but also some degree of addition and omission with respect to the original English text. More of this will be commented below, in the section devoted to translational analysis.

A realm of narratives around *Seven Jewish Children*

With another approach, Aaltonen (2009) speaks about the different narratives²⁸ created by all parts involved in the theatrical endeavor according to their subjective history, circumstances and extra-theatrical elements: "When we see a theatre performance we will automatically try to construct a narrative of what we see. [...] Also the translator is engaged in this process. The narratives are not necessarily the same for all participants. [...] Productions are still open texts".²⁹

Personal narratives of *Seven Jewish Children* constructed by the different directors are inevitably shown in each production, mostly in the way they handle characterization, staging and orality, but this in turn is affected by the public narrative of the societal group to which the director or the theatre are affiliated, and even by the master narrative of Jewish history. Thus, those *mise-en-scenes* by directors or groups belonging to Jewish culture face the difficulty of addressing the public narratives shared by the mainstream community and supported by many among the Jewish public ("the 'baggage' the audiences carry with them", in Aaltonen's words),

²⁸ Aaltonen uses the term *narrative* as defined by Mona Baker to describe a way of organizing the chaos around us into meaningful wholes.

²⁹ AALTONEN, Sirkku (2009): "Noni sosökokeror alolotoså asyl? Constructing Narratives of Heteroglossia in the Swedish Performances of *Utvandrarna* on the Finnish Stage", in EZPELETA, Pilar (ed.) (2009): Dossier: De la traducción teatral, in *TRANS. Revista de traductología*. Málaga: Universidad de Malaga, v. 13.

knowing that the staging will confront them or challenge in some regards, particularly those of Zionist imprint. It is also predictable that the ontological and collective narratives constructed in each scene (much depending on the director's approach) will be assembled and resignified by the spectators based on the blueprint of the master narratives implicit or hinted in the play (such as the Holocaust, the diaspora or Shoah, the Arab-Israeli wars, the Intifada and other major historical events of international scope), with the result of emotional, intellectual or political rejection.

In this interaction of narratives, the dynamics of polyphony/monophony attained during the staging (in terms of text distribution and the degree of consistency among characters) will also play a part in the dialogic construction of meaning at each performance.

As Jewish history has links and ramifications in most parts of the West and certainly in the Middle East, it resounds meaningfully to peoples and groups distributed all around the world. This means that *Seven Jewish Children* can be represented virtually in any country with a history of Jewish settlement or with a socio-political involvement with the Middle East conflict. This opens up wide potentialities for representation, as second and third generation post-diaspora Jews exist in many countries after the Shoah, with their own religious or traditional identities and discursive practices overarching their respective native nationalities. Some scenes in the play, for instance, may change their meaning and nuance if enacted by an old character speaking English with a Yiddish accent or by a young character who has migrated to Israel and adopted this country as his new homeland.

It is even possible to go beyond these public external narratives of identity, and think of some of the lines spoken by non-Jewish relatives of the girl which have their saying in her education, if we think of mixed marriages moving to Israel, creating a much more complex polyphony in the play. (This last possibility was not explored by any reviewed production yet, but seems interesting indeed.)

This complex network of antagonistic forces —sustained by heteroglossia, polyphonic/monophonic interpretations and a possible clash between internal and external narratives— explains the need for paratheatrical devices such as “open discussions”, “preliminary speeches” or “moderated debates” before or after the performances, so as to provide a contextual buffer for the play.

For example, we read in *The Washington Jewish Week* about the staging by Roth at the JWC's Theater J: “Roth himself was upset by the script. However, he has added two pro-Israel

plays to the evening as well as a panel discussion as part of an effort to give a broader context to the play”.

Travis Bedard, who also decided to include a discussion after the performance, comments about his staging in Texas: “My goal was to ensure that this emotional piece was focused on the emotion rather than on the intellect. [...] I feel we succeed on that score [because] the audience reacted emotionally rather than politically. We had guests with histories from all over the world. They all sat pole-axed for the beginning of the talkback, [...] and then they started sharing. The anger that we feared we would have to sidestep and assuage never really materialized. Instead we got sadness and an overwhelming disappointment at the conceived truth adults will feed to children”.³⁰

Punctuation —Freedom and constraint

Churchill uses a formulaic beginning for all her sentences: “Tell her”, “Don’t tell her”, interspersed with “Don’t frighten her” in several scenes. These contrivances help create a rhythmic staccato, which may also be consistent with a suggested use of stichomythia, as pointed elsewhere.

She does not end sentences with final periods other than in a few places. Out of 161 lines of drama text, only 35 sentences are closed with a period. How should we interpret, in theatrical terms, the fact that a text keeps initial capitalization, which is a textual mark to identify individual sentences, but goes without ending periods? Which is the purpose behind this intervention upon conventional grammar?

Having decided that this aspect would be best answered by Churchill herself, I asked her: “Which was your specific point in omitting punctuation? If you had to deconstruct the intentionality behind this decision and instruct what of this should be kept in the translation, even if punctuation could not be omitted in a different language, what would you suggest or instruct as the author of the play?”. Confronted with this aspect of her playtext, Churchill —a translator herself— replied: “You’ll notice that there isn’t no punctuation. There are full stops sometimes. The dialogue moves on quickly, coming to a slight pause at the full stops. It isn’t correct in English either to do without punctuation, so it shouldn’t be relevant that it is not correct in other languages. I would expect translators to follow the punctuation I have written”.

³⁰ BEDARD, Travis: “After the Wind Down”, in Cambiare Productions Blog, accessed in March 16, 2011 in <http://blog.cambiareproductions.com/2009/03/31/after-the-wind-down/>.

But this is not James Joyce and his Molly Bloom's soliloquy. Even though Churchill claims there is no punctuation, she does use commas and, most remarkably, she capitalizes the beginning of all sentences, no matter if the previous had full stops or not. So there *is* punctuation after all. She could have omitted the capitals at the onset of sentences to create continuity, but she did not, as if she meant to say when a sentence starts but not when it ends.

So we asked her again about her intentions. *"I tentatively get from your reply that you used no punctuation to create the feeling that 'the dialogue moves quickly, coming to a slight pause at the full stops'. Is this understanding right? Does this mean that the purpose of the non-punctuated text is to instill a fast tempo in the scene action? [...] What do you want to convey with the lack of punctuation that makes you expect that translators follow your criteria?"*. Churchill replies: "It's not so much a fast tempo to the scene, as that each speech will follow at once from the one before where there is no punctuation, as people develop each other's thought".

I deeply pondered this. She said in her letter that she *"expected translators to follow the punctuation"* she had written. And I decided to explore to which extent her intentions were really fulfilled in Spanish versions by keeping the same half-punctuation without full-stops that she had chosen to use.

In my own translation work (whose final expression is included in "Appendix A"), I had initially explored how full stops would affect the play's impact. So I composed a first translation using plain, regular punctuation. As I found out in this scenario, there might be differences in the way it was *read*, but I didn't notice this affected the performative dynamics of the play. Why I say this? It is interesting to observe (and this became particularly evident when I had to transcribe some filmed performances for this research) that "characterization" and "acting" in *Seven Jewish Children* are performative equivalents to textual punctuation. When a director decides to split each scene into one or several characters and distribute the text, in fact he is introducing a sort of punctuation, upon a non-punctuated text. Also, when actors play their parts, they introduce "oral full stops" in their performances. It is the implicit punctuation within orality. Perhaps Stoller's monologue is the only real performance whose orality runs along the same non-punctuated tracks designed by Churchill. Other than this, all other performances are fully orally-punctuated on stage.

So what if a researcher decided to work the other way round? What if researchers started by transcribing the theatrical text exactly as it is staged on video performances, and they

hadn't read the original playtext beforehand, thus having no previous information about grammar issues in the play?

Leaving aside Stoller's particular solo interpretation, we would find nothing in the video performances suggesting that we had to transcribe the sentences without punctuation. Based on the acting, we would transcribe the theatrical text with full stops or commas, in the natural way in which actors had played the scenes. In fact, this is what happened to me when I proceeded with the transcriptions, and led me to propose an interesting line of research.

So my first pragmatic approach led me to think that punctuation was useful or meaningful *in terms of the reading*, and *as a hint for directors*, inasmuch as they picked up the glove and decided to do something about it onstage. This was the case in the production by *The Guardian*, and in fact this "non-punctuated" effect was so well attained in the performance, that critics tainted it as "psychobabble": the ramblings of an unpunctuated mind.

With or without textual punctuation, actors do introduce their own cuts, pauses and rhythm in their performances under the directors' coaching, so we could say that *the theatrical text, the text targeted for performance, becomes a sort of punctuated text*.

While I was discussing these issues, Churchill's letter arrived, in which she explicitly said that she expected translators to follow her punctuation criteria. On pondering this, I could see—beyond assumptions—that this was an important aspect to Churchill herself. I wondered to which extent a translator would pay a fine service to a translated play by deliberately diverting from the author's instructions. Was this valid? Of course it was. A translator is also responsible for his or her work, and if we consider a *translatum* as an original, then yes, translators can deliberately ponder and discard an author's suggestion about how to translate the play, as long as they believe that there are better reasons to push another translation strategy in terms of the play *skopos*. After all, except for a few remarkable cases, authors are not experts in the target languages, while translators are. But, on second thoughts, was this convenient? Should Pirandello's words be requoted here?

The solution was obvious: if I translated *Seven Jewish Children* as a dramatic playtext, a text meant to be read and pondered by directors, I had to abide to Churchill's indication. In any case, the text would become punctuated as soon as it became a theatrical text, a text for representation voiced and enacted by actors. Whether directors would turn the absent full stops into commas, periods or consciousness flow, this was beyond the translator and even beyond Churchill. If the playtext was translated for performance (assuming it is a "translation

for spatially and temporally controlled reception”, in Aaltonen terms, as opposed to a loosely-targeted translation [Aaltonen 2002]), punctuation issues could be discussed and handled with the directors and producers.

The most decisive factor in the resolution of this self-questioning was Churchill’s own stance in favor of ambiguity, open-coded text and open hermeneutics. Introducing punctuation in the translated play could certainly be better in some aspects and enhance the text value in others, but it would introduce a definition and a set of boundaries which the author deliberately tried to avoid, and in this sense it would go against the *skopos*, understood as “intentionality”.

Ambiguity as a rhetoric device

This ambiguous handling of punctuation is consistent with Churchill’s ambiguity in depersonalization, linguistic economy, use of allusions, and other resources, all of which give room to different semantic interpretations, and, sometimes, are noticed in the realm of orality during performance.

While reviewing the collection of videos, I was surprised to find that some of the actors gave a certain sentence a nuance which pointed to a distinctive meaning, while others seemed to have interpreted the text in a different direction. This contradiction was consistent all along 13 or 14 video recordings, with half the performances carrying a message and the other half ascribing to a different textual interpretation. So I went to check the text, and, in fact, the ambiguity lied in the writing itself, connected to the use of punctuation.

We read in Scene Four, exactly as punctuated in the printed first edition:

“Don’t tell her home, not home, tell her they’re going away” (line 78 in “Appendix A”)

This sentence was interpreted in two different ways by the actors/directors, being:

(1) “Don’t tell her home, definitely avoid talking about ‘home’, instead tell her they’re going away”.

(2) “Don’t tell her either ‘home’ or ‘not home’, avoid this dualism; instead, tell her they’re going away”.

If directors actually did not make any textual intervention upon the dramatic text, and they chose to keep the theatrical lines as an exact transposition of the dramatic original, how is

interpretation noticed and detected? In both ways of interpretation, the actors performed exactly the same lines.

Again, orality held the key; this hermeneutic nuance was very clearly noticeable in the actors' intonation and performing emphasis, while, in the written text, meaning remains obscure. It seems ambiguity fits better to the written word, but is more difficult to maintain during performances, as actors apparently need to enact the text as a carrier of meaning (this meaning riding on their subjective narratives). Again, the only exception is Jeannie Stoller's monologue, where she somehow manages to keep ambiguity by putting sentences one after the other without separation, speaking in what others have already described as a "psychobabblish" inner speech.

Other than Stoller, the second interpretation ("neither home nor not home") is detectable in seven out of thirteen video performances, while the first meaning ("not home, definitely not home") is visible in six of them, and also in the French translation by Esteban García («Ne mentionne pas le foyer, non pas le foyer, dis-lui qu'ils vont partir»).³¹

We pointed this ambiguity to Ms Churchill and asked her which of both meanings was coincidental with her own intention. She replied: "About Scene 4, 'home, not home', the interpretation in (b) is right, meaning don't get into the issue of it being their home or not. Pity about the misunderstanding in (a), but I can see that it could seem to mean that".

However, as she herself admits to, the ambiguity is embedded in the textual expression, giving place to forking hermeneutical roads. Of course, as this affects the reading, this obscurity affects the translator's understanding as well. While we already commented on García's French translation, on the four Spanish versions examined, two got Churchill's intended meaning (Amigo and Tizzano), one contains the diverging interpretation (Talens), and a fourth version avoided the issue by simplification and omission (Roa), as follows:

«No menciones la palabra país, país no, dile que se van de aquí» (Talens);

³¹ As seen and listened to in video, the productions which have made the first interpretation, not the one given by Churchill, were those by Rooms Productions, Behind the Pale Radio Theater, Warwick Drama, Slack Space Festival, Maine Activist Network and Waiheke Theatre in New Zealand. On the contrary, those who chose the second interpretation —the one that Churchill wanted to mean— are those by Cambiare Production, Washington Street Demonstration, Grit TV (slightly ambiguous), Another Jewish Voice, Shades Repertory, Lebanese American University and El infierno de los vivos.

«No le digas nada de hogar o de no hogar. Decile que se van a ir» (Amigo);

« No le digas esas cosas, dile que se van» (Roa);

«No le digas si es o no es su patria, decile que se van a ir» (Tizzano).

The links between ideology and the choice for or against an interpretation is explored in the section “Ideology in translation” and in the contrastive analysis.

Gender issues

Another semantic and textual intriguing aspect was the word “children” in the title. Why did Churchill title her play “Seven Jewish Children” and not “Seven Jewish Girls”, if every single child alluded to in the play was a female child? (We know this based on pronouns, “Tell *her*/ Don’t tell *her*”). In fact, in my own translation I had considered *Siete niñas judías* as a more adequate choice for the title from the start, compared to *Siete niños judíos* as in other Spanish language versions.

This I also decided to ask Churchill about. She was sensible about the issue, saying that “children” was used in a general sense, but she saw no objection about using “niñas” or “girls” in transpositions or translations. She did not point out any ambiguity here that she had intentionally used and confirmed that she had thought of girls, not boys, in her writing, so all interpretations consistent with this aspect would be correct in her opinion.

In “Appendix A”, I contrasted four different Spanish versions of *Seven Jewish Children*. The most widely distributed text, by Manuel Talens, chose “niños” in the title, as I’ve just said. He stuck to the literal title. Sergio Amigo’s translation (his own translation for spatially and temporally controlled reception, which he composed for his staging) also opted for “niños”, as in Talens’ work.

While “children” is a comprehensive, gender-undetermined word in English, which can be used both for girls and boys, “niños” in Spanish is a male noun, thus introducing a gender definition which is not present in the English text. (By the way, using male nouns as an umbrella encompassing both genders has been denounced by feminist translators as a discursive practice hiding structural violence against women.) So this adherence to literal translation also introduces a male-oriented misleading element which is alien to the original. Other than my own, I found just another translation which considered “niñas” for the title, based

on semantic interpretation, which is the one by César Roa. I will refer to these four versions in the section below.

3) Ideology in translation

Pertaining ideology in translation, Maria Tymoczko has pointed out that a translation's ideology is a complex construction, which includes the contents of the source text, with its many locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary aspects, but is also affected by the fact that a translation is an interpretation performed upon the original, and also by the stance and voice of the translator as an ideological ingredient, particularly in connection with the receiving audience.³²

Seven Jewish Children is a highly ideological text, as we've commented at the beginning, conceived of as a political intervention, not as a mere theatrical event. However, it is equally ambiguous and obscure in its formal expression. We have seen that some sentences can be read as meaning different things by directors and producers —readings which become visible not in textual transformation but in orality and performance affecting an intact, untouched original text.

However, one of our hypothesis is that ambiguity tends to be washed out in the process of translation, riding on ideological interpretation, so that the [ambiguous] statements in the original become more explicit metastatements in the *translatum*, "affected by the place of enunciation of the translator" (Tymoczko, 2003], which is ideological, historical and geographical.

³² This is what Tymoczko says: "A translation's ideology is determined only partially by the content of the source text — the subject and the representation of the subject — *even though this content may itself be overtly political and enormously complicated as a speech act*, with locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary aspects of the source text all contributing to the effect in the source context. The ideological value of the source text is in turn complemented by the fact that translation is a metastatement, a statement about the source text that constitutes an interpretation of the source text. That is, the ideology of a translation resides not simply in the text translated, but in the voicing and stance of the translator, and in its relevance to the receiving audience." See TYMO CZKO, María: "Ideology and the Position of the Translator — In What Sense is a Translator 'In Between'?", in CALZADA PÉREZ, María (ed.) (2003): *Apropos of Ideology*, Manchester: St. Jerome. Italics are mine.

As Pym has elaborated on (2005), the idea that translations tend to be more explicit than the original texts is not new to Translation Studies. Pym distinguishes between explicitation required by different language systems and explicitation as an asymmetric feature of the translation situation itself, which “has been hailed as a potential translation universal”. In a bold article, he suggests that explicitation is not so much due to semantic idealism but as an expression of risk management, in the sense that “translators orient reference systems in order to manage the risks of non-cooperation in communication, and that they tend to be risk-averse because of the cultural reward system that often structures their professional tasks” (Pym 2005).

Being this the case or not, while subscribing to the general idea that explicitation might be a potential translation universal, we focus here not in risk-management but, on the contrary, on ideology as a trigger for explicitation and as a general vector guiding interpretive reading, thus prompting translators to make explicit those meanings which they perceive as inherent or implicit in the play, according to their own interpretation of the purpose underlying theatrical writing.

On her part, Tymoczko points out that the translator’s cultural and ideological affiliations weigh more heavily than other determinants such as the location or the temporal frame in which he or she translates.

In the case of the four translations reviewed, two of them are targeted for the Argentinean public. The one I composed is a loosely-targeted translation, or even a reader-oriented drama translation, though localized for Argentina, and the other by Sergio Amigo is a specific version intended to be locally staged in Buenos Aires. Of course, the Argentinean roots of both translators set the dialectal frame and color for the text (incidentally, Amigo lives in London, not in Argentina, and I admit to mixed cultural origins —and nationalities— both from Spain and Argentina). The other two translations are set and written in European Spanish, by Spanish-born translators.

Of course, the differences do exist and are reflected in the texts through dialectal verbal uses and semantic expressions, as I will discuss below. There is no need to guess or interpret when it comes to identifying the regional affiliation of the four translators involved, as they are self-evident in the linguistic interface of each text and they constitute an embedded element of their textual identity.

Ideological dimensions, however, are more challenging to detect just by tracking the translated texts without referring to parallel hypertextual and paratextual information.

We had said that *Seven Jewish Children* had been staged, on the one hand, by supporters of the Palestinian cause, and, on the other hand, by Jewish directors or groups. Churchill herself may be counted among the first group. But based on her attempts to clarify her own position and rebuke the accusations of anti-Semitism, it is reasonable to propose that a “support to the Palestinian cause” can coexist with different degrees of opposition to the Israeli stance, from the wider position of understanding the complex relationship of Jewish people with violence in terms of history and victimhood (and the recognition that not all Jewish people are Zionists), to the open, incensed condemnation of everything related to their presence in Middle East region including, yes, possibly some anti-Semitic readings of the play.

On the other hand, we have reviewed stage productions by Jewish groups, directors or theaters, who saw some kind of universal, appealing moral dimension in the play, maneuvering somehow to ignore its controversial, alleged anti-Semitic bias [and these Jewish directors may or may not be against the Israeli specific policies about territorial and military issues, while the same could be said of the Jewish public who went to see the play carrying their own narratives and interpretive understanding of the reality in Gaza].

In the case of Manuel Talens’ and César Roa’s translations, it is easier to identify their pro-Palestinian ideology and their position against Israeli’s policy of territorial expansion, in connection with paratextual and hypertextual information, as the publication or promotion of their versions is surrounded by metatranslational contents which explicit their political or ideological positioning, either included in the translated text themselves (as in the case of Talens) or in the websites related to their versions and their corresponding theatrical performances.

As for Sergio Amigo and Marcos Arano, responsible for the Buenos Aires production by El Infierno de los Vivos, their ideological stance is traceable in social networks, interviews and recordings, which set themselves in the general context of the Theater of the Oppressed, Forum Theater, the struggle for human rights, the vindication of popular movements against centralized powers, and the action against Imperialism or Neo-liberalism. There are some heated, harsh adjectives against the Israeli incursion in Gaza in blogs related to their stage production, but not directly written by them.

As far as my own translation is concerned, my approach to the text is much more universal than political, and my interest links to the problem of violence, otherness and war in the wider frame. While I feel a deep compassion for the plight of the Palestinian people, I also deplore the long suffering and persecution which has possibly helped frame the Israeli response. I do not see the situation in terms of victims-perpetrators but as a system involving both parties, working as a self-replicating cycle. I am against demonizing any of the parties, as much as against denying their humanity. My ideology is peace activism and the absolute rejection of war in all its forms. If pressed to define my own stance, I would say that war is the worse tragedy in human history, which can only be solved through a firm commitment to dialogue, through education and through an inner transformation in people's hearts and awareness, not through systemic political action by itself and, definitely, never through military action, which can never be a gateway to peace. My translation has not been done from the political position with which Churchill wrote the play or it was translated by Talens, Roa or Amigo. I see the play as a deft, intelligent and powerful mirror of the mindset which is focused on division and exclusion of the other, and emphasizing difference, as an underlying cause of war.

Now, having referred to what can be stated or inferred about the political and ideological stance of the author, directors and translators, the question remains— To which extent this positioning affects the translational work and has incidence on hermeneutical matters? This is what I plan to search along this article.

In the contrastive analysis, suggestive ingredients of ideology came up in the different translations. For instance, Amigo's version localized for Argentina omits two sentences which highlighted a compassionate interest on part of the Jewish families, minimizing thus this dimension in his theatrical text, and also adds a sentence which is not included in the original, introducing the dynamics of economic power and money domination between the Jewish and the Palestinians. This is not stated in Churchill's text, as the only presence of economic domination is the alluded, somehow obscure mentioning of the water issue. The fact that Amigo (alone or during the transposition process with Arano) has introduced this aspect is most interesting, as revealing the translator's own narrative about the Palestinian-Israeli question and his hermeneutic analysis of the text. Whether he saw this meaning as implicit in the play (making it explicit in the translation) or whether he felt it needed to be posited in his version (as to state of his own interpretive understanding of the background), in any case this shows how

ideology is an inherent element of agency, and works in general terms through explicitation. We will return to this point in our contrastive analysis.

Talens also includes ideology in his translation, also by the resource of addition. As will be mentioned below, he attaches a whole proposition, which is not in the original, at the end of a translated sentence. He may have done this either to complete the meaning of an implicit perceived meaning, by means of explicitation, or as his own clarification of Churchill's purpose in writing the phrase. The result is an intolerant sentence which is not stated in the English and can only be perceived if justified by an ideological interpretation. Also, his choice of "país" as the translation of "land" or "home" may also contain an ideological ingredient, in terms of the Palestine status, as we explore in the following paragraphs. This has links with his ("wrong") interpretation of the ambiguous sentence in the English playtext, "Don't tell her home, not home", as Talens' version can be read as intently avoiding the issue of the concept of Palestinians as a "país" ("*No mencionas la palabra país, país no...*").

A sentence which was differently rendered by all four Spanish translators is "Tell her they [the Palestinians] did it to themselves". While Talens wrote "Dile que ellos se lo buscaron" ("Tell her they had it coming"), Amigo translates "Decile que ellos nos hicieron lo mismo" ("Tell her they did the same to us"), and Roa proposes "Dile que se lo hicieron a sí mismos" (literal transference). My translation is "Decile que todo esto lo provocaron ellos mismos" ("Tell her they caused all this themselves"). A more vindictive tone is present in Talens' version, meaning they deserved being attacked, while Amigo's text makes a turn and introduces the meaning of *lex talionis*. This is a highly ideological sentence, as it refers to the attempted explanation or justifying of their own acts of violence.

Transitivity and ideology

It is interesting to notice the relation between transitivity and ideology in certain translated sentences. In this, we follow the most interesting developments by Calzada in her book *Transitivity in translation*, particularly the section "Transitivity from a Functionalist and CDA Viewpoint" (Calzada 2007: 65 and ff.) Building on the tentative proposition that "transitivity is regarded as the main mechanism that marks the 'perspective' from which situations are observed", Calzada then adds that it is also "seen as a reflection of the processes that take place in the world [...] 'sorted in the grammar of clause' (Halliday as quoted by Calzada 2007:67)".

Some sentences in the English original are affected by workings of depersonalization, which are more or less characteristic of English language. How have they been kept or transformed in translation, and how does ideology relate to this?

For instance, we find sentences with receptive voices without explicit actors, like:

- Tell her only a few of us have been killed
- Don't tell her how many of them have been killed
- Tell her the Hamas fighters have been killed
- Tell her he was driven out
- Don't tell her the boy was shot

... coexisting with others where we find depersonalization in terms of general existence or obligation:

- Tell her it's important to be quiet
- Tell her you can't believe what you see on television
- Don't tell her there's any question of danger.

...and also others with active voice but depersonalization in terms of void/abstract nouns, as in:

- (Tell her) it's the fog of war
- Tell her something about the men, tell her they're bad in the game
- Tell her they can't talk suffering to us
- ...they said it was a land without people

And also causative uses:

- Tell her she can make them go away if she keeps still
- Tell her they want their children killed to make people sorry for them,

At the same time, in other sentences the agency is clearly and actively defined:

- Tell her we've turned them back
- Tell her they set off bombs in the cafes
- Tell her they want to drive us into the sea
- Tell her we kill far more of them
- Tell her we killed the babies by mistake

Calzada notices that “despite being natural (obligatory) renderings, all of the divergences discussed [...] have potential ideological implications”. The author comments that although some constructions omit the agent, they refer to it implicitly and speakers are aware on different levels that “the depersonalized construction lacks an agent that they have to infer from the context of the communicative exchange” (Calzada 2007: 101), leaving room for interpretation.

As each scene in the play refers to different communicative and historical settings, “they” in the first scene may mean the Nazis or any persecutor, but “they” in the last Scene means fighters/soldiers/militia men from Palestinian origin, and “they” in scene 4 may allude to the original inhabitants of the lands.

This ambiguity which, as said, is a deliberate element in the English text, is enhanced by the use of depersonalized constructions and passive voices. Calzada observes that some English supervision processes also aim at avoiding the acceptance of responsibility. We can also add that the psychological process of depersonalization helps tolerate the unbearable when coming to terms with situations which entail moral questioning or a contradictory self-image. Part of this has been used wisely by Churchill in her textual construction.

These situations have been solved by means of different translation strategies. One of the most frequent operations involved in the translation of transitivity issues from English to Spanish is the transformation of receptive to operative opposition. Preferring one over the other, a translator may change the ideological charge of the original. These can be seen as follows:

“Don’t tell her how many of them have been killed” (L. 151, Sc. 7), includes a receptive clause where the actor is not explicit and there is no agentive term. While Talens keeps the receptive in his translation, “No le digas cuántos de ellos han muerto”, Amigo inverts transitivity and translates “No le digas a cuántos de ellos matamos nosotros”, with a clear indication of responsibility, as the receptive is turned into operative. In terms of ideology, the latter has a bigger impact and charge.

While Churchill writes “Tell her the Hamas fighters have been killed”, with a depersonalization associated to the receptive opposition, Roa translates “Dile que han matado a guerrilleros de Hamas”. Although he introduces an operative clause, the depersonalization remains, in terms of a non-explicit actor. Amigo and myself have used a clause of state, “están (todos) muertos” shifting action to status, rather than “han muerto” chosen by Talens. All these

strategies try to make the message come to terms with the structures which best serve the purposes of communication in Spanish, a language which is asymmetric to English in terms of transitivity and agency.

Some shifts in causation are also observed:

The sentence “Tell her they want their children killed to make people sorry for them” (L. 167 in Sc. 7), laden with ideological denotation and open to all sorts of interpretations about intention, offers an interesting example in this regard, showing both transitivity and ideology.

Talens: “Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para que la gente se apiade de ellos”.

Amigo: “Decile que utilizan las imágenes de los bebés asesinados para que la gente los compadezca”.

Roa: “Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para dar pena a la gente”

Tizzano: “Decile que a ellos les conviene que haya bebés muertos para que todo el mundo les tenga lástima”.

Talens translation substitutes an operative, non-causative use for a receptive causative use in the original, “Tell her they want that they kill their children so that people feel sorry for them”, though keeping depersonalization through a non-explicit actor (“que maten”). The causative (“making people do something”) is turned into a clause of purpose (“so that”), with operative assignment of agency.

Amigo makes an interpretation on the contents and rephrases the sentence, meaning “Tell her they use the images of their killed babies to make people feel sorry for them”. The full responsibility of the action falls into “they”, the Palestinians, and the causative use of “make” is also turned into a proposition of aim or purpose (“para que la gente”) with the others as active subjects.

I have also opted for a rephrasing, “Tell her it’s convenient for them to have dead babies so that everybody feels sorry for them”, possibly making a shift in the ideological charge of the original, not by assuaging it but perhaps seeking rhetorical efficiency on more rationalized terms.

Roa has translated the most literal, “Tell her they want they kill their babies to arouse pity on others”, thus doubling the stakes for operative clauses, as it is not “the people” who feel

sorry for them, but they themselves who create the feelings on the others. The responsibility seems to hang all the more heavily on the subject of the operation, in the double sense of manipulation.

These examples show that transitivity shifts do have an ideological potential in the level of sentence rephrasing during translation. This potential is fulfilled, enhanced or kept latent according to contextuality and cotextuality. In a play such as *Seven Jewish Children*, with such a crafty and delicate construction at the level of sentence and textual economy, both contextuality and cotextuality acquire similarities to those of poetry, where each word hinges with the others in a precise architecture of effect and impact.

4) Contrastive analysis of four Spanish translations

The following contrastive analysis has been based on the source original dramatic text by Caryl Churchill and on four Spanish versions corresponding to different *skopos*, dialect variant and contexts.

Manuel Talens

The first Spanish text to be considered is the one translated by Manuel Talens, a Spanish translator who is an activist at Tlaxcala, a network of translators for diversity. This is, in all probability the most widespread translation, as it is available online as an open source text, and it is also the version provided by the faculty for research purposes in the context of Theatrical Translation.³³

Talens was born in Granada en 1948. He is a writer and translator publishing his works in web-based media, such as Rebellion website, or in traditional formats, as well a founder of Tlaxcala, a network of translators for linguistic diversity and activism in the field of translation. He is openly against Israeli military and territorial policies and supports the Palestinian cause. We read in his website: “There are many leftist websites whose membership includes

³³ This version can be downloaded at <http://www.rebellion.org/noticia.php?id=85103> [Accessed in April 10, 2011.]

professional and amateur translators who [...] volunteer part of their time to help spread texts against the establishment in several languages, and almost instantly, as they are come along”.

He writes at the end of his translation, *Siete niños judíos*, “¡Larga vida al pueblo palestino! / Long live the Palestinian people!”, as an expression of his stance, and, as Churchill, also offers his translation for free, while encouraging money collections to be sent to Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP).

He has undertaken this translation as part of his activist efforts to help create awareness about the plight of people in Gaza and Palestine, so the main *skopos* of his translation is a political purpose much coincidental with Churchill’s own stance.

How does this *skopos* and stance in Talens weigh on his translation work? To which extent he interprets Churchill’s ambiguity from his own ideological position and interpretive reading of the text? What peculiarities does his version have, compared to others and to the original?

A contrastive analysis provides the following interesting findings:

- 1) The text is rendered in Spanish for Spain, seen not so much in verb conjugation as in semantic choice of words as usually used in this country (“pastel”, “bulldozer”, “solar”, “de haberlo sabido”, “apiadarse de”, “hace sol” for instance).
- 2) While the original reads “a play for Gaza”, Talens translated “Monólogo en un acto para Gaza”. It may be that he translated not the dramatic text, but the theatrical text used by Jeannie Stoller in the *Guardian*’s production, which in fact is introduced as “a monologue for Gaza” (though they are both identical in wording). Other than this guessed explanation, there is nothing else which explains why he chose to translate “play” as “monologue”.³⁴
- 3) The title has been translated as *Siete niños judíos*, in a literal approach, which introduces a gender issue not present in the original. (See page 23 in this paper about the subject, where we have discussed the suitability of “niñas” as a better title translation, as also commented by the author herself.)
- 4) Interpretive and semantic elements in the translation have been detected as follows:

³⁴ See in page 13 and fs. the criticism raised by the Jewish community about the inadequacy of representing the play as a monologue and my considerations about heteroglossia/homoglossia in this regard.

-
- a) (Line 10) “Tell her she’ll have cake if she’s good” / “Dile que si es buena le darás pastel”. The transformation from a passive, receptive position in the subject (“she’ll have”) to an active action/subject (“le darás”) introduces a subject assignment to the 2nd. singular which is not present in the original. If the verb “dar” is to be kept, there are many subjects possible “Si es buena le dare/le darás/le daremos/se le dará”, and there is interpretation in thinking that “tú (and not me or us, or others) le darás” cake.
- b) “Don’t tell her home, not home”. We have already mentioned an exchange with Churchill about a phenomenon of ambiguity and diverging interpretations in the English performances, as seen not in textual transposition, but in the way orality enacted the text, leading some directors to understand the text in one direction, while the other half of the performances seem to denote a different meaning.

This was also observed in translation, with the obvious difference that *the meaning is not revealed by orality and voice intonation, but stated explicitly in written form*. Translation makes lots of interpretive issues implicitly running in the original come out as explicit textual content in the *translatum*, as in this case. In theatrical plays, the possible interpretations of the literal text exist as a potentiality which is embedded into and inherent in the dramatic text, and becomes either in the theatrical text (if targeted for a performance) or in the onstage performance itself. While many interpretations involve a textual transformation during the transposition for theatre, this example is remarkable in the sense that the dramatic text remains untouched in the targeted theatrical text, but the interpretation is made explicit by means of orality (intonation).

The version by Talens conveys the “wrong” interpretation, that is, not the one which Churchill confessedly wanted to assign the text. Can we take the analysis one step forward and propose that the choice of meaning has had to do with an ideological conscious or unconscious choice? This version by Talens goes “No menciones la palabra país, país no, dile que se van de aquí”. While Churchill wanted the sentence to mean “Let’s not get into the issue of this place being their home or not, neither to affirm it nor to deny it”, Talens’ approach means, to the effect: “Don’t mention the word ‘country’, not the word ‘country’”.

Is this ideologically different in any sense? Obviously so, not only in terms of how he interpreted the meaning, but also in his choice of “país” as “home”, introducing the question of Palestine status and sovereignty. In this context, the meaning

acquired by his translated text is “leave out the word “country”, leave the concept out”, which is quite different from the meaning Churchill intended to give and the way she used the more general word “home”.

- c) There is a literal translation of “iron fist” as “puño de hierro”, which is an idiomatic expression. Though of course “puño de hierro” can be read as a metaphor as well, the occurrence of “puño de hierro” in Spanish shows a ratio of 1:50 (2%) compared to the actual occurrences of “iron fist” in English, as revealed by a simple Google frequency search, which suggests that the allusive impact and the full adequacy of the translation is weaker than in the original. Two Spanish translators (Talens and Roa) have used this rendering, while the two translations for Argentina found dynamic equivalences by means of naturalization to their use context. This may hint to a regional more accepted use of “puño de hierro” in Spain, or simply to a more literal approach to translation in these particular two cases.
- d) Some adaptation has taken place by omitting or simplifying the full grammar of the source sentences (L. 11 - “Tell her to curl up as if she’s in bed” / “Dice que se acurruque en la cama”). Being Talens a professional translator, we attribute this to a literary strategy rather than an error. The strategy of structure simplification in this sentence has not been followed by the other three translators.
- e) This adaptation has also taken place in L. 23, “Tell her she can make them go away if she keeps still”, translated by Talens as “Dile que, si no se mueve, se irán”, which omitted the causative use of “make” and simplified the grammar construction.
- f) “Land” and “Home” as “país”. Talens’ version almost systematically translates the concept as “país”, instead of other less targeted versions (such as “tierra”, for instance) or even more patriotic (as “patria”). Churchill is less specific, and instead of speaking of “country” she chooses wider words (*land, home*) which are more encompassing. Talens’ choice of “país” as “land”, which is semantically correct, at the same time varnishes the translation with a political coating and highlights the element of national identity. While Palestine is being internationally acknowledged as a “territory”, and not as a “state”,³⁵ Talens’ mentioning of “home” as “país” sets an even more controversial frame to his version. This was already discussed above in “Ideology in translation”.

³⁵ Palestine is not a member of the United Nations and is not officially recognized as a State. The status acknowledge at the UN is that of an occupied territory. The “Palestine question” (sic) is a benchmark in all the UN pages related to this issue.

- g) “Dile que no son muy buenos contra los tanques”. Talens interprets “Tell her they’re not much good against tanks” so that “they” refers to the Palestinians, while it refers to “stones”, addressing the sentence immediately before, “Don’t tell her they throw stones”.
- h) “They did it to themselves”. This sentence has been translated differently by all translators. Talens’ version is “Dile que ellos se lo buscaron” (“They had it coming”), reinforcing the connotation that they deserve all actions against them. This item was discussed before in the section about ideology.
- i) “It’s the fog of war”. It is also striking that Talens has chosen to translate literally this phrasological image referring to the collateral damages caused by war and the reality of armed clashes even in its dark aspects. The semantic efficacy of the literal translation in Spanish is not evident, and so the choice affects adversely the transmission of the message both in terms of contents and of ideology, as the sentence was meant to justify the killing of the babies in the context of the previous lines.
- 5) Additions and changes
- j) “Pero fuera de aquí”. Talens version follows closely Churchill’s original, in general terms. So it is significant to find an unexpected change in line 90, where the English text reads “Tell her for miles and miles all round they have lands of their own”, and the Spanish version is: “Dile que tienen kilómetros y kilómetros de tierras que son suyas, *pero fuera de aquí*”.³⁶ The translator has chosen to add a sentence which introduces an “expelling” or “exclusionist” intention in the speech. It is probable that Talens has given the sentence this meaning, making explicit in his translation something was not stated in the English text and, which he finds inherent in his own interpretation. Where Churchill remains ambiguous, Talens takes sides in hermeneutic terms and turns implicitness into explicitness. This is what we’ve pointed out before, in terms of ideology as a catalyzer for explicitation in translation.

César Roa

César Roa Llamazares is not a professional translator, but an economist working in the public banking sector in Spain, who is also an author of political and historical texts, articles and

³⁶ Italics are mine.

comments. As in the case of Talens, we also find his works in the Rebellion website, and he is connected with the School of Sociology and Politics at Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

He has composed a “targeted translation for stage performance” intended for a staging produced by Indalecio Corrugeto. This staging had an *avant-premiere* at the Teatro de Cámara de Getafe affiliated to Fundación César Navarro, in March 2010, and premiered at the Ateneo de Madrid and at the Somosaguas Campus of Universidad Complutense, the day after that.

In the video recordings available³⁷ corresponding to the pre-premiere, the dramatic performance is not included (Roa and Corrugeto said, in their correspondence with me, that the performance was not recorded “due to copyright limitations”), but there are the preliminary speeches by César Navarro de Francisco as the honorary president of the sponsoring institution, by Indalecio Corrugeto as the director, and by César Roa as the translator.

In the first speech by Navarro, Corrugeto is acknowledged to be “Churchill’s disciple” and “a scholar at the School of Economics, in UCM”, as well as “a well-known figure in the theatrical world” and “a man deeply involved with theatre”. In his own speech, Corrugeto claims that “the structure (?) which this staging will follow is exactly the structure meant by the author, Caryl Churchill, as the short performance, not beyond 15 minutes long, will be followed by a debate. In this, I like to think I am following strictly the author’s purpose, not only in textual aspects but in all other aspects.” However, it is interesting to note, Corrugeto seems to interpret characterization in a way of his own, parting from Churchill’s indications: “The play is composed of seven scenes”, he says, “and seven characters”, thus ascribing to the “monophonic” interpretation of the Jewish discourse and not considering that Churchill did not provide any indication as to the size of the cast or the number or characters.

The premiere was promoted and sponsored by the group Todos Somos Palestina. The announcements were released by websites such as “Nodo50 – Counterinformation in the web”, “Otro Madrid – Urban resistance”, and “Mirada hacia Palestina – A blog by a collective created at the School of Politics and Sociology at Universidad Complutense de Madrid in support of the Palestinian people”. These announcements state that “the play’s intention is the following debate among the public, so that the public [...] will share ideas and opinions about the Zionist invasion to the Palestinian territory and the savage assassinations perpetrated upon the

³⁷ These two videos can be watched online in <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48gGX1sdmx4>. See “Appendix C – Stage productions”, item Nr. 18.

Palestinian people day after day”. The footer in miradahaciapalestina.blogspot.com reads: “We are a collective formed by professors and students of the School of Politics and Sociology at UCM with the purpose of supporting Palestinian people and create awareness among students about the barbaric plight of this people due to Zionist immoral, illegal and irrational attacks”.

In the video, César Roa is introduced by Corrugado as “also an Economist working at the Servicio de Estudios del Banco de España, in his ‘second life’ [besides his interest in the Palestinian cause and theatre]”.

As the recording did not include the performance, it was hard to get the theatrical translated text. I was particularly interested in it because of the explicit ideological adscriptions surrounding its staging, sponsoring and activism, much less ambiguous than Churchill’s approach. It was Corrugado who got me in contact with Roa, and he provided himself his translated version, which I analyze as follows, included in “Appendix A”.

The contrastive analysis of Roa’s version offers the following suggestive findings:

- 1) About the title. Roa’s has had the merit of rethinking the title in terms of gender determination, and chose *Siete niñas judías* as his translation strategy.
- 2) While the version he provided to me (dramatic translated playtext) reads “Un texto sobre Gaza”, the poster designed for the theatrical performance reads “Una obra para Gaza”, thus suggesting a textual transformation on his first draft.
- 3) Graphic elements. In Roa’s translation we find that two sentences along the text were highlighted by the translator with bold font. These two sentences are not marked in any way by Churchill in her published version, and they correspond to line 91, in Scene 4, and line 168, the long, climactic paragraph in Scene 7. In the first case, the underlined sentence is as follows: “Repítele **que esta es nuestra tierra prometida**”. In the second case, the text goes: “...dile **que somos el pueblo elegido**”. Both annotations underline the element of “promised land” in connection with Jewish narratives, identity and discourse, and obviously with the occupied territories and the claims to the land.

As a bold font is a graphic marker working at the level of reading, we can assume that Roa wanted to take the reader’s attention to the claim of the “promised land” as a theme for further thoughts. To which extent the bold characters were also indications addressed to the actors is something we ignore. Corrugado’s production made a point of stressing the importance of the discussion after the performance. Was the issue of the

promised land a central element in this debate? These questions could be posed to Roa and Corrugado in a second stage of research.

In any case, there is no question about the ideological ingredient of the promised land as a theme which caught the translator's attention.

- 4) Normative and literary elements. Though assessing the literary adequacy or the stylistic appropriateness of the scrutinized translations was never a purpose of this study, we want to observe the fact that Roa is not a linguist and is not a professional translator. Thus, his translation strategies are not strong in the field of norms, style rules or literary criteria. The elements which could be changed in a copy-edition or a revision will not be addressed here, as they are not the subject of research, unless they are related to matters of explicitness, ideology and interpretation.
- a) While Roa translated literally in many places, in other cases he uses strategies of adaptation, naturalization, transference and modulation corresponding to a "free translation". For example, he renders "Tell her she'll have cake is she is good" as "Dile que, si se porta bien, tendrá un regalo" (line 10, Scene 1), or "Tell her her uncles died" as "Dile que sus tías murieron" (lines 28, 29, 30, in Scene 2), changing gender.
 - b) The sentence "Tell her how many when she is older" (line 46, Scene 2), which is subtly, deftly unspecified and inexplicit is translated as "Dile a cuántos nos mataron cuando sea mayor", introducing a gross explicitation.
 - c) Where Churchill writes "Tell her her great great great great lots of greats grandad lived there", combining the indirect orality for children and the direct speech to the adults, Roa adapts based on meaning and translates "Dile que sus antepasados vivieron allí", unifying these two levels in one single layer of neutral, explanatory, non-figurative speech.
 - d) "Tell her about camels in the desert and dates". Roa omits the second part of the sentence and does not translate the dates, just leaving the camels in the desert.
 - e) The commented sentence, "Don't tell her home, not home" has been solved by Roa through omission. His translation reads "No le digas esas cosas, dile que se van", avoiding the interpretation of the ambiguous phrase.
 - f) In line 117, Scene 6, while the original reads "Don't tell her anything she doesn't ask", Roa translates "No le digas que no pregunte", giving the sentence a very different meaning ("Don't tell her not to ask").

g) Roa also changes “Tell her she can stay late and watch *Friends*” into “Dile que puede acostarse tarde y ver *los Simpsons* (sic)”, in an effort towards adaptation.

5) Interpretive elements.

a) In line 61, Scene 3, Churchill writes: “Tell her, of course tell her, tell her everyone was driven out and the country is waiting for us to come home”, and Roa translates “Dile, díselo, dile que los echaron a todos y que el país espera *impaciente*³⁸ que volvamos a casa”. The adjective “*impaciente*” (“impatient”) is not present in the English text, and it is an interpretive choice by Roa, probably to give account of the feeling of urgency he perceived in the voices of those returning to Israel or Gaza. Being as it may, it is an addition more than an explicitation, which may be associated to an ideological reading of the text.

b) In line 100, Scene 5, while Churchill writes “Tell her how big their armies are”, Roa interprets the sentence in the opposite sense, translating “Háblale sobre lo fuerte que es *nuestro* ejército”. In the same scene, line 102, the English text reads “Tell her we’re fighters”, and Roa renders “Dile que somos *buenos* guerreros”. These two sentences together convey somehow a different image of Jewish people in their victory, emphasizing their inclination to war and their self-contented nature in the commitment to fight.

c) A most striking interpretation which apparently has nothing to do with the original text shows in line 141, the last sentence in Scene 6. The scene starts with the issue of the swimming pool, proceeds to a discussion of the Palestinians intentions of driving them to the sea and the need for the wall, and ends with the same initial allusion to the swimming.

So “Tell her we’re going swimming” is translated (or, better, transformed into) “Dile que de aquí no nos echa nadie”, which is more a writing exercise than a translation.

d) In line 153, Scene 7, Roa chooses “guerrilleros de Hamas” as a translation for “Hamas fighters”, where Talens translates the word as “combatientes de Hamas”, Amigo as “líderes de Hamas” (“Hamas leaders”) and I have preferred to omit the term and call them “los de Hamas” as self-explanatory.

e) “It’s the fog or war”. Roa translates this by simplification, “dile que es la guerra”, which is not very efficient in semantic terms to express what the original English

³⁸ Italics are mine.

makes a point of stating in terms of the undesired but necessary and unavoidable effects of war, included as a rationalization and a justification of the killing.

- f) There is a change of meaning in connection with a possible error or slip in line 168, Scene 7. While Churchill has written: “Tell her we won’t stop killing them till we’re safe”, Roa translates “Dile que no vamos a dejar de matar hasta que *no* estemos seguros”³⁹ (“Tell her we won’t stop killing until we are *not* safe”), making the sentences mean the exact opposite. This use of “hasta” as “while” instead of “until” is a common linguistic solecism, but it has also effects, either conscious or unconscious, in the ideological charge of the sentence.
- 6) Omissions.
- a) Roa has omitted line 133 in the original text, which is a repetition of line 131: “Tell her they want to drive us into the sea”. In Churchill’s playtext this concern about the alleged intentions of Palestinian people is repeated in the context of argument, as a statement, denial, restatement. In Roa’s version, this sentence is only mentioned once, which of course affects the dynamics of the exchange.

Sergio Amigo

Sergio Amigo is an Argentinean living in London, UK, since the start of the century, where he develops theatrical and cultural activities. He is related to the “Calder Bookshop Theatre”, where he offers theatre workshops and training about Shakespeare.

Together with actor and director Marcos Arano, they staged *Siete niños judíos* in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the context of “Theatre for identity”, an initiative instrumented in the context of local struggle for justice and truth, demanding trials against the military who violated human rights and the recycling of former clandestine torture centers into museums and awareness venues. The play was staged at the former Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada, one of the worst torture and illegal detention dungeons during the late 70s and early 80s, recently reconverted into a Museum of Memory. Amigo joined Arano in his theatre company “El infierno de los vivos”, which aligns itself in the movement of the Theater of the Oppressed, started by Boal in the 60s, and the techniques of the Forum Theatre. This company was in charge of the premiere of *Siete niños judíos* in Argentina, as translated by Sergio Amigo.

³⁹ The italics are mine.

As the theatrical text was not available, the text in “Appendix A” is a transcription from the video with the performance, available in the internet. A radio version⁴⁰ (a reading) is more comprehensive than the theater performance, including Churchill’s instructions and suggestions at the first page of the published text, which means that they used the dramatic text as a basis for the radio reading.

In a written interview with Arano, he explained to me the transposition process they followed. Based on Amigo’s translation, they tested the text onstage during rehearsals and changes were introduced in terms of the performance needs. He said they tried to use local language in their version (Argentine Spanish), but they wanted to remove all cultural references which constrained the time frame, with the purpose of making their staging as “anachronical” as possible. This is why they removed specific references to *Friends*, the TV sitcom, and used general allusions. This operation can be taken to correspond to what Aaltonen (2006) calls “*reactualization*”, that is, the choices made by the translators or directors “at the sites of indeterminacy to suggest familiarity or distance and, through these, relevance”, to neutralize the ways in which culture impacts and constrains translation.

Though Arano and Amigo have not made statements about their ideological position and motivations in staging the play, their referential articles, interviews and texts in connection with their *Siete niños judíos* set their political position in the context of the struggle against the oppressed, the popular resistance movements, the anti-neoliberal policies and the anti-Imperialist general stance. In articles and interviews about their performance, strong, incensed adjectives against the Israeli action in Gaza also help infer their anti-Israeli political involvement. They also collected money for Medical Aid for Palestine during their shows.

The textual analysis of this version shows the following interesting elements:

- 1) The translation is rendered in Argentinean Spanish, as seen in the verb treatment (“Decile”) and in some semantic choices (“nenas”, “tortas”, “dibujitos”, “pileta”). A common grammar error extended in Argentine Spanish in recent decades is the use of singular “enclitic” pronominal forms for plural indirect objects (“Decile que podrá escribirle a sus amigos” instead of “deciles que podrá escribirles a sus amigos”). Though the regional character of this solecism is questionable, as it probably takes place

⁴⁰ Available in www.myspace.com/elinfiernodelosvivos

elsewhere, considering the extended misuse in Argentinean graphic and audiovisual press and mass-media, we may tentatively consider this as a regional marker.

- 2) The title has also been translated as *Siete niños judíos*, as in the case of Talens' version, using the male word as encompassing of both genders. However, as already said, this choice introduces a male-oriented interpretation which is contradicted by the playtext in terms of gender.
- 3) Interpretive and semantic elements in the translation have been detected as follows:
 - a) "Tell her it's important to be quiet". While Talens version and mine have translated "quiet" as "silent", Amigo has taken it to mean "still", "not moving" (as in Roa's version).
 - b) "Home, not home". Unlike Talens, Amigo has interpreted the text according to which Churchill meant: "No le digas nada de hogar o de no hogar. Decile que se van a ir".
 - c) "Tell her they're bad in the game". While Talens has translated in more or less literal terms "Dile que son los malos del juego", and the other two translators have simplified the expression to "Dile/decile que son los malos", Amigo has made an interpretive adaptation, rendering the sentence as "Decile que no juegan limpio", making it more specific and explicit.

We had commented on the two levels of orality, direct and indirect, present in the play, which lets Churchill combine a direct oral speech addressed to other significant adults, and an indirect orality which followed the style and tone used to talk to children. "Tell her they're bad in the game", "Decile que son los malos", "Dile que son los malos del juego" replicate this pattern and reproduce both levels.

Amigo's translation suppresses this children code and uses a code meant more to adults than to children, as it is permeated with moral rationalizing.

- d) "We're the iron fist now". Amigo has approached the sentence adapting the image to a metaphoric equivalent in Spanish, at least for Argentina, rendering this line as "Decile que ahora nosotros somos la mano dura". This dynamic equivalence has been avoided by Spanish translators from Spain, which kept the literal image, though the prevalence of the construction in Spanish occurs with much lesser frequency than in English.
- e) "Decile del pueblo que provoca la guerra". Amigo's translation of "tell her it's the fog of war" sounds strange and unclear, "tell her about the people who provoke the war", apparently not related to the charge and purpose of the original text. It is not clear, also, what is the meaning of the sentence in contextual terms.

- f) “They are animals living in rubble now”. Amigo has adapted “animals” into “rats”, with an obvious ideological sign and evident expressive effects, attributing an even more unpleasant varnish to an already revulsive sentence spoken by an extremist Israeli. In all this paragraph, an evident “overclocking” has been done upon the emotional voltage of the text, exaggerating a speech which verges on the unbearable. For instance, Amigo translates “I look at one of their children covered in blood” as “Veo a una de esos niños *chorreando* sangre” (“dripping blood”) which is possibly a more explicit and gruesome expression. In any case, either performed by the translator or resolved based on scenic and performative reasons in the theatrical transposition, it is clear that this climactic scene, a very controversial string of speech, has been intensified through rhetoric resources and expressive emphasis in translation.
- 4) Omissions.
- a) Omission 1. Amigo and Arano omitted two sentences in the playtext. One is L. 17, “Tell her we’ll come and find her”. This sentence conveys compassion, hope and humanity in the original, and its removal somehow deletes an affectionate element in the scene.
- b) b) Omission 2. The second omitted sentence is “Don’t tell her there is any question of danger” (L. 48 in scene 2). This sentence also conveys a spirit of protecting and removing a cause of anguish in the girl, so this omission also cuts down this dimension in the text.
- 5) Additions.
- a) In Scene 4, after line 85, Amigo and Arano have added a sentence which is not in the original: “Decile que son gente de bien que trabaja para nosotros” (“Tell her they are well-meant people who work for us”).
- When Amigo has one character say “They work for us”, he introduces a new layer which adds to all other complex issues between Palestinians and Israelis— work domination. In the polyphony of criteria, opinions and stances represented in the text, something interesting comes up which is not in the original text and carries the translator (or the directors’ or the company’s) own narrative.
- This added sentence represents ideology in the translated text possibly more than any other element, and it highlights the nature of this translation as a theatrical metastatement and a collective construction.

In terms of economic power and dynamics, the Israeli character (a female character) speak of themselves as employers and she also condescends upon Palestinians as “good-natured people” who lend services to them as owners (of the land?, of the capital?, of the money?, of the job opportunities?). This positioning of Jewish characters as “politically correct lords” is laden with colonial connotations and reinforces an interpretation of the Israeli stance in league with Amigo’s involvement with the oppressed under imperialist domination. At least it could be tentatively said that the added sentence is consistent with his ideological statements.

- b) In Scene 5, line 99, Amigo adds another sentence which is not in the original: “Decile cómo pasaban los tanques” (“Tell her how the tanks passed along”). This sentence may be justified in terms of dramatic tension or intensity. While this scene has been performed by several companies with a contained sadness or an emotional measure of austerity, *El Infierno de los Vivos* creates a loud, highly histrionic, triumphant scene with revengeful outbursts of joy which gives the Jewish a belligerent, vindictive identity. Maybe the added line contributes to convey how powerful the opponent was and how valuable is the Israeli victory to their heroes. In any case, it is a transformation on the original dramatic text.
- c) “Tell her I laughed when I saw the dead policemen”. Amigo has added an adjective which enhances the abhorred reaction to the sentence spoken by the Jewish character, “Decile que me reí a carcajadas cuando vi al policía muerto” (“Tell her I roared with laughter / Tell her I laughed out loud / Tell her I bursted out laughing”). Far from being a naturalization of a mere rephrasing, there is a quantitative degree of emphasis which is not present in the English, with an ideological effect on the public.

5) Conclusion

The analysis of four Spanish translations of a highly ideological and political play such as *Seven Jewish Children*, as well as the contrastive review of sixteen video recordings of stage performances in English, Hebrew, French and Spanish, has led us to observe how ideology in translation is a complex construction built upon the explicit and implicit statements in the original text and the ideological positioning of the translator. This latter element sometimes

becomes visible in metatextual and hypertextual information, and sometimes can only be inferred out of textual markers embedded in the composition.

As a distinctive element, this play is inextricably related to a political intention, and the same can be said about its translations, with three out of the four translations reviewed coming to life based on an ideological alignment with the author's position about the Gaza conflict and the Palestine question, and with the explicit aim of supporting the Palestinian cause or spreading the political message within. In these cases, the ideological adscription of the translators was clearly traceable, and it permeated the *skopos* of the translation work.

Ideology has been seen to act as a triggering element behind certain translational operations such as explicitation or transitivity shifts—in fact, through the whole array of translational procedures and strategies which constitute the conventional baggage of translation work (omissions, additions, modulations, adaptations, transference, naturalization, recreation, and so on)—, particularly when ideology had to do with the purpose and motivation of the work. This element also acts as a main ingredient of the personal, public, and master narratives linking translators, directors, actors and public, which complete, in each case, the play's meaning, and leans the potentialities inherent in the theatrical original text.

Interpretation, based on these narratives and on the ideological dimensions, not only affects the textual layers during transposition and translation. As it was seen, it even changes the scenic performance in the presence of an intact, unchanged dramatic text, extracting different meanings out of identical and exact messages.

Transitivity shifts and explicitation were seen as two major operations in translation which can be closely linked to ideology, not only as a *cause* of transformation in the ideological charge of the message—as many authors have already stated—, but also as *effects* of ideology, either conscious or unconsciously.

As topics for research, ideology and explicitation in translation can be highly benefitted from contrastive analysis and video-assisted research, as well as from the scrutiny of paratheatrical information, press articles and internet material about social reception. Both the topics and the tools promise further possibilities of exploration in Translation Studies from an interdisciplinary approach, including also the links to psychological, sociological, religious and political dimensions.

THEATRICAL TEXTS REVIEWED

- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *Seven Jewish Children*, Royal Court, en <http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/mmlib/includes/sendapplicationfile.php?id=157>
Fecha de descarga: 16 de marzo de 2011.]
- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *Siete niños judíos, monólogo en un acto dedicado a Gaza*, trad. Manuel Talens, en <http://www.tlaxcala-int.org/upload/telechargements/17.pdf>
[Downloaded March 16, 2011.]
- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *Sept enfants juifs, Monologue en un acte dédié à Gaza*, trad. Esteban García, rev. Fausto Giúdice, en <http://www.tlaxcala-int.org/upload/telechargements/16.pdf>. [Downloaded March 16, 2011.]
- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *7 niños judíos, una obra para Gaza*, trad. Sergio Amigo, transc. Paula Tizzano, en <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwtfBHJaou4> [Downloaded March 16, 2011.]
- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *Siete niñas judías, una obra para Gaza*, trad. Paula Tizzano Fernández, en <http://www.megaupload.com/?d=LHORG360>. [Uploaded May 3, 2011.]
- CHURCHILL, Caryl (2009): *Siete niñas judías*, trad. César Roa, no publicada en internet, cedida por el autor e incluida en este material.

REFERENCE SOURCES AND ARTICLES

AALTONEN, Sirkku (2004): "Targeting in Drama Translation: Laura Ruohonen's Plays in English Translation", available in <http://www.lipas.uwasa.fi/hut/english/aaltonen/vakki2004.doc> [Accessed in April 11, 2011.]

--- (2006) "Ecce Homo – Reactualized", in *Teatro em tradução, Cadernos de Literatura Comparada*. Instituto de Literatura Comparada Margarida Losa, da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, pp. 65-98.

--- (2009), "Noni sosökokeror alolotosá asyl? Constructing Narratives of Heteroglossia in the Swedish Performances of *Utvandrarna* on the Finnish Stage", in EZPELETA PIORNO, Pilar

- (ed.) (2009): *Dossier: De la traducción teatral*, *TRANS. Revista de traductología*, 13, Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, pp. 107-118.
- (2010): "Drama translation", in GAMBIER, Yves and VAN DOORSLAER, Luc (2010): *Handbook of Translation Studies. Volume 1*, New York, Benjamins.
- BASSNETT, Susan (1991): "Translating for the Theater: The Case Against Performability", in *TTR: traduction, terminologie, rédaction*, 4:1, pp. 99-111.
- CALZADA PÉREZ, María (2007): *Transitivity in translation*, Bern: Peter Lang.
- CHE SUH, Joseph (2002): "Compounding Issues on the Translation of Drama/Theatre Texts", in *Meta: Translators' Journal*, 47:1, 51-57.
- EZPELETA PIORNO, PILAR (2007): *Teatro y traducción: aproximación interdisciplinaria desde la obra de Shakespeare*, Madrid, Cátedra, pp. 366-406.
- (2009), "Introducción: De la traducción teatral", *TRANS. Revista de traductología*, 13, Málaga: S. P. Universidad de Málaga. pp. 12-17.
- PYM, Anthony (2005): "Explaining Explicitation", in *New Trends in Translation Studies. In Honour of Kinga Klaudy*, ed. Krisztina Károly. Budapest, 2005, available in http://usuaris.tinet.cat/apym/on-line/translation/explicitation_web.pdf [Accessed in April 16, 2011.]
- TYMO CZKO, María: "Ideology and the Position of the Translator – In What Sense is a Translator 'In Between'?", in Calzada Pérez, María (ed.) (2003): *Apropos of Ideology*, Manchester: St. Jerome.
- ZUBER-SKERRIT, Ortrun (1988): "Towards a Typology of Literary Translation: Drama Translation Science", *Meta*, 33: 4, 485-490.

Appendix A: Contrastive analysis of the original and four translated versions

| | Caryl Churchill - English | Manuel Talens - Spanish | Sergio Amigo - Spanish for Argentina - Stage transcription | Paula Tizzano - Spanish for Argentina | César Roa - Spanish for Spain |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Seven Jewish Children | Siete niños judíos | 7 niños judíos | Siete niñas judías | Siete niñas judías |
| 2 | a play for Gaza | Monólogo en un acto dedicado a Gaza | una obra para Gaza | Una obra para Gaza | Un texto sobre Gaza (theatrical poster) – Una obra para Gaza (playtext) |
| 3 | <i>No children appear in the play. The speakers are adults, the parents and if you like other relations of the children. The lines can be shared out in any way you like among those characters. The characters are different in each small scene as the time and child are different. They may be played by any number of actors.</i> | <i>La infancia – destinataria genérica del enunciado del discurso en esta obra de teatro– está ausente aquí. Las voces discursivas, que aluden en cada una de las siete escenas a una niña distinta, son de adultos: de sus padres o, si se prefiere, de cualquier otra persona relacionada con los niños. El monólogo corre a cargo de diferentes personajes, tantos como se desee, que son distintos en cada pequeña escena, puesto que el tiempo teatral y los niños también lo son.</i> | | <i>En la obra no aparecen niños. Los parlamentos están a cargo de adultos, que representan a los padres o, si se prefiere, a otras personas cercanas a las niñas. El texto puede repartirse entre los personajes en forma libre, a elección. Cada escena ocurre en momentos diferentes de la historia y se refiere a niñas distintas, por eso los personajes cambian. La obra puede ser representada por una cantidad indeterminada de actores.</i> | |
| 4 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 |
| 5 | Tell her it's a game | Dile que es un juego | Decile que es un juego, | Decile que es un juego | Dile que es un juego. |
| 6 | Tell her it's serious | Dile que es grave | Decile que es en serio, | Decile que es en serio | Dile que es algo muy |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | serio. |
| 7 | But don't frighten her | Pero no la asustes | Pero no la asustes, | Pero no la asustes | Pero no la asustes. |
| 8 | Don't tell her they'll kill her | No le digas que la van a matar | No le digas que la pueden matar. | No le digas que la pueden matar | No le digas que quieren matarla |
| 9 | Tell her it's important to be quiet | Dile que es importante que no haga ruido | Decile que es muy importante que se quede quieta. | Decile que no haga ruido por ningún motivo | Dile que no se mueva |
| 10 | Tell her she'll have cake if she's good | Dile que si es buena le darás pastel | Decile que hay torta si se porta bien. | Decile que si se porta bien va a haber torta | Dile que, si se porta bien, tendrá un regalo |
| 11 | Tell her to curl up as if she's in bed | Dile que se acurruque en la cama | Decile que se haga un ovillo como cuando está en la cama. | Decile que se quede acurrucada, como cuando duerme | Dile que se acurruque como si estuviera en la cama |
| 12 | But not to sing. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante |
| 13 | Tell her not to come out | Dile que no salga | Decile que no salga. | Decile que no salga | Dile que no salga |
| 14 | Tell her not to come out even if she hears shouting | Dile que no salga incluso si oye gritos | Decile que no salga aunque oiga gritos. | Decile que no salga aunque oiga gritos | Dile que no salga, aunque oiga gritos |
| 15 | Don't frighten her | No la asustes | No la asustes. | No la asustes | No la asustes |
| 16 | Tell her not to come out even if she hears nothing for a long time | Dile que no salga incluso si no oye nada durante mucho tiempo | Decile que no salga aunque no se oiga nada. | Decile que no salga aunque pase mucho tiempo y no oiga nada | Dile que no salga aunque esté mucho tiempo sin oír nada |
| 17 | Tell her we'll come and find her | Dile que vendremos a buscarla | | Decile que vamos a venir a buscarla | Dile que volveremos y que la encontraremos |
| 18 | Tell her we'll be here all the time. | Dile que estaremos aquí todo el tiempo. | Decile que estaremos aquí todo el tiempo. | Decile que vamos a estar acá todo el tiempo. | Dile que luego no nos moveremos de aquí |
| 19 | Tell her something about the men | Dile algo sobre los hombres | Decile algo sobre los hombres. | Decile algo de los hombres | Dile algo sobre los hombres |
| 20 | Tell her they're bad in the game | Dile que son los malos del juego | Decile que no juegan limpio. | Decile que son los malos | Dile que son los malos |
| 21 | Tell her it's a story | Dile que es un cuento | Decile que es un cuento. | Decile que es como un cuento | Dile que es un cuento |
| 22 | Tell her they'll go away | Dile que se irán | Decile que se irán. | Decile que se van a ir | Dile que se irán |
| 23 | Tell her she can make them go away if she keeps still | Dile que, si no se mueve, se irán | Decile que ella puede lograr que se vayan si se queda quieta. | Decile que si se queda quieta, hará que se vayan | Dile que puede hacer que desaparezcan si se está quieta |
| 24 | By magic | Por arte de magia | Como por arte de magia. | Como por arte de magia | Mediante un truco de |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | magia. |
| 25 | But not to sing. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante. | Pero que no cante. |
| 26 | 2 | 2 | | 2 | II |
| 27 | Tell her this is a photograph of her grandmother, her uncles and me | Dile que ésta es una foto de su abuela, sus tíos y yo | Decile que esta es una foto de su abuela, de sus tíos, y mía. | Decile que esta foto es de su abuela, sus tíos y yo | Dile que es una fotografía mía con su abuela y sus tías |
| 28 | Tell her her uncles died | Dile que sus tíos murieron | Decile que sus tíos murieron. | Decile que sus tíos murieron | Dile que sus tías murieron. |
| 29 | Don't tell her they were killed | No le digas que los mataron | No le digas que los mataron. | No le digas que los mataron | No le digas que las mataron |
| 30 | Tell her they were killed | Dile que los mataron | Decile que los mataron. | Decile que los mataron | Dile que las mataron |
| 31 | Don't frighten her. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes |
| 32 | Tell her her grandmother was clever | Dile que su abuela era inteligente | Decile que su abuela era una mujer sagaz. | Decile que su abuela era inteligente | Dile que su abuela era muy inteligente |
| 33 | Don't tell her what they did | No le digas lo que hicieron | No le digas lo que hicieron. | No le cuentes lo que hicieron | No le digas lo que les hicieron |
| 34 | Tell her she was brave | Dile que era valiente | Decile que era una mujer valiente. | Decile que era valiente | Dile que la abuela fue muy valiente |
| 35 | Tell her she taught me how to make cakes | Dile que me enseñó a hacer pasteles | Decile que me enseñó a preparar tortas. | Decile que me enseñó a hacer tortas | Dile que me enseñó a hacer pasteles |
| 36 | Don't tell her what they did | No le digas lo que hicieron | No le digas lo que hicieron. | No le cuentes lo que hicieron | No le digas lo que les hicieron |
| 37 | Tell her something | Dile algo | Decile algo. | Algo contale | Dile algo |
| 38 | Tell her more when she's older. | Ya le dirás más cuando sea mayor. | Decile más cuando crezca. | Mejor contale cuando crezca. | Dile algo más cuando sea mayor |
| 39 | Tell her there were people who hated Jews | Dile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos | Decile que existía gente que odiaba a los judíos. | Decile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos | Dile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos |
| 40 | Don't tell her | No se lo digas | No le digas eso. | No se lo digas | No se lo digas |
| 41 | Tell her it's over now | Dile que eso ahora se acabó | Decile que ya pasó. | Decile que eso ya pasó | Dile que eso ya se acabó |
| 42 | Tell her there are still people who hate Jews | Dile que todavía hay gente que odia a los judíos | Decile que todavía existe gente que odia a los judíos. | Decile que sigue habiendo gente que odia a los judíos | Dile que aún hay gente que odia a los judíos |
| 43 | Tell her there are | Dile que hay gente | Decile que también existe gente que ama a los | Decile que hay gente | Dile que hay gente que |

| | people who love Jews | que ama a los judíos | judíos. | que ama a los judíos | quiere a los judíos |
|----|--|--|--|---|--|
| 44 | Don't tell her to think Jews or not Jews | No le digas que haga diferencias entre los judíos y los que no lo son | No le digas nada sobre los judíos o sobre los no judíos. | No le enseñes a discriminar entre judíos y no judíos | No le digas que piense en términos de judío o no-judío. |
| 45 | Tell her more when she's older | Ya le dirás más cuando sea mayor | Decile más cuando crezca. | Mejor contale cuando crezca | Dile algo más cuando sea mayor |
| 46 | Tell her how many when she's older | Dile cuántos cuando sea mayor | Decile cuántos fueron cuando crezca. | Cuando crezca, contale cuántos fueron | Dile a cuántos nos mataron cuando sea mayor |
| 47 | Tell her it was before she was born and she's not in danger | Dile que fue antes de que ella naciera, así que no corre peligro | Decile que sucedió antes de que naciera, y que no corre ningún peligro. | Decile que eso fue antes de que ella naciera, y que ahora no hay peligro | Dile que eso sucedió antes de que ella naciera y que ahora no corre peligro |
| 48 | Don't tell her there's any question of danger. | No le digas que hay peligro | [..] | Del peligro ni le hables. | No le digas que ya no hay peligro |
| 49 | Tell her we love her | Dile que la queremos mucho | Decile que la amamos. | Decile que la adoramos | Dile que la queremos |
| 50 | Tell her dead or alive her family all love her | Dile que todos sus familiares, vivos o muertos la queremos | Decile que viva o muerta, toda su familia la ama. | Decile que en su familia, vivos o muertos, la amamos todos | Dile que viva o muerta toda su familia la quiere |
| 51 | Tell her her grandmother would be proud of her. | Dile que su abuela estaría orgullosa de ella. | Decile que su abuela estaría muy orgullosa de ella. | Decile que su abuela estaría orgullosa de ella | Dile que su abuela estaría muy orgullosa de ella |
| 52 | 3 | 3 | | 3 | III |
| 53 | Don't tell her we're going for ever | No le digas que nos vamos allí para siempre | No le digas que nos vamos para siempre. | No le digas que nos vamos para siempre | No le digas que nos vamos para siempre |
| 54 | Tell her she can write to her friends, tell her her friends can maybe come and visit | Dile que puede escribir a sus amigos, dile que sus amigos quizá puedan venir a visitarla | Decile que podrá escribirle a sus amigos. Decile que quizás, alguna vez, sus amigos podrán ir de visitas | Decile que puede escribirles a sus amigos, decile que ojalá vengan a visitarla sus compañeritos | Dile que puede escribir a sus amigos, dile que quizás puedan venir a visitarla |
| 55 | Tell her it's sunny there | Dile que allí hace sol | Decile que allá brilla el sol. | Decile que es un lugar lleno de sol | Dile que allí siempre hace bueno |
| 56 | Tell her we're going home | Dile que vamos a nuestro país | Decile que volvemos a casa. | Decile que nos vamos a nuestra tierra | Dile que volvemos a casa |
| 57 | Tell her it's the land God gave us | Dile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio | Decile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio. | Decile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio | Dile que es la tierra que nos dio Dios |
| 58 | Don't tell her religion | No le hables de religión | No le digas nada religioso. | No le hables de religión | No le hables de religión |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|---|---|
| 59 | Tell her her great great great great lots of greats grandad lived there | Dile que su recontratatarabuelo vivía allí | Decile que su tátara, tátara, tátara, tátara... un montón de tatarabuelo vivió allí. | Decile que allí vivió su tátara tátara requetetátara abuelo | Dile que sus antepasados vivieron allí |
| 60 | Don't tell her he was driven out | No le digas que lo expulsaron de allí | No le digas que fue expulsado. | No le digas que de ahí lo expulsaron | No le digas que los echaron |
| 61 | Tell her, of course tell her, tell her everyone was driven out and the country is waiting for us to come home | Dile, por supuesto, dile que a todos los expulsaron y que el país está esperando nuestro regreso | Decile, por supuesto, decile a ella y a todo el mundo que fue expulsado, y que el país está esperando nuestro retorno | Decile, más vale, decile que los echaron a todos, y que ahora el país está esperando que volvamos | Dile, díselo, dile que los echaron a todos y que el país espera impaciente que volvamos a casa. |
| 62 | Don't tell her she doesn't belong here | No le digas que no es de aquí | No le digas que no es de aquí. | No le digas que esta no es su tierra | No le digas que no es su tierra |
| 63 | Tell her of course she likes it here but she'll like it there even more. | Dile, por supuesto, que le gusta aquí, pero que allí le gustará más. | Decile que es lógico que a ella le guste aquí, pero que allí le va a gustar mucho más. | Decile que acá, naturalmente, le gusta vivir, pero que allá le va a gustar más todavía. | Dile que claro que le gusta esto, pero que aún le va a gustar más |
| 64 | Tell her it's an adventure | Dile que es una aventura | Decile que será una aventura. | Decile que es una aventura | Dile que es una aventura |
| 65 | Tell her no one will tease her | Dile que nadie se reirá de ella | Decile que allí nadie le va a hacer burla. | Decile que nadie se va a burlar de ella | Dile que no se meterán con ella |
| 66 | Tell her she'll have new friends | Dile que tendrá nuevos amigos | Decile que tendrá nuevos amigos. | Decile que va a tener nuevos amigos | Dile que hará nuevos amigos |
| 67 | Tell her she can take her toys | Dile que puede llevarse sus juguetes | Decile que puede llevar sus juguetes. | Decile que va a poder llevarse sus juguetes | Dile que puede llevar sus juguetes |
| 68 | Don't tell her she can take all her toys | No le digas que puede llevarse todos sus juguetes | No le digas que podrá llevar todos sus juguetes. | No le digas que va a llevarse todos los juguetes | No le digas que se puede llevar todos sus juguetes |
| 69 | Tell her she's a special girl | Dile que es una niña especial | Decile que es una nena muy especial. | Decile que es una nena especial | Dile que es una niña muy afortunada |
| 70 | Tell her about Jerusalem. | Háblale de Jerusalén. | Decile de Jerusalém. | Háblale de Jerusalem. | Háblale de Jerusalén |
| 71 | 4 | 4 | | 4 | IV |
| 72 | Don't tell her who they are | No le digas quiénes son | No le digas quiénes son. | No le digas quiénes son | No le digas quiénes son |
| 73 | Tell her something | Dile algo | Decile algo. | Decile algo | Dile algo |
| 74 | Tell her they're Bedouin, they travel about | Dile que son beduinos, gente que va de un lado para otro | Decile que son beduinos, que viven de aquí para allá. | Decile que son beduinos, gente que vive viajando | Dile que son beduinos, que están de paso |
| 75 | Tell her about camels | Háblale de camellos en | Decile de los camellos en | Contale de los camellos, del desierto, de los | Háblale de los camellos en el desierto |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|---|--|
| | in the desert and dates | el desierto y de dátiles | el desierto, de los dátiles... | dátiles | |
| 76 | Tell her they live in tents | Dile que viven en tiendas | Decile que viven en tiendas. | Decile que viven en carpas | Dile que viven en tiendas |
| 77 | Tell her this wasn't their home | Dile que éste no era su país | Decile que este no es su hogar. | Decile que esta no es su patria | Dile que no son de aquí |
| 78 | Don't tell her home, not home, tell her they're going away | No menciones la palabra país, país no, dile que se van de aquí | No le digas nada de hogar o de no hogar. Decile que se van a ir. | No le digas si es o no es su patria, decile que se van a ir | No le digas esas cosas, dile que se van |
| 79 | Don't tell her they don't like her | No le digas que ellos no la quieren | No le digas que no la quieren. | No le digas que no la quieren | No le digas que no la quieren |
| 80 | Tell her to be careful. | Dile que tenga cuidado. | Decile que tenga cuidado. | Decile que tenga cuidado. | Dile que tenga cuidado |
| 81 | Don't tell her who used to live in this house | No le hables de quienes vivían en esta casa | No le digas quién vivía en esta casa. | No le digas quiénes vivieron en esta casa | No le digas quién vivía antes en esta casa. |
| 82 | No but don't tell her her great great grandfather used to live in this house | No, pero no le digas que su tatarabuelo vivía en esta casa | No, pero tampoco le digas que su tátara tátara tátara tatarabuelo vivía en esta casa. | No, pero no le digas que en esta casa vivió su tátara tátara requetetátara abuelo | No, pero no le digas que en esta casa vivía antes su tatarabuelo |
| 83 | No but don't tell her Arabs used to sleep in her bedroom. | No, pero no le digas que unos árabes dormían en su habitación. | No le digas que en su cuarto dormían árabes. | No, pero no le digas que en su cuarto durmió algún árabe. | No, pero no le digas que en su dormitorio dormían antes los árabes |
| 84 | Tell her not to be rude to them | Dile que no sea grosera con ellos | Decile que no sea irrespetuosa con ellos. | Decile que no los trate mal | Dile que no sea grosera con ellos |
| 85 | Tell her not to be frightened | Dile que no se asuste | Decile que no tenga miedo. | Decile que no tenga miedo | Dile que no tenga miedo |
| 86 | | | Decile que son gente de bien que trabaja para nosotros. | | |
| 87 | Don't tell her she can't play with the children | No le digas que no puede jugar con los niños | No le digas que no puede jugar con los chicos. | No le digas que no juegue con los chicos | No le digas que no puede jugar con los niños |
| 88 | Don't tell her she can have them in the house. | No le digas que puede invitarlos a casa. | No le digas que los puede invitar a casa. | No le digas que los invite a casa. | No le digas que puede traerlos a casa |
| 89 | Tell her they have plenty of friends and family | Dile que tienen muchísimos amigos y familiares | Decile que ellos ya tienen un montón de amigos y de parientes. | Decile que ellos ya tienen montones de amigos y de parientes | Dile que tienen muchos amigos y parientes |
| 90 | Tell her for miles and miles all round they | Dile que tienen kilómetros y kilómetros de tierras | Decile que son dueños de kilómetros y kilómetros de | Decile que ya tienen kilómetros y kilómetros | Dile que más lejos tienen mucha tierra para sí |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|---|---|--|
| | have lands of their own | que son tuyas, pero fuera de aquí | tierra en las afueras. | de tierras que son tuyas | |
| 91 | Tell her again this is our promised land. | Dile otra vez que ésta es nuestra tierra prometida. | Decíle de nuevo que esta es nuestra tierra prometida. | Decíle otra vez que esta es nuestra tierra prometida. | Repítete que esta es nuestra tierra prometida |
| 92 | Don't tell her they said it was a land without people | No le digas que decían que era una tierra sin pueblo | No le digas que ellos sostenían que esta era una tierra desierta. | No le digas que nos contaron que acá no vivía nadie | No le digas que nos aseguraron que era una tierra despoblada |
| 93 | Don't tell her I wouldn't have come if I'd known. | No le digas que yo no habría venido de haberlo sabido. | No le digas "No hubiera venido de haber sabido". | No le digas que si yo hubiera sabido, no venía. | No le digas que, si lo hubiera sabido, no habríamos venido |
| 94 | Tell her maybe we can share. | Dile que quizá podamos compartirla. | Decíle que, tal vez, podamos compartirla. | Decíle que a lo mejor la podríamos compartir. | Dile que quizá la podamos compartir |
| 95 | Don't tell her that. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso. | Eso no le digas. | No le digas eso |
| 96 | 5 | 5 | | 5 | V |
| 97 | Tell her we won | Dile que hemos ganado la guerra | Ahhhh.... Decíle que ganamos. | Decíle que ganamos | Dile que hemos ganado |
| 98 | Tell her her brother's a hero | Dile que su hermano es un héroe | Decíle que su hermano es un héroe. | Decíle que su hermano es un héroe | Dile que su hermano es un héroe |
| 99 | | | Decíle cómo pasaban los tanques. | | |
| 100 | Tell her how big their armies are | Dile los enormes que son sus ejércitos | Decíle lo grandes que son sus ejércitos. | Contale lo grande que era ejército de ellos | Háblale sobre lo fuerte que es nuestro ejército |
| 101 | Tell her we turned them back | Dile que los hicimos retroceder | Decíle que los hicimos retirar. | Contale que los hicimos retroceder | Dile que les hicimos retroceder |
| 102 | Tell her we're fighters | Dile que somos combatientes | Decíle que somos gente de lucha. | Decíle que somos combatientes, | Dile que somos buenos guerreros |
| 103 | Tell her we've got new land. | Dile que hemos conquistado más territorio. | Decíle que tenemos una nueva tierra. | Decíle que conquistamos un nuevo territorio. | Dile que tenemos más tierras |
| 104 | 6 | 6 | | 6 | VI |
| 105 | Don't tell her | No se lo digas | No se lo digas. | No se lo cuentes | No se lo digas |
| 106 | Don't tell her the trouble about the swimming pool | No le hables de los problemas a causa de la piscina | No le digas del problema con la pileta de natación. | No le hables del problema que se armó con la pileta | No le cuentes el incidente de la piscina |
| 107 | Tell her it's our water, we have the right | Dile que el agua es nuestra, que tenemos derecho | Decíle que el agua es nuestra, y que tenemos derecho. | Decíle que es nuestra agua y que tenemos derecho | Dile que es nuestra agua, que tenemos derecho |

| | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|---|--|
| 108 | Tell her it's not the water for their fields | Dile que esa agua no es para sus campos | Decile que no es agua para sus terrenos. | Decile que esa agua no era para los campos de ellos | Dile que este agua no es para sus campos |
| 109 | Don't tell her anything about water. | No le digas nada sobre el agua. | No le digas nada del agua. | Mejor del agua no le hables. | No le digas nada sobre el agua |
| 110 | Don't tell her about the bulldozer | No le hables del bulldozer | No le digas de la topadora. | No le hables de la topadora | No le hables del bulldozer |
| 111 | Don't tell her not to look at the bulldozer | No le digas que no mire el bulldozer | No le digas que no la mire. | No le digas que no la mire | No le digas que no mire al bulldozer |
| 112 | Don't tell her it was knocking the house down | No le digas que estaba derribando la casa | No le digas que demolerá casas. | No le digas que estaba tirando la casa abajo | No le digas que estaba derribando la casa |
| 113 | Tell her it's a building site | Dile que es un solar para construir | Decile que es una obra en construcción. | Decile que era una obra en construcción | Dile que es una zona en construcción |
| 114 | Don't tell her anything about bulldozers. | No le digas nada sobre los bulldozers. | No le digas nada de la topadora. | De la topadora ni le hables. | No hables de los bulldozers |
| 115 | Don't tell her about the queues at the checkpoint | No le hables de las colas en el puesto de control | No le digas nada de los puestos ¿sin? control | No le hables de las colas en el puesto de control | No hables de las colas en el puesto de control |
| 116 | Tell her we'll be there in no time | Dile que llegaremos enseguida | Decile que pronto estaremos allí. | Decile que vamos a llegar enseguida | Dile que llegamos enseguida |
| 117 | Don't tell her anything she doesn't ask | No hables de nada que ella no te pregunte | No le digas nada que no pregunte. | No le digas nada que no te pregunte | No le digas que no pregunte |
| 118 | Don't tell her the boy was shot | No le digas que mataron al niño de un tiro | No le digas que el chico murió acribillado | No le hables del chico que mataron | No le digas que mataron al chico |
| 119 | Don't tell her anything. | No le digas nada. | No le digas nada. | No le digas nada. | No le digas nada |
| 120 | Tell her we're making new farms in the desert | Dile que estamos creando nuevas granjas en el desierto | Decile que estamos construyendo granjas nuevas en el desierto. | Decile que estamos haciendo nuevas granjas en el desierto | Dile que estamos montando nuevas granjas en el desierto |
| 121 | Don't tell her about the olive trees | No le hables de los olivos | No le digas de los olivos. | No le hables de los olivos | No le digas nada de los olivos |
| 122 | Tell her we're building new towns in the wilderness. | Dile que estamos construyendo nuevos pueblos en terreno baldío. | Decile que estamos construyendo pueblos nuevos en el desierto. | Decile que estamos construyendo pueblos nuevos en tierras inhóspitas. | Dile que estamos construyendo nuevas ciudades en el páramo |
| 123 | Don't tell her they throw stones | No le digas que tiran piedras | No le digas que nos tiraron piedras. | No le digas que nos tiran piedras | No le digas que nos tiran piedras |
| 124 | Tell her they're not much good against | | Decile que se asustan con los tanques. | Decile que las piedras no sirven de nada contra | Dile que no valen nada contra los tanques |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|--|--|
| | tanks | | | los tanques | |
| 125 | Don't tell her that. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso |
| 126 | Don't tell her they set off bombs in cafés | No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés | No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés. | No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés | No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés |
| 127 | Tell her, tell her they set off bombs in cafés | Dile que, dile que ponen bombas en los cafés | Decile, decile que ponen bombas en los cafés. | Decíselo, decile que ponen bombas en los cafés | Dile que ponen bombas en los cafés |
| 128 | Tell her to be careful | Dile que tenga cuidado | Decile que tenga cuidado. | Decile que ande con cuidado | Dile que tenga cuidado |
| 129 | Don't frighten her. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes |
| 130 | Tell her we need the wall to keep us safe | Dile que necesitamos el muro para estar seguros | Decile que necesitamos el muro para estar seguros. | Decile que necesitamos el muro para estar a salvo | Dile que nos hace falta el muro para protegernos |
| 131 | Tell her they want to drive us into the sea | Dile que quieren arrojarnos al mar | Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar. | Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar | Dile que quieren echarnos al mar |
| 132 | Tell her they don't | Dile que no quieren arrojarnos al mar | Decile que no. | Decile que eso no es lo que quieren | Dile que no |
| 133 | Tell her they want to drive us into the sea. | Dile que quieren arrojarnos al mar. | Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar. | Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar. | |
| 134 | Tell her we kill far more of them | Dile que nosotros matamos a muchos más de ellos | Decile que nosotros matamos a muchos más que ellos. | Decile que matamos a muchos más de los suyos | Dile que mataremos más |
| 135 | Don't tell her that | No le digas eso | No le digas eso. | Eso no le digas | No le digas eso |
| 136 | Tell her that | Dile eso | | Decíselo | Díselo |
| 137 | Tell her we're stronger | Dile que somos más fuertes | Decile que somos más fuertes. | Decile que somos más fuertes | Dile que somos más fuertes |
| 138 | Tell her we're entitled | Dile que estamos en nuestro derecho | Decile que tenemos derecho. | Decile que tenemos derecho | Dile que tenemos derecho |
| 139 | Tell her they don't understand anything except violence | Dile que sólo entienden la violencia | Decile que el único idioma que entienden es el de la violencia. | Decile que el único idioma que ellos entienden es la violencia | Dile que sólo entienden la fuerza |
| 140 | Tell her we want peace | Dile que buscamos la paz | Decile que nosotros queremos la paz. | Decile que nosotros queremos la paz | Dile que queremos la paz |
| 141 | Tell her we're going swimming. | Dile que vamos a bañarnos en la piscina | Decile que iremos a nadar. | Decile que nos vamos a la pileta a nadar. | Dile que de aquí no nos echa nadie |
| 142 | 7 | 7 | | 7 | VII |
| 143 | Tell her she can't watch the news | Dile que no puede ver las noticias | Decile que no puede ver el noticiero. | Decile que no vea los noticieros | Dile que no puede ver las noticias |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|---|--|
| 144 | Tell her she can watch cartoons | Dile que puede ver dibujos animados | Decile que puede ver dibujitos. | Decile que mire dibujitos animados | Dile que vea los dibujos animados |
| 145 | Tell her she can stay up late and watch Friends. | Dile que puede quedarse hasta muy tarde y ver <i>Friends</i> . | Decile que se puede quedar hasta tarde viendo su serie favorita. | Decile que se puede quedar hasta tarde mirando <i>Friends</i> . | Dile que puede acostarse tarde y ver <i>los Simpsons</i> |
| 146 | Tell her they're attacking with rockets | Dile que nos están atacando con misiles | Decile que están atacando con misiles. | Decile que nos están tirando misiles | Dile que atacan con cohetes |
| 147 | Don't frighten her | No la asustes | No la asustes. | No la asustes | No la asustes |
| 148 | Tell her only a few of us have been killed | Dile que sólo unos pocos de los nuestros han muerto | Decile que mataron a muy pocos de los nuestros. | Decile que de nuestro lado mataron a muy pocos | Dile que sólo algunos de los nuestros han muerto |
| 149 | Tell her the army has come to our defence | Dile que el ejército ha venido a defendernos | Decile que el ejército llegó para defendernos. | Decile que vino el ejército para defendernos | Dile que el ejército ha venido a defendernos |
| 150 | Don't tell her her cousin refused to serve in the army. | No le digas que su primo se negó a servir en el ejército. | No le digas que su primo se negó a servir en el ejército. | No le cuentes que su primo no quiso ir al frente a combatir. | No le digas que su primo ha objetado |
| 151 | Don't tell her how many of them have been killed | No le digas cuántos de ellos han muerto | No le digas a cuántos de ellos matamos nosotros. | No le digas cuántos de ellos murieron | No le digas cuántos de ellos han muerto |
| 152 | Tell her the Hamas fighters have been killed | Dile que los combatientes de Hamás han muerto | Decile que los líderes de Hamas están todos muertos. | Decile que los de Hamas están muertos | Dile que han matado a guerrilleros de Hamas |
| 153 | Tell her they're terrorists | Dile que son terroristas | Decile que son terroristas. | Decile que son terroristas | Dile que son terroristas |
| 154 | Tell her they're filth | Dile que son escoria | Decile que son basura. | Decile que son una basura | Dile que son basura |
| 155 | Don't | No se lo digas | Noo. | Eso no le digas | No |
| 156 | Don't tell her about the family of dead girls | No le hables de la familia de las niñas muertas | No le digas nada de los familiares de las nenas muertas. | No le hables de los familiares de las chicas muertas | No le hables sobre esa familia de las niñas muertas |
| 157 | Tell her you can't believe what you see on television | Dile que no puedes creer lo que ves en la televisión | Decile que no creemos lo que muestran en la televisión. | Decile que no hay que creer en lo que muestra la televisión | Dile que no se crea todo lo que vea en televisión |
| 158 | Tell her we killed the babies by mistake | Dile que matamos a los bebés por equivocación | Decile que matamos a los bebés por equivocación. | Decile que a los bebés los matamos por error | Dile que matamos a los niños por error |
| 159 | Don't tell her anything about the army | No le digas nada del ejército | No le digas nada del ejército. | No le cuentes nada del ejército | No le digas nada del ejército |
| 160 | Tell her, tell her about the army, tell her to be | Háblale, háblale del ejército, dile que tiene | Decile, decile del ejército, decile que se sienta | Decile, contale del ejército, decile que del | Dile, háblale del ejército, dile que tiene |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|---|--|
| | proud of the army. | que sentirse orgullosa del ejército. | orgullosa del ejército. | ejército se sienta orgullosa. | que estar orgullosa de su ejército. |
| 161 | Tell her about the family of dead girls, tell her their names | Háblale de la familia de las niñas muertas, dile sus nombres, | Decile de las familias de las nenas muertas, decile sus nombres | Háblale de los familiares de las nenas muertas, decile cómo se llamaban, | Cuéntale lo de la familia de las niñas muertas, dile sus nombres, |
| 162 | why not, | por qué no, | ¿Por qué no? | por qué no, | ¿por qué no?, |
| 163 | tell her the whole world knows why shouldn't she know? | dile que si todo el mundo lo sabe ella también debe saberlo. | Decile que el mundo entero lo sabe, que lo sepa ella también. | contásele, todo el mundo lo sabe, por qué no va a saberlo ella | dile que todo el mundo lo sabe, ¿por qué ella no? |
| 164 | ... tell her there's dead babies, did she see babies? | Dile que hay bebés muertos, ¿vio a los bebés? | Decile de los bebés muertos, ¿o acaso nunca vio a un bebé? | Decile que hay bebés que murieron, ¿a los bebés los vio, no? | dile que han muerto bebés, ¿vio los bebés muertos? |
| 165 | Tell her she's got nothing to be ashamed of. | Dile que no tiene por qué avergonzarse de nada. | Decile que no hay nada de lo que deba avergonzarse. | Decile que no tiene nada de qué avergonzarse. | Dile que no tiene nada de lo que avergonzarse. |
| 166 | Tell her they did it to themselves. | Dile que ellos se lo buscaron. | Decile que ellos nos hicieron lo mismo. | Decile que todo esto lo provocaron ellos mismos. | Dile que se lo hicieron a sí mismos. |
| 167 | Tell her they want their children killed to make people sorry for them, tell her I'm not sorry for them, tell her not to be sorry for them, tell her we're the ones to be sorry for, tell her they can't talk suffering to us. | Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para que la gente se apiade de ellos, dile que yo no me apiado de ellos, dile que no se apiade de ellos, dile que es de nosotros de quien hay que apiadarse, dile que a nosotros no nos pueden hablar de sufrimiento. | Decile que utilizan las imágenes de los bebés asesinados para que la gente los compadezca, decile que yo no los compadezco, decile que no los compadezco, decile que somos nosotros los que merecemos compasión, decile que no nos van a enseñar a nosotros lo que significa el sufrimiento. | Decile que a ellos les conviene que haya bebés muertos para que todo el mundo les tenga lástima, decile que yo no los compadezco, y que ella tampoco les tenga lástima; decile que lástima hay que tenernos a nosotros; que no nos vengan a hablar de sufrimiento justo a nosotros... | Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para dar pena a la gente, y dile que a mí no me dan pena, y dile que a ella tampoco le deben dar pena, dile que los que debemos dar pena somos nosotros, dile que a nosotros nadie nos va a dar lecciones de sufrimiento. |
| 168 | Tell her we're the iron fist now, tell her it's the fog of war, tell her we won't stop killing them till we're safe, tell her I laughed when I saw the dead policemen, tell her they're animals living in rubble now, tell her I wouldn't care if we wiped them out, the world would hate us is the only thing, tell her I don't care if the world hates us, tell her we're | Dile que ahora el puño de hierro lo tenemos nosotros, dile que es la niebla de la guerra, dile que no vamos a dejar de matarlos hasta que nos sintamos seguros, dile que me dio risa cuando vi a los policías muertos, dile que son animales que ahora viven entre escombros, dile que no me importaría nada si los exterminásemos, el | Decile que ahora nosotros somos la mano dura; decile del pueblo que provoca la guerra; decile que no detendremos las muertes hasta estar seguros y a salvo; decile que me reí a carcajadas cuando vi al policía muerto; decile que son como ratas viviendo entre los escombros; decile que no me importa si los liquidamos a todos y el mundo nos odia por ello; | Decile que ahora el poder es nuestro, decile que todo esto son daños colaterales, decile que no vamos a parar de matar hasta que estemos a salvo, decile que cuando vi a los policías muertos me largué a reír, decile que son como animales viviendo entre los escombros, decile que si los exterminamos a todos no se me va a | Dile que ahora somos el puño de hierro, dile que es la guerra, dile que no vamos a dejar de matar hasta que no estemos seguros, dile que me reí cuando vi muertos a los policías, dile que ahora son animales viviendo entre escombros, dile que no me importaría si los borrásemos del mapa, lo único malo es que el mundo nos odiaría, dile que me |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|--|
| | better haters, tell her we're chosen people, tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? tell her all I feel is happy it's not her. | mundo nos odiaría, eso es lo único, dile que no me importa si el mundo nos odia, dile que nosotros odiamos mejor, dile que somos el pueblo elegido, dile que cuando miro a una de sus niñas cubierta de sangre me siento feliz porque esa niña cubierta de sangre no es ella. | decile que me tiene sin cuidado que el mundo nos odie, decile que nosotros somos mucho mejores si de odiar se trata; decile que somos el pueblo elegido; decile lo que siento cuando veo a uno de sus niños chorreando sangre; decile que me siento feliz de que no sea ella. | mover ni un pelo; a lo sumo nos odiará el mundo, y a mí qué; decile que si el mundo nos odia, lo lamento por ellos, decile que nosotros sabemos odiar mejor, decile que somos el pueblo elegido, decile cómo me siento cuando veo a una de esas nenas bañadas en sangre..., decile que me alegro, me alegro de que no haya sido ella. | tiene sin cuidado que el mundo nos odie, dile que a la hora de odiar nadie nos gana, dile que somos el pueblo elegido , dile que cuando veo a uno de sus hijos cubierto de sangre..., ¿que qué siento?, pues que me alegro de que no sea ella |
| 169 | Don't tell her that. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso. | No le digas eso |
| 170 | Tell her we love her. | Dile que la amamos. | Decile que la amamos. | Decile que la amamos. | Dile que la queremos |
| 171 | Don't frighten her. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes. | No la asustes |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 172 | Seven Jewish Children is Caryl Churchill's response to the situation in Gaza in January 2009, when the play was written. | Siete niños judíos es la respuesta de Caryl Churchill a lo ocurrido en Gaza en enero de 2009, cuando escribió esta obra. | | Siete niños judíos es la respuesta de Caryl Churchill a la situación generada en Gaza en enero de 2009, momento en que fue escrita la obra. | |
| 173 | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> first published in Great Britain in 2009 by Nick Hern Books Limited, 14 Larden Road, London, W3 7ST, in association with the Royal Court Theatre, London | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> fue publicada inicialmente en Gran Bretaña en 2009 por Nick Hern Books Limited, 14 Larden Road, London W3 7ST, en asociación con el Royal Court Theatre, Londres | | La obra original, <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> , se publicó por primera vez en 2009 en Gran Bretaña, con sello de Nick Hern Books Limited, 14 Larden Road, Londres W3 7ST, en asociación con el Royal Court Theatre de Londres. | |
| 174 | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> Copyright © 2009 Caryl Churchill Limited | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> Copyright © 2009 Caryl Churchill Limited | | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> Copyright © 2009 Caryl Churchill Limited | |
| 175 | Caryl Churchill has asserted her moral right to be identified as | Caryl Churchill ha hecho valer su derecho a que se la identifique como autora de esta | | Caryl Churchill reafirma su derecho moral a ser identificada como | |

| | the author of this work | obra | | autora de esta obra. | |
|-----|---|--|--|--|--|
| 176 | Typeset by Nick Hern Books, London ISBN 978 1 84842 047 2 | Composición de Nick Hern Books, Londres ISBN 978 1 84842 047 2 | | Composición tipográfica: Nick Hern Books, Londres. ISBN 978 1 84842 047 2 | |
| 177 | Performing Rights | Derechos de puesta en escena | | Derechos de representación teatral | |
| 178 | <i>Seven Jewish Children</i> was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre, London, on 6 February 2009. | La versión original de <i>Siete niños judíos</i> fue puesta en escena por primera vez en el Royal Court Theatre de Londres el 6 de febrero de 2009. | | <i>Siete niñas judías</i> se estrenó en el Royal Court Theatre, en Londres, el 6 de febrero de 2009. | |
| 179 | The play can be read or performed anywhere, by any number of people. | Esta obra puede leerse o representarse en cualquier lugar y por cualquier número de personas. | | La obra puede ser leída o representada en cualquier lugar y por cualquier número de actores. | |
| 180 | Anyone who wishes to do it should contact the author's agent (details below), who will license performances free of charge provided that no admission fee is charged and that a collection is taken at each performance for Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, tel +44 (0)20 7226 4114, e-mail info@map-uk.org , web www.map-uk.org | Quien desee hacerlo debe ponerse en contacto con el agente de la autora (véanse los detalles más abajo), que le otorgará los permisos de puesta en escena sin costo alguno, a condición de que la representación sea gratuita y de que en ella se realice una colecta de dinero destinada a Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, tel +44 (0)20 7226 4114, dirección electrónica info@map-uk.org , sitio web www.map-uk.org | | Los interesados deben tomar contacto con los agentes de la autora, en la dirección indicada abajo, quienes autorizarán la puesta en escena sin cargo, siempre y cuando la entrada al público sea libre y gratuita, y que en cada función se recauden fondos voluntariamente para la organización Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB. Tel +44 (0)20 7226 4114. Correo electrónico: info@map-uk.org Sitio en internet: www.map-uk.org | |
| 181 | <i>Author's agent:</i> Casarotto Ramsay and Associates Ltd, | <i>Agente de la autora:</i> Casarotto Ramsay and Associates Ltd, | | Agentes de la autora: Casarotto Ramsay and Associates Ltd, | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|--|--|
| | Waverley House, 7-12 Noel Street, London W1F 8GQ, <i>fax</i> +44 (0)20 7287 9128, <i>e-mail</i> agents@casarotto.co.uk | Waverley House, 7-12 Noel Street, London W1F 8GQ, <i>fax</i> +44 (0)20 7287 9128, <i>dirección electrónica</i> agents@casarotto.co.uk | | Waverley House, 7-12 Noel Street, Londres W1F 8GQ. <i>Fax:</i> +44 (0)20 7287 9128, <i>Correo electrónico:</i> agents@casarotto.co.uk | |
| 182 | This text can be downloaded free of charge from the following websites: Casarotto Ramsay, www.casarotto.co.uk/page/sjc Nick Hern Books, www.nickhernbooks.co.uk Royal Court Theatre, www.royalcourttheatre.com | Este texto puede descargarse gratuitamente de los sitios web enumerados a continuación: Casarotto Ramsay, www.casarotto.co.uk/page/sjc Nick Hern Books, www.nickhernbooks.co.uk Royal Court Theatre www.royalcourttheatre.com | | El texto de esta obra puede descargarse gratuitamente de internet en los siguientes sitios: Casarotto Ramsay - www.casarotto.co.uk/page/sjc Nick Hern Books - www.nickhernbooks.co.uk Royal Court Theatre www.royalcourttheatre.com | |
| 183 | | Tlaxcala, la red de traductores por la diversidad lingüística, www.tlaxcala.es . | | | |
| 184 | Printed copies can be obtained, while stocks last, with all proceeds going to Medical Aid for Palestinians, from Nick Hern Books, address as above. | Hasta que se agoten las existencias disponibles se pueden obtener ejemplares impresos de esta obra escribiendo a Nick Hern Books, cuya dirección está aquí arriba. El dinero recaudado se enviará a Medical Aids for Palestinians. | | Se podrán adquirir ejemplares impresos de la obra, hasta agotar existencias, en las oficinas de Nick Hern Books, en la dirección antes mencionada; lo recaudado se donará a Medical Aids for Palestinians. | |
| 185 | | El escritor y traductor español Manuel Talens es miembro de Tlaxcala, la red de | | La presente traducción al español de Argentina es de propiedad intelectual de su autora, | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | <p>traductores por la diversidad lingüística. Tlaxcala ofrece gratuitamente esta traducción y también anima a quienes deseen leerla en público o ponerla en escena a que recauden fondos entre los asistentes y los envíen a Medical Aids for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, <i>teléfono</i> +44 (0)20 7226 4114, <i>dirección electrónica</i> info@map-uk.org, <i>sitio web</i> www.map-uk.org</p> | | <p>Paula Tizzano Fernández, sin cuya autorización no puede ser reproducida, publicada o interpretada.</p> | |
| 186 | | <p>¡Larga vida al pueblo palestino!</p> | | <p>Algunos párrafos del original que admitían lecturas ambiguas, ya sea en el contexto de la puesta teatral o de la traducción, han sido objeto de correspondencia escrita entre la traductora y Caryl Churchill, quien tuvo la gentileza de esclarecer o comentar las interpretaciones desde el punto de vista de sus intenciones como autora. Se ha procurado que las aclaraciones de la autora quedaran reflejadas en la versión.</p> | |
| 187 | | <p>The Spanish writer and translator Manuel Talens is a member of Tlaxcala, the network of translators for linguistic diversity. Tlaxcala donates this translation and also encourages anyone desiring to read or perform this play to collect money from the audience and to send it to Medical Aids</p> | | <p>Esta traducción es parte de un artículo académico de investigación sobre traducción teatral basado en <i>Seven Jewish Children</i>, en el marco de la cátedra de Géneros Literarios del Máster Universitario en Traducción e Interpretación, Universitat Jaume I de Castellón, España.</p> | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, tel +44 (0)20 7226 4114, e-mail info@map-uk.org , web www.map-uk.org | | | |
| 188 | | Long live the Palestinian people! | | | |
| 189 | http://www.nickhernbooks.co.uk/pdf/9781848420472.pdf | http://www.tlaxcala-int.org/upload/telechargements/17.pdf | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwtfBHJaou4 | http://www.megaupload.com/?d=LHORG360 | |

Appendix B: Reception and Reviews

The following excerpts are enumerated in chronological order, not classified into “for” or “against” but just reproducing the same sequence in which general public read them along, as they were published by media. The selection criteria were that they were public or made public in the internet or in printed press, that they were directly connected to Seven Jewish Children, and that they were relevant to discussing ideological and theatrical issues about the play. The URLs were attained all during March-April 2011. The articles are not quoted in full, with the omitted parts indicated by editor’s brackets. The highlighting is mine.

1. Royal Court acts fast with Gaza crisis play

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/jan/24/theatre-gaza-caryl-churchill-royal-court-seven-jewish-children>>

Author: Mark Brown

Medium: The Guardian

Saturday, January 24, 2009.

- *Work written last week to be performed next month*
- *Tickets will be free and text available to download*

Caryl Churchill says her new play is 'a political event, not just a theatre event'. Photograph: Jane Bown

By any theatrical standards the latest play by Caryl Churchill has been remarkably speedy, going from pen to performance on a London stage in under a month.

The reason for the speed is Gaza. Churchill was so appalled by events there that she felt compelled to write, and the Royal Court theatre in London felt a duty to quickly produce her play, titled Seven Jewish Children - A Play for Gaza.

Churchill, one of the titans of British theatre, said: "Israel has done lots of terrible things in the past, but what happened in Gaza seemed particularly extreme."

The play will be performed for free with a collection afterwards for the charity Medical Aid for Palestinians. After the London run Churchill will publish it online and allow anyone, anywhere to download it. "Anyone can perform it without acquiring the rights, as long as they do a collection for people in Gaza at the end of it."

Churchill added: "I wrote it last week; by this week I was arranging it with the Royal Court; it's now being cast; rehearsals are next week; and we perform it on 6 February. It's only a small play, 10 minutes long, but it's a way of looking at what's happened and to raise money for the people who've suffered there."

That tickets are free is important to Churchill. "It came out of feeling strongly about what's happening in Gaza - it's a way of helping the people there. Everyone knows about Gaza, everyone is upset about it, and this play is something they could come to. It's a political event, not just a theatre event."

The Royal Court's artistic director, Dominic Cooke, who will direct, said one of the theatre's strengths was its willingness to react to events - but this was the quickest turnaround he had known. "I hope audiences will be moved by the play," he said. "I hope they'll be provoked, that they'll be made to think about the historical circumstances that have led us to the situation in the Middle East."

Cooke said that Churchill, 70, had tackled a huge subject in "an incredibly distilled and economical way". And he paid tribute to a writer who had her first play performed at the Royal Court in 1972. "Caryl is one of the reasons why I wanted to work at the Royal Court," Cooke said.

Cooke's version will have a cast of nine or 10 actors. "It might be provocative. I'm not sure. My job is to get inside the meaning of the play; and you never really know how it might be received, to be honest."

Cooke said it was an important subject, not just because of the humanitarian crisis but because of the ramifications on other multicultural societies, not least the UK. He said there was a real thirst for meaty theatre. [...]

The Royal Court had planned a response to Gaza, said Elyse Dodgson, head of the international department: "We were talking about what we would do, and then our most committed and brilliant playwright came along with a play ... **It is not an attack on anyone, it is a cry of grief.**"

- The play will be performed nightly at 9pm between 6 and 21 February after Marius von Mayenburg's *The Stone*. Tickets will be available from the box office (020 7565 5000) - not online - from Monday.
-

2. Caryl Churchill's play for Gaza is a prompt for theatres to react quickly

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/jan/26/caryl-churchill-play-gaza-theatre>>

Author: Lyn Gardner

Medium: The Guardian

Monday, January 26, 2009.

Theatre can and should respond swiftly to world events, so I applaud Churchill's 10-minute Gaza drama for the Royal Court

Last week, I wrote about **the difficulties theatre faces in responding to the situation in Gaza**. Because of the sheer amount of time it takes to write and produce work, it appeared near impossible.

Now comes the news that **Caryl Churchill was so impassioned** about what has been happening that she has written a play about it. **Seven Jewish Children – a Play for Gaza** will be performed at the Royal Court from 6 February. Tickets are free and there will be a collection for the charity Medical Aid for Palestinians. So, where there's a will, there is a way. Churchill's piece is just 10 minutes long, but as **Beckett's *Breath*** and Pinter's *Mountain Language* proved, the length of a play is no guide to its power and impact.

Other theatres could perhaps learn a great deal from this speedy response. [...]

The trick for the playwright, of course, is not just to be a terrific writer but to be able to predict the course of current affairs. Because it often takes so long to write a play and then find a slot for

it, with theatres programming so far ahead, writers have to be extraordinarily prescient. By the time the play gets staged – sometimes two years or more after it was started – it still needs to feel part of the zeitgeist. [...]

Churchill's ability to leap into action over something she feels passionate about, and the Royal Court's willingness to respond, can only be a good thing. If more playwrights and theatres were prepared to be reactive and flexible in this way, theatre could genuinely claim its place as an art form with a crucial role to play in responding to and contextualising the way we live now.

3. The Royal Court's Mystery Play

URL: <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/melaniephillips/3334851/the-royal-courts-mystery-play.shtml>>

Author: Melanie Phillips

Medium: The Spectator

Sunday, February 8, 2009.

Today's Observer carries a report that Jew-hatred attacks in Britain are now running at such a level the police have drafted in extra patrols and British Jews are beginning to emigrate. I have previously reported here on the menacing atmosphere in which British Jews are currently living, as a result of the malevolent misrepresentation of Israel's actions in Gaza by Britain's media and intelligentsia which are pumping out mind-twisting and ultimately genocidal Arab propaganda as unchallengeable truths. The Royal Court theatre in London is now adding fuel to that Jew-hatred by staging a ten-minute blood-libel written by Caryl Churchill. A copy of this text has now reached me (and it has also reached "Harry's Place". Please bear in mind that what is actually being performed on stage may be slightly different.)

Ostensibly about Israel, it is actually a direct attack on the Jews. It tells them in effect that they are to be held responsible for the fact that in Israel Jews have turned into Nazis. Indeed, the title 'Seven Jewish children' makes that explicit. (In the typescript I have, the word 'jews' is presented in lower case throughout while Arabs, God, Jerusalem and Hamas get capital letters).

There are seven scenes in which notional adults are said to be explaining to seven Jewish children, in an oblique fashion, seminal episodes in modern Jewish and Israeli history – the Holocaust, its aftermath in Europe, the creation of the State of Israel, the Six-Day War, the Second Intifada and operation Cast Lead in Gaza. The underlying message is that the Jews who started out as victims of the Nazis – when they were Good, apparently, because they were Victims and even better were Dead Victims – then claimed the land of Israel out of a sense of their own superiority, dispossessed its rightful Arab inhabitants and ever since have set about killing them out of instincts of rapacious colonialism, hatred and blood-lust. [...]

So here we have the blood libel finally out in the open. With no acknowledgement of Israel's claim that the vast majority killed in Gaza were male terrorists, and with the suggestion that the Jews are lying when they say that Hamas used their own children as bomb fodder, the inflammatory focus instead is solely upon dead babies. The Jews are presented as literally dehumanised, with the claim that they feel no pity or sorrow for the babies they have killed because they assert they have a monopoly on suffering; indeed, they supposedly laugh at those they have killed. And the portrayal of Jews as not only monstrous child-killers but 'better haters' because they are the 'chosen people' is straight out of the hallucinatory lexicons of medieval Jew-hatred.

This is an open vilification of the Jewish people, not merely repeatedly perpetrating incendiary lies about Israel but demonstrably and openly drawing upon an atavistic hatred of the Jews. It is sickening and dreadful beyond measure that the Royal Court theatre is staging this. It is not a contribution to a necessarily polarised and emotional debate. It is open incitement to hatred. In the Middle Ages, 'mystery plays' which portrayed the Jews as the demonic killers of Christ helped fuel the murderous pogroms against the Jews of Europe. With this piece by Caryl Churchill, the Royal Court is staging a modern 'mystery play'. It is a despicable act.

4. "Seven Jewish Children – A play for Gaza" – by Caryl Churchill at the Royal Court

URL: <<http://hurryupharry.org/2009/02/08/seven-jewish-children-a-play-for-gaza-by-caryl-churchill-at-the-royal-court/#comments>>

Author: Jonathan Hoffmann

Medium: Harry's place

Sunday, February 8, 2009.

The eponymous children (all girls – whom we never meet) in Caryl Churchill's 10 minute play are alive at various times in the 60 year history of Israel. The dialogue we hear belongs to their parents and grandparents who are trying to decide how best to explain to them the events going on in the world – first in Nazi Germany, then by stages in the aftermath of World War Two; on the way to live in Israel; in the civil strife before the War of Independence of 1948; after the Six Day War in 1967; probably around the first Intifada (1987-93); and finally today, after Operation Cast Lead. [...]

If you should meet Caryl Churchill (maybe at meetings of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign where she is a Patron) please tell her that she has written a play which reinforces false stereotypes and demonises Israelis. Tell her there is a vibrant press in Israel where all opinions can be found and freely expressed. Tell her that Israelis are not the heartless, murderous triumphalists that she portrays. Tell her that Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005, removing military bases and its citizens from Gush Katif but nevertheless continuing to provide Gazans with electricity, water, and goods. Tell her how workers at the power plant in Ashdod risked injury or even death from the rockets which were being fired from Gaza — the place where they were supplying electricity. Tell her that Israeli parents tell their children the truth and therefore do not teach them that Palestinians are subhuman and to be hated. Tell her that it's antisemitic to use the phrase "chosen people" to imply that Jews believe they are superior to non-Jews (tell her the phrase involves responsibilities as well as blessings).

But the trouble is, she probably knows all that. So tell her then that there's a nice job waiting for her at PressTV.

5. Royal Court theatre gets behind the Gaza headlines

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2009/feb/11/royal-court-theatre-gaza>>

Author: Michael Billington

Medium: The Guardian

Wednesday, February 11, 2009.

Caryl Churchill's 10-minute play, Seven Jewish Children, typifies what the stage does best: address the world as it is right now.

Where, at the moment, can you see plays about Israeli attitudes to Gaza, Muslim life in Britain and Germany's denial of its Nazi past? The answer is London's Royal Court. And, having bashed the Court last year for its bias towards American plays, I would now like to praise it for connecting with the big issues. I can't think of any more urgent task for a theatre such as the Court than that of addressing the world we live in.

I suppose Caryl Churchill's 10-minute play, Seven Jewish Children, is the most controversial of the Court's current trio. Some will say it's too soon to write about the invasion of Gaza; others will dismiss the play as propaganda. Both charges are easily refuted. If theatre fails to react rapidly to current events, whether it be the Middle East crisis or the global financial meltdown, it will be reduced to the role of an impotent bystander. What theatre can also do is delve behind the headlines. We've all been shocked by TV footage of the Israeli assault on Gaza. But Churchill's play reminds us that, in any conflict, children are always prime victims. Literally so in the case of Gaza, where 410 died during the 23-day bombing. But Churchill also shows us how Jewish children are bred to believe in the "otherness" of Palestinians and how, for generations to come, they stand to reap the bitter harvest of the military assault on Hamas.

Churchill's play pricks our conscience. [...]

6. Seven Jewish Children

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/feb/11/seven-jewish-children>>

Author: Michael Billington

Medium: The Guardian

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Review

Play: Seven Jewish Children

Theatre: Royal Court, London

Score: 4 stars over 5

Articulating moral outrage ... David Horovitch in Seven Jewish Children. Photograph: Tristram Kenton

Caryl Churchill's 10-minute play was written in response to the recent tragic events in Gaza. It not only confirms theatre's ability to react more rapidly than any other art form to global politics, but also makes a fascinating counterpoise to Marius von Mayenburg's The Stone, which precedes it at the Royal Court. Whereas The Stone shows how German children are often the victims of lies about family history, Churchill's play suggests Israeli children are subject to a barrage of contradictory information about past and present.

The work consists of seven cryptic scenes in which parents, grandparents and relatives debate how much children should know and not know. It moves, implicitly, from the Holocaust to the foundation of the state of Israel through the sundry Middle East wars up to the invasion of Gaza. At first, the advice indicates the deep divisions within Israel ("Tell her they want to drive us into the sea" / "Tell her they don't"); at the end, it becomes a ruthless justification for self-preservation ("Tell her we're the iron fist now, tell her it's the fog of war, tell her we won't stop killing them till we're safe").

Churchill, I'm sure, would not deny the existence of fierce external, and internal, Jewish opposition to the attack on Gaza. What she captures, in remarkably condensed poetic form, is the transition that has overtaken Israel, to the point where security has become the pretext for indiscriminate slaughter. Avoiding overt didacticism, her play becomes a heartfelt lamentation for the future generations who will themselves become victims of the attempted military suppression of Hamas. Performed by nine actors, under Dominic Cooke's brisk, clear direction, the play solves nothing, but shows theatre's power to heighten consciousness and articulate moral outrage.

7. Review: Seven Jewish Children

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/feb/11/seven-jewish-children>>

Author: John Nathan

Medium: The Jewish Chronicle

Friday, February 12, 2009

Not just a theatre event, a political event, said Caryl Churchill of her 10-minute play. So this review should deal first with the play, then the politics.

As you'd expect from the Royal Court's most revered living playwright, *Seven Jewish Children* — which Churchill wrote as a rushed response to Israel's attack on Gaza — is an impressively distilled piece of writing. Its powerful premise is built upon the parental instinct to protect children from frightening realities. [...]

"Tell her it's a game", says one guardian in a scene implying that the child must hide from Nazis; "Don't tell her they were killed", says another, in the second scene, suggesting the care with which Jewish children were told about the Holocaust.

And so the play moves on to the post-war settlement of European Jews in Palestine — "Tell her it's the land God gave us" — the implied expulsion of Arabs — "Tell her this wasn't their home" — to war, the Intifada and to the killing of Palestinian babies in Gaza, by which time Churchill's Jews are no longer victims but perpetrators of atrocity, who no longer protect their children from truths but conspire to distort them.

In dramatic terms, there is no doubting the power of Churchill's message.

But this is one of those occasions when the merits of a play are eclipsed by its politics.

The unavoidable question is: are the politics antisemitic?

The problem here is that a gentile author is portraying not just her own views and attitudes but those of Jews. "Tell her I laughed when I saw the dead policemen", says one, glorying in Palestinian suffering.

Does the Court's artistic director, Dominic Cooke, not realise that a play that is critical of, and entirely populated by, characters from one community, can be defended only if it is written by a member of that community? This is the wise rule of thumb by which Nicholas Hytner has judged that a play that is critical of, and populated by, Muslims, can only be staged at the National Theatre if it is written by a Muslim.

As if sensing this, Cooke has recruited Jews for his cast. Not, it appears, to bring Jewish insight to their roles but to provide crude cover against criticism. It won't work. For the first time in my career as a critic, I am moved to say about a work at a major production house that this is an antisemitic play.

8. Say it, but not so loud

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/feb/11/seven-jewish-children>>

Author: Susannah Clapp

Medium: *The Observer*

Sunday, February 15, 2009

Three Days of Rain returns, on steroids, while Londoners who braved the slush for 10 minutes of topical Caryl Churchill were richly rewarded

Seven Jewish children: Royal Court, London SW1

You don't have to pay for a seat for **Seven Jewish Children**, though there's a bucket person at the door collecting for Medical Aid for Palestinians. Even so, it's remarkable how many people, on the sleetiest day of a grim winter, trekked into the Royal Court for 10 minutes'-worth of Caryl Churchill's words. They won't have wasted their time. Though you could argue that as a response to, rather than an analysis of, recent events in Gaza, the play is actually rather slow off the mark, it still shows how relatively flexible theatre is in seizing on topical subjects: **film can't react quickly and telly mostly doesn't bother.** The Court should make a habit of staging such reactions.

What's more, though **there's no mystery about Churchill's reaction to the Israeli bombing - she's against it - she produces more than an agitprop shout:** this is a far more substantial piece of work than her invective against America and Britain's "special relationship" staged three years ago. On the page, these brief scenes, for which the only specification is that they should be spoken by adults, look as if they might be spoken by only one person and talking about only one other. In fact they're intended to be orchestrated into argument, and to be divided between different speakers.

Dominic Cooke dispenses the lines perfectly in a production that begins by looking mechanical - characters scatter and come together around a discussion as if they were iron filings - but then builds and changes. The early sentences invoke the Holocaust; the later clearly talk of Gaza. But none of them are really addressed to anyone other than the speaker. They seem to care but are really a blood-letting. The more you speak, the less you say. The more you go on, the less you are actually talking to someone else. Tell that to an audience and, weirdly, they seem to respond.

9. Churchill's Gaza play accused of anti-Semitism

URL: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2009/feb/18/caryl-churchill-gaza-play>

Author: Charlotte Higgins

Medium: The Guardian

Wednesday, February 18, 2009.

A fine old row is developing over whether *Seven Jewish Children*, Caryl Churchill's eight-minute play provoked by the recent conflict in Gaza, is antisemitic.

The work, now playing at London's Royal Court, involves seven brief scenes, in which Israeli adults discuss how to explain moments in Israeli history to seven children. The last, about Gaza, includes the line: "Don't tell her about the dead babies."

The rightwing commentator Melanie Phillips is hopping mad. In a *Spectator* blog, she calls the play "blood libel" and continues: "This is an open vilification of the Jewish people . . . demonstrably and openly drawing upon an atavistic hatred of the Jews. It is sickening and dreadful beyond measure . . . In the Middle Ages, 'mystery plays', which portrayed the Jews as the demonic killers of Christ, helped fuel the murderous pogroms against the Jews of Europe." With this piece, she says, the Royal Court is staging a modern "mystery play", which she calls "a despicable act".

The Royal Court "categorically rejects" the accusation - but what did the critics think? The *Sunday Times* condemned its "ludicrous and utterly predictable lack of even-handedness"; but for the *Times*, "there are no heroes or villains, for all that Churchill decries what is happening in Gaza".

The Diary's advice? See it for yourself, preferably in the context of the play that runs before it: Marius von Mayenburg's *The Stone* is an intense criticism of the refusal by some Germans to accept their families' complicity in atrocities against the Jews.

10. Howard Jacobson: Let's see the 'criticism' of Israel for what it really is

URL: <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/howard-jacobson/howard-jacobson-let8217s-see-the-8216criticism8217-of-israel-for-what-it-really-is-1624827.html>

Author: Howard Jacobson

Medium: *The Independent*

Wednesday, February 18, 2009

Anti-Semitism? Absolutely not. It is "criticism" of Israel, pure and simple. [...]

This is pretty well the thesis of Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children*, an audacious 10-minute encapsulation of Israel's moral collapse – the audacity residing in its ignorance or its dishonesty – currently playing at the Royal Court. The play is conceived in the form of a family roundelay, with different voices chiming in with suggestions as to the best way to bring up, protect, inform, and ultimately inflame into animality an unseen child in each of the chosen seven periods of contemporary Jewish history. It begins with the Holocaust, partly to establish the playwright's sympathetic bona fides ("Tell her not to come out even if she hears shouting"), partly to explain what has befallen Palestine, because no sooner are the Jews out of the hell of Hitler's Europe than they are constructing a parallel hell for Palestinians.

You cannot of course tell the whole story of anywhere in 10 minutes, but then why would you want to unless you conceive it to be simple and one-sided? The staccato form of the piece – every line beginning "Tell her" or "Don't tell her" – is skilfully contrived to suggest a people not just forever fraught and frightened but forever covert and deceitful. Nothing is true. Boasts are

denials and denials are boasts. Everything is mediated through the desire to put the best face, first on fear, then on devious appropriation, and finally on evil.

That being the case, it is hard to be certain what the playwright knows and what she doesn't, what she, in her turn, means deliberately to twist or just unthinkingly helps herself to from the poor box of leftist propaganda. The overall impression, nonetheless, is of a narrative slavishly in line with the familiar rhetoric, making little or nothing of the Jews' unbroken connection with the country going back to the Arab conquest more than a thousand years before, the piety felt for the land, the respect for its non-Jewish inhabitants (their rights must "be guarded and honoured punctiliously," Ben Gurion wrote in 1918), the waves of idealistic immigration which long predated the post-Holocaust influx with its twisted psychology, and the hopes of peaceful co-existence, for the tragic dashing of which Arab countries in their own obduracy and intolerance bear no less responsibility.

Quite simply, in this wantonly inflammatory piece, the Jews drop in on somewhere they have no right to be, despise, conquer, and at last revel in the spilling of Palestinian blood. [...]

Thus lie follows lie, omission follows omission, until, in the tenth and final minute, we have a stage populated by monsters who kill babies by design – "Tell her we killed the babies by mistake," one says, meaning don't tell her what we really did – who laugh when they see a dead Palestinian policeman ("Tell her they're animals... Tell her I wouldn't care if we wiped them out"), who consider themselves the "chosen people", and who admit to feeling happy when they see Palestinian "children covered in blood". Anti-Semitic? No, no. Just criticism of Israel. [...]

This is the old stuff. Jew-hating pure and simple [...] So for that we are grateful. At last that mystery is solved and that lie finally nailed. No, you don't have to be an anti-Semite to criticise Israel. It just so happens that you are. [...]

Take Michael Billington's somnolent review of the play in the Guardian. I would imagine that any accusation of anti-Semitism would horrify Michael Billington. [...] But if you wanted an example of how language itself can sleepwalk the most innocent towards racism, then here it is. "Churchill shows us," he writes, "how Jewish children are bred to believe in the 'otherness' of Palestinians..."

[...] What's most chilling is that lazy use of the word "bred", so rich in eugenic and bestial connotations, but inadvertently slipped back into the conversation now, as truth. Fact: Jews breed children in order to deny Palestinians their humanity. [...]

11. Seven deadly scenes

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/feb/22/seven-jewish-children-royal-court>>

Author: David Smith

Medium: The Observer

Sunday, February 22, 2009.

Caryl Churchill drew flak from British Jews for her provocative eight-minute play about Gaza.

David Smith reports on US plans to stage the play.

"Good art troubles people," says Dave Barton, theatre director. "Great art offends. I'm happy to offend and confront."

Barton's Los Angeles theatre company, Rude Guerrilla, is set to do both next month when it presents *Seven Jewish Children*, the new eight-minute play by Caryl Churchill that has already caused disquiet in Britain.

With theatres in New York also considering stagings, the provocative drama, written by Churchill in response to the war in Gaza, could provide an early test of the artistic and political climate in President Obama's America. [...]

It has been praised by some critics but attacked by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the novelist Howard Jacobson and the columnist Melanie Phillips. A letter condemning it, sent to the *Daily Telegraph*, was signed by more than 60 leading British Jews including Professor Geoffrey Alderman, Lord Janner, Ronald Harwood and Maureen Lipman. The Royal Court vehemently denies that the piece demonises Israelis.[...]

But such criticisms are rejected by Rude Guerrilla. "For a theatre to remain relevant, it needs to be talking about the world it finds itself in. Any play about Israel is bound to be an issue. We're an over-religious country and any criticism of Israel is forbidden. I think Israel should be criticised like any other country. If I disagreed with Caryl Churchill's point of view, I wouldn't be doing the play," says Barton.

He was aware of the objections, he said, but remained defiant. "I've seen criticism that if you're not Jewish, you can't talk about Israel. That's bullshit. It's like saying men can't write about

women. When there's an attempt to step on criticism then you have a problem - that's the time to ramp up criticism. If it was anti-semitic, I wouldn't direct it."

A production is also being discussed by the New York Theatre Workshop, which faced accusations of censorship three years ago after cancelling *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*, based on the diaries of a young American woman killed by an Israeli army bulldozer in Gaza in 2003. James Nicola, artistic director of the workshop, wants to produce the Churchill play, the New York Times reported, but is keen to avoid another international controversy.

Stephen Pidcock, a spokesman for the Royal Court, said: "We've had full houses and positive responses. We've made more than £1,000 per night for the relief fund. It's an outstanding play and deserves to be put on anywhere."

12. Controversial Churchill Play, *Seven Jewish Children*, Gets Readings at NYTW

URL: <<http://www.playbill.com/news/article/127349-Controversial-Churchill-Play-Seven-Jewish-Children-Gets-Readings-at-NYTW>>

Author: *Ernio Hernández*

Medium: *Playbill*

Monday, March 16, 2009

New York Theatre Workshop will present three staged readings of Caryl Churchill's short play, *Seven Jewish Children*, March 25-27 at the company's Off-Broadway home.

Sam Gold will direct the 7 PM readings, which will be followed by moderated discussions with Laura Flanders (March 25), Tony Kushner and Alisa Solomon (March 26) and Mark Crispin Miller (March 27). The ten-minute work will then be read again following the talks. Casting will be announced shortly.

The new work, which caused a stir during its London run at The Royal Court Theatre in February, now reaches New York. According to NYTW notes: "*Seven Jewish Children* was written

by Churchill as a direct response to the recent events in Gaza. The play features seven scenes of Jewish parents, grandparents, and relatives attempting to explain to children how they should feel and react to the sometimes violent and confusing world around them. The play's sparse poetics touch on the major political events of the last half-century that have most affected the Jewish people, from the Holocaust, to the founding of Israel, to the Intifada, and the recent violence in Gaza.

"As there has been a great deal of public discussion expressed about the play based either on reading it, or merely hearsay, it is our intent to put the play where it belongs—on a stage and in the mouths of actors—so our community can encounter the play firsthand and in a conducive environment for thoughtful and respectful discussion and consideration," according to a NYTW press release. "In *Seven Jewish Children*, [Churchill] addresses a deeply complicated and ancient conflict in a way that we hope the theater can uniquely address by engendering a dialogue on the most pressing issues facing society. We aim to present this work in a format that invites and encourages public discourse about the myriad of issues surrounding it."

13. BBC rejects play on Israel's history for impartiality reasons

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/mar/16/bbc-rejects-caryl-churchill-israel?intcmp=239>>

Author: Ben Dowell

Medium: *The Guardian*

Monday, March 16, 2009

The BBC has declined to broadcast a radio version of Caryl Churchill's controversial new stage play about Israeli history, claiming it needed to remain impartial - the same reason given for declining to air the Gaza emergency appeal.

In a move likely to resurrect the row over the BBC's refusal in January to broadcast the appeal to help the people of Gaza, Radio 4 rejected an unsolicited manuscript of the play, *Seven Jewish Children*, which recently finished a short run at the Royal Court theatre. BBC sources suggest that a significant factor in the decision was awareness of the controversy stirred by *Seven Jewish Children* during its theatre run and the fact that the BBC has only recently survived the onslaught of criticism for its refusal to broadcast the Gaza appeal. [...]

Howe wrote: "It is a no, I am afraid. Both Mark [Damazer, Radio 4 controller] and I think it is a brilliant piece, but after discussing it with editorial policy we have decided we cannot run with it on the grounds of impartiality – I think it would be nearly impossible to run a drama that counters Caryl Churchill's view. Having debated long and hard we have decided we can't do *Seven Jewish Children*." [...]

In a letter sent to the Daily Telegraph last month a number of prominent British Jews condemned the Royal Court for showing Churchill's play which they said portrayed Israeli parents as "inhuman triumphalists".

Some critics agreed. Christopher Hart in the *Sunday Times* attacked what he called "the play's ludicrous and utterly predictable lack of even-handedness". However, the *Times* said the play had "no heroes and villains" and the Guardian's critic Michael Billington said the play "shows theatre's power to heighten consciousness and articulate moral outrage".

14. 'Jewish Children' Comes to D.C. Already Upstaged by Controversy

URL: <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/16/AR2009031603255.html?referrer=emailarticle>>

Author: Monica Hesse

Medium: *The Washington Post*

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

The four-day run of a 10-minute play later this month in Washington has raised a very large philosophical question: Where does the art stop and the politics begin?

The play in question is "Seven Jewish Children: A Play for Gaza," an abstract, free-form work by British playwright Caryl Churchill. [...]

As a work of art, "Seven Jewish Children" is "deftly constructed, evocative, elusive and provocative," says Ari Roth. He is the artistic director of the Jewish Community Center's Theater J in Northwest Washington, where staged readings of the play will be offered on March 26 and 28. [...]

Theater J, which is prohibited from fundraising for outside groups, will offer the play for free. Forum will request donations. [...]

In British media, Churchill has denied charges of anti-Semitism; Roth wonders whether an American audience will have a reaction so vehemently negative. "The idea is to give the play a hearing, to approach it in the spirit of inquiry," Roth says. "We're not going to take a right-wing British journalist's word that it's blood-libel."

Instead, the two Washington theaters, both of which frequently hold issue-based discussion groups, will present the play as an opportunity for dialogue, holding forums after each performance. Theater J will also follow "Seven Jewish Children" by debuting a response play, "Seven Palestinian Children," which New Jersey playwright Deb Margolin wrote after reading Churchill's work.

Although Margolin's play also features some controversial language -- "Tell him: When old men die, it is expected; when young men die, it is sacred" -- she argues that her play comes from a humanitarian perspective. "What I want to speak to is that moment when one human being is incapable of seeing the humanity in another," Margolin says. She is Jewish and says distress over some of Churchill's generalizations about the Jewish community caused Margolin to write her own play.

In recent weeks, in fact, responses to "Seven Jewish Children" have almost become their own genre. In addition to "Seven Palestinian Children," there is Robbie Gringas's "The Eighth Child" ("Tell her that it's more complicated than that") and Iris Bahr's "Seven English Children" ("Tell her her new medical treatment was developed in Israel").

"My druthers would be to critique this play dramaturgically, not politically," Roth say. But separating art from politics in a work as fraught as "Seven Jewish Children" might be a nearly impossible task, even for sophisticated theatergoers. The play brings up issues that prompt immediate emotional responses, however you perceive Churchill's intent.

Roth believes that there are many rational ways to interpret "Seven Jewish Children." It's a quick play, he says, "that accomplishes an awful lot."

15. 'Tell her the truth'

URL: <<http://www.thenation.com/article/tell-her-truth>>

Authors: Tony Kushner y Alisa Solomon

Medium: *The Nation*

Thursday, March 26, 2009

Churchill is one of the most important and influential playwrights living, the author of formally inventive, psychologically searing, politically and intellectually complex dramas, including *Cloud Nine*, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, *Serious Money*, *Mad Forest* and *Far Away*. To this body of work she's now added the very brief (six pages, ten minutes long in performance) and very controversial *Seven Jewish Children: A Play for Gaza*. The play ran for two weeks in February at London's Royal Court Theatre and is being presented across the United States in cities such as New York (Theaters Against War and New York Theatre Workshop), Chicago (Rooms Productions), Washington (Theater J and Forum Theatre), Cambridge, Massachusetts (Cambridge Palestine Forum) and Los Angeles (Rude Guerrilla).

While some British critics greatly admired the play, which was presented by a Jewish director with a largely Jewish cast, a number of prominent British Jews denounced it as anti-Semitic. Some even accused Churchill of blood libel, of perpetrating in *Seven Jewish Children* the centuries-old lie, used to incite homicidal anti-Jewish violence, that Jews ritually murder non-Jewish children. A spokesman for the Board of Deputies of British Jews told the *Jerusalem Post* that the "horrifically anti-Israel" text went "beyond the boundaries of reasonable political discourse."

We emphatically disagree. We think Churchill's play should be seen and discussed as widely as possible.

Though you'd never guess from the descriptions offered by its detractors, the play is dense, beautiful, elusive and intentionally indeterminate. This is not to say that the play isn't also direct

and incendiary. It is. It's disturbing, it's provocative, but appropriately so, given the magnitude of the calamity it unfolds in its pages. Any play about the crisis in the Middle East that doesn't arouse anger and distress has missed the point. [...]

The hostile reaction to *Seven Jewish Children* has been amplified by the context of a frightening wave of anti-Semitism in Britain and elsewhere, and exacerbated by the tendency to misread a multivocal, dialectical drama as a single-voiced political tract. [...]

Why is the play so short? Probably because Churchill means to slap us out of our rehearsed arguments to look at the immediate human crisis. No wonder it smarts. The play dares reduce the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the kind of stinging simplicity of Neruda's lines, "and through the streets the blood of children flowed easily/like the blood of children."

Why does the title use "Jewish" rather than "Israeli"? Because all the children the play revolves around are Jewish, but not all are Israeli. And because not all Israelis are Jewish; a sizable minority is Arab. [...]

The play consists of seven sequences, each composed of approximately twenty simple sentences, almost all of which begin with the words "Tell her" or "Don't tell her." There is no place-and-time setting specified for the sequences, and the lines are not assigned to specific characters. In fact, there isn't a character list or even a suggested number of performers, and the text looks less like a play than the poem it also is. Nonetheless, it's clear that these are discussions between the parents, adult relatives and guardians of a young girl, presumably a different little girl in each sequence, who the playwright specifies is not on stage, not seen. It's also clear that the first of the seven sequences begins during the Holocaust; then the play moves successively to the founding of the State of Israel, the displacement of its Palestinian population and the intensification of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, arriving, finally, in a very dark, very dangerous moment--probably, although this is not made explicit in the text, concurrent with the military operation and humanitarian disaster in Gaza that occasioned the play. All else--the cast's size, gender, age (as long as all the players are adults) and ethnicity, as well as all staging choices--the playwright leaves to the director and actors.

The central issue being discussed, in each of the sequences, is what the little girl should or shouldn't be told regarding her circumstances; the tenor of the debate changes as the circumstances change. In the first section, the child faces immediate danger of arrest and murder by the Nazis. Her survival requires that she have an awareness of the seriousness of her situation without being traumatized into paralysis or dissociation.

In the next sequence, which takes place sometime immediately post-Holocaust, telling or not telling revolves around questions of memory and mourning, of protecting a child from the emotional annihilation of a grief too weighty and of a knowledge of evil too imponderable for her youthful capacities.

In subsequent sequences, what can and can't be talked about are the anxieties of relocating (to pre-state Israel, although it isn't named), then the presence and forcible displacement of others (the Palestinians, again not named), the roadblocks, the bulldozing of homes, water rights. There's a shift at this point in the dialogue: the tension between assertions and their negation becomes tighter, more suggestive of conflict within the family or community, as the speakers struggle over how to deal with conflict from without.

Just before the play ends, the back-and-forth of the dialogue is stopped for the first time by a monologue. Though it's ostensibly an answer to the question of what the girl can or can't be told, that question becomes mere pretext for an explosion of rage, racism, militarism, tribalism and repellent indifference to the suffering of others. It's important to note that this monologue is neither the last word in the play nor any kind of summation or harmonizing of the play's disputatious voices. But it's near enough to the end; and expansive as it is, after so much compression, it unavoidably feels like a dreadful conclusion; to some, it's manifestly an indictment. [...]

But that is not what Churchill wrote. Distortion, misrepresentation and name-calling are tactics familiar to anyone who's spoken out about the Middle East. There's no blood libel in the play. The last line of the monologue is clearly a warning: you can't protect your children by being indifferent to the children of others.

There's a vast difference between making your audience uncomfortable and being anti-Semitic. To see anti-Semitism here is to construe erroneously the words spoken by the worst of Churchill's characters as a statement from the playwright about all Jews as preternaturally filled with a viciousness unique among humankind. But to do this is, again, to distort what Churchill wrote. The monologue belongs to and emerges from a particular dramatic action that makes the eruption inevitable and horrifying.

The play traces the processes of repressed speech. The violence forcing that repression comes initially from without; the monologue gives voice to a violence that's moved inside. The play stages the return of the repressed, an explosion of threatened defensiveness that, unexpressed and unowned, has turned into rage. Encountering it is terrifying; we don't want to own it. But

that doesn't mean we don't recognize it. And sad to say, there's no sentiment in the monologue's spew that we have not heard or read at some point from presumed "defenders" of Israel. [...]

That hideous sentiment, however, is not the play's final word. There are three more lines:

Don't tell her that. / Tell her we love her. / Don't frighten her.

A playwright's presumptuous job is to imagine others, and the others Churchill has imagined in this play are Jews. If there's anger in the writing, there's also empathy, tenderness and intimacy. Nothing is more intimate than discussions between parents about what to tell their children; no act of speech is more carefully weighed or more fiercely protected. This is a family play, told from within the family.

It concludes with love, and it concludes with fear. *Seven Jewish Children* is a play. It must be read with an awareness of the incompleteness of plays on paper, destined as they are for collective rather than singular experience, for warm bodies speaking the lines, for empathy, for the variability of interpretation. The monologue and the lines that follow it will carry different meanings if spoken, say, by a grandmother with a Yiddish accent or by a young man in an Israeli army uniform. Or by, say, a Korean-American man or a Chicana. Or, since the play is so short and could be watched three or four times in a row, with the lines spoken each time by different actors. Any director and company approaching the play will have to decide whether and how the audience will be made aware of the radical degree to which the written text has insisted, through its lack of character identification or stage action, on collaboration. Surely it's essential to understanding *Seven Jewish Children* that against the specifics of the script, the playwright, relinquishing nearly all traditional authorial control, engineers a far-greater-than-usual slippage among text and performance and audience reception, producing an unusually large amount of room for variant readings.

And it is perhaps only on stage that the central characters of the play come into their own: the eponymous seven Jewish children who are its heroines. We never see them. Our empathic imaginations are enlisted by the playwright. We have to conjure them.

16. Seven themes for Caryl Churchill

URL: <<http://normblog.typepad.com/normblog/2009/03/seven-themes-for-caryl-churchill.html>>

Author: Norman Geras

Medium: Normblog

Sunday, March 22, 2009

Being a review by me of Churchill's play *Seven Jewish Children*. Put on originally at the Royal Court Theatre in London, scheduled for readings by the New York Theatre Workshop, rejected for broadcasting by the BBC for impartiality reasons, given an outing in Dublin, upcoming in Austin and LA and no doubt many other centres, the play clearly deserves critical notice on this blog. You can find the text of it here [pdf]. Below is my review of that text.

1

Tell them it's a play

Tell them it's serious

But don't enlighten them

Tighten them

Put some night in them.

Tell it in the voice of Jews

Tell it only in the voice of Jews

That way any bad thought will be the thought of Jews

(Like that 'they' don't understand anything except violence)

And any thought ascribed to others will be ascribed by Jews

And not necessarily true

And maybe just an excuse

(Like that there are still people who hate Jews)

And any bad deed ascribed to others will be merely ascribed by Jews

(Like that 'they' set off bombs in cafés)

And ascribed maybe as a pretext.

2

Tell them this was the land God gave us

Tell them it was our promised land

Tell them we said it was a land without people

Tell them again that we said that

And said it wasn't 'their' home.

Don't enlighten them
Put some spite in them
By making it a story of eviction and dispossession only.
Don't tell them of two peoples with a right to self-determination
Two peoples with a claim on justice and humanity
Don't enlighten them.

3

Tell them that we won
Tell them that we're fighters
Tell them we are stronger
Tell them we're the iron fist now
Prussia of the Middle East.
Powerful Jews
Night in them, spite in them.
Don't tell them it's a play
Tell them it's real.
Frighten them.

4

Powerful Jews (tell them)
And hating, racist Jews
(Tell them this too).
Tell them we think we're the chosen people
Tell them we say that 'they' are animals.

5

Tell them about occupation and settlements
Do tell them about this because it's true
Tell them about bulldozers, knocking down houses, checkpoints, olive trees
Do tell them all this.
But don't mention the war
Whatever you do, don't mention that the foundation of the state of Israel took place with the
backing of the UN, the world community
Don't mention that Israel's Arab neighbours at once mobilized for its destruction
Don't mention that they really did speak of 'driving us into the sea', that this is not just what we

tell

Don't mention the Hamas Charter and its promise of killing Jews and destroying Israel
Don't mention Hizbollah, or the threats and denials of Ahmadinejad, or the growth of anti-Semitism everywhere, or the attacks on Jews, or, in certain places, the teaching of anti-Semitism.
Thank you, don't mention it.

6

Yes, tell them it's serious
Tell them not only hating, racist Jews
But also pitiless Jews.
Tell that we say 'they' want their children killed to make people feel sorry for them
And that 'they' can't talk suffering to us
Tell that we think we're the ones to be sorry for, we're entitled
And that we wouldn't care if we *wiped them out*, we're just happy it's not us.
Execute the reversal beloved of every spewing Jew-hater from his pit, and by every anti-Zionist
who can shit
Tell them the Shoah is mere pretext now
Exploited to claim entitlement
Entitlement to inflict suffering upon others
Tell them it, tell them.

7

Tell them finally (shrinking not even from this,
Ancient libel from before the Holocaust was text let alone pretext)
That Jews kill babies, girls, boys
Tell them we say 'they' want their children killed
Tell them that Jews look at one of 'their' children and ask 'what do I feel?'
And say 'happy it's not her'.
Tell them this
And tell them it's a play
No, don't tell them it's a play
Tell them it's serious, deadly serious
Don't enlighten them
Exciten them

Whiten them

Hate in them.

17. Caryl Churchill: Gaza's Shakespeare, or Fetid Jew-Baiter?

URL: <<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2009/03/caryl-churchill-gaza-apos-s-shakespeare-or-fetid-jew-baiter/9823/#more>>

Author: Jeffrey Goldberg

Medium: The Atlantic

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

Against my advice -- and the advice of others -- my friend Ari Roth has decided to stage two readings of Caryl Churchill's "Seven Jewish Children" at his Theater J, in Washington. (The first reading is tonight at 8:00 p.m.; the second is tomorrow at 10 p.m.) Given Churchill's strong distaste for all things Israeli and the not-entirely veiled blood libel embedded in the text, Roth's decision to put on a reading has been controversial, but has at least produced a steady stream of publicity for his theater (of which I am generally a fan).

"Seven Jewish Children" [...] was dismantled by some critics -- "ludicrous and utterly predictable lack of even-handedness" -- and lauded by others -- "heartfelt lamentation for the future generations." I'm in the first camp, in case you couldn't tell. Anyway, Ari asked me if I would come and talk to the audience after the reading, and I said no, but I said I would interview him on his decision to provide Churchill's play with Jewish oxygen. Here's our bizarre and sometimes-entertaining argument on Churchill and theater and Jews.

Jeffrey Goldberg: Well, tell me why I'm wrong.

Ari Roth: Well, let me ask you, do you think you're still right?

JG: I read the play five times. It reads like anti-Jewish agitprop to me. I see it as a short polemic directed against one party in a complicated conflict. Take the line, "The world hates us, tell her we're better haters, tell her we're chosen people, tell her I look at one of their children covered

in blood and what do I feel? Tell her all I feel is happy it's not her." I mean, I think she moves from the traditional smug, self-righteous European morally superior stance --

AR: When you say she starts, she doesn't start there --

JG: No, no, no, let me finish my sentence. I think she moves into an area that she has to know has this very, very terrible historic resonance. It's associating Jews with the spilling of innocent blood. She knows what that means and I think it kind of feeds into, obviously, the very worst and most dangerous stereotypes about Jews. How they revel in non-Jewish blood.

AR: I totally agree with you. I mean, I'm on the watch for this as well --

JG: Then why are you putting it on?

AR: I wrote in the Washington Post and the Washington Jewish Week when the Royal Shakespeare company came over with their Canterbury Tales two years ago and included The Prioress's Tale and they brought, in order to make it pungent and fresh again, they did this re-enactment of essentially a blood libel, a young boy was slaughtered by Jews and buried under the floorboards, and all the Jews wore hook-noses. This was very primitive and I blasted it. They wanted to make it fresh, they wanted to elicit outrage, they didn't contextualize, they didn't -- they wanted to surprise the shit out of people and surprise they did.

JG: Let's start at the beginning --

AR: One other thing, can you be available one of those nights? I want to give voice to a critic.

JG: I'm not going to validate it by arguing against it.

AR: Validate what? The play?

JG: What am I going to do, debate every hater?

AR: No offense, you're a critic who went out in public and said something strong about the --

JG: I don't want to treat this as a serious piece of art worthy of argument. I want to argue against

what I think is a grotesquely unfair.

AR: I wouldn't be doing this if I thought it was as bad as you do.

JG: I hope not.

AR: But then I think you should be open to the possibility that it's not as bad as you think. And the fact that some of this piece is incredibly deft in accurately overhearing the trauma that the Jews felt, you know, way back when. When they were hiding a child in the closet. I mean there's tremendous accuracy --

JG: Hold on, are you equating what happened to Jews in WWII to what happens to Palestinians children at the hands of Jews now?

AR: Okay, I'm going to speak like a valley boy: *dude*, I didn't say that. You know I didn't say that. And you didn't even say that because that's a dumb thing to say. That is not what it says and, in fact, that's a very convenient and easy conflation. Does she mean to suggest that people who are once under siege themselves are now laying siege? Is she creating a compressed historical irony like that? That's a question. There are a lot of questions here. But is she saying what you just said to me? I would say absolutely not.

JG: Let me give you another quote from Caryl Churchill. "Israel has done a lot of terrible things in the past, but what happened in Gaza seems particularly extreme." This is a woman who hates Israel. She's not complicated. I mean, has she ever expressed an ounce of sympathy for a Jewish child victim of a Hamas suicide bomber?

AR: You're a great writer, but you may not love art enough. And you --

JG: I may not love art enough?

AR: Yeah, maybe you don't love the dramatic arts enough. You know a thousand things but you're making assumptions about Caryl Churchill that are not true, in terms of her lack of empathy. So I would invite you to come sit in on a rehearsal. We're just trying to understand

what she's saying. Okay?

JG: Why? Why bother?

AR: Why do you do symposiums on Shylock? Why have we done two different pieces on Shylock? Because we want to make love with that character? Because we think it's the greatest comedy William Shakespeare ever wrote? It's not a particularly good play. Why is it of interest to Jews to decode and demystify and see into what --

JG: Decoding Shakespeare is one thing --

AR: How many better playwrights are there than Caryl Churchill living today?

JG: Eight.

AR: Eight?

JG: Okay, seven.

AR: Harold Pinter had lunatic left-wing politics too.

JG: He wasted the last years of his life writing shitty poetry about George Bush.

AR: When I read this play, I knew it was both pernicious and that there was something really strong and right about it, too. And I'm investigating the hell out of it, artistically. And I think it doesn't lend itself to journalistic drive-bys --

JG: I'm not driving by. Caryl Churchill wrote the drive-by. This is a drive-by shooting of a play. I mean, if she really wants to grapple with the complexity of the situation --

AR: -- Write a full-length play.

JG: -- then grapple with the complexity! There's no story in human history that is as simple as the story she presents.

AR: You may be entirely right. This form may be a kind of bastard form -- in ten minutes to tell the history of a people in the 20th century.

JG: I'll ask again. Why are you doing this?

AR: I'm not endorsing it. This is a critical inquiry. And, unlike you, I'm not saying that I'm not going to deem this play worthy of my attention. I think the play is insightful and problematic enough to be worthy of attention. It wasn't intended to be a signature calling card for us. At Theater J, we investigate plays we don't necessarily endorse.

JG: You use this distancing language. You're "investigating" it, you see its "pernicious qualities," but, in fact, you're giving it oxygen and you're giving it the imprimatur of a Jewish theater company.

AR: What is a book reviewer doing when he reads Jimmy Carter's book? What we would do is we would not only read the play and review it, we'd read it out loud and consider it.

JG: Go back to pernicious.

AR: The pernicious piece here, which is when the play goes off -- and by that, we mean in the colloquial sense -- the character spews his rage. Now I'm saying a character spews his rage. That's interpretive already. I'm not saying that the Jewish people did this. There's one part of the paragraph that would suggest that one person is going off the rails there, where you have other people reacting, perhaps, differently to it. I mean you could say, like Motti Lerner said in "Pangs of the Messiah," a play that we did set on the West Bank --

JG: I saw it, I saw it. I did a discussion on it. Didn't I?

AR: Of course. You did it with the Israeli -- so you know what our project is up to in terms of how we love Israel and we wrestle and struggle with it.

JR: That was in the realm of the defensible. I mean, Motti Lerner's play was something completely different. It was a fully-formed, full-length play, it ventilated some of the issues.

Maybe because he's writing from the inside, it scanned a lot differently to me than this smug playwright with pronounced animus towards Israel writing this drive-by polemic that's meant to demonize the Jewish state.

AR: I've shared this play with a number of Israeli academics and theater people --

JG: Yes, you found other Jews who agree you could put it on.

AR: The play is about an impulse to protect your children. From early on, the play's motivation, the characters' motivation is to protect the children at all costs. No matter what.

JG: The play's motivation is to demonize the Jewish people. Or at least the Israeli branch of the Jewish people. She's basically saying that Israelis are obtuse to the point of criminality, morally obtuse to the point of criminality and that they don't care about the lives of other people.

AR: I don't think that's fair at all. That's not what I think her project is about. Would it be different if Caryl Churchill were working the front lines of Seeds of Peace, and was an agent of dialogue, and that she wrote this play as a kind of cry from the heart, that she was outraged by the disproportionality of what happened in Gaza. Let's forget the fact that she's not letting her plays be performed in Israel --

JG: How could you forget that? She believes that Israel should be cut off from the quote-unquote civilized world --

AR: Caryl Churchill is talking with different directors now in Israel about her plays and is one step away from lifting her boycott. Maybe that's because we're trying to build a bridge between her and --

JG: Who wants to build a bridge to Caryl Churchill? That's --

AR: You don't and I do. I didn't think I did, but I do want to build that bridge with her because I think she is, she writes better than what her politics are. I hated that quote. I read that quote before I read the play and I thought I'm not going to do this play.

JG: Why?

AR: I thought it might be agitprop. But you know what? I defy you to read those first six chapters and say that they're agitprop. Now you might say it's more seductive than that --

JG: I think she's seducing you toward the point where you stage something that insinuates the blood libel.

AR: I may agree with you. I think she's a very, very shrewd dramatist --

JG: I think shrewd is a good word. I think she wrote this to demonize Israel.

AR: There are different ways of demonizing Israel. And you can look at this as a ploy to seduce the audience and to seduce the reader, but she's also trying to emotionally engage and validate the Jewish audience member or the universal audience member --

JG: Who is she to engage me?

AR: She's going to be remembered a lot longer than you or me, that's who she is. She's a writer who has written twenty-eight great plays --

JG: Czar Alexander III is going to be remembered for longer than I'm remembered, but what do I care?

AR: I read this play and I said, "My God, she's been listening really, really closely to how Jews speak." She's not Jewish. She's gone to a shitload of cocktail parties, she's memorized every play that David Hare ever wrote about Israel. You know, her referencing the swimming pools is a reference to David Hare's "Via Dolorosa" when he talks about something fundamentally un-Jewish about Jews in Gaza sitting by their swimming pools and watching a Palestinian walk two kilometers with a jerry can for two liters of water. That's a direct reference to that. Every fucking line there comes from something else she's overheard or watched or said. And who the hell knows if she's ever been to Israel or not. I have no idea. But she is smart. She is a smart writer. And each one of these lines is doing something that is more sophisticated than you're giving her credit. And then --

JG: Oh, I'm not saying that she's not sophisticated. I'm just saying that she's using her skills and her shrewdness in order to paint a picture of Israel's that's a caricature. And she knows that Jews, because of their self-flagellating nature, will just go along with this to an extraordinary degree. I mean if she were brave, she would write about the Qu'ran, about Islamic fundamentalism.

AR: You know, it's pretty easy to go after Islamic fundamentalism.

JG: It is?

AR: I'm hearing it in the Jewish community ad nauseum. Jews get together and bash the Qu'ran, that's what they do.

JG: Who's bashing the Qu'ran? The Qu'ran is a lovely book. It's filled with very interesting passages. I'm just saying that she seems to be engaged in an exercise of cost-free moral vanity. I know she has explored the demons inside British imperial culture. But this just seems to smug and superior. Maybe you'll say, Jeff you're such a tribalist it's ridiculous, but my general position is that I don't need to listen to Europeans lecture Jews on morality. I think they have a lot more repentance to do. Why does Israel exist? Israel exists because Europe persecuted its Jews! I mean, where's her examination of the British fault? Where's her examination of European fault? The Jews are a scapegoat for her.

AR: I wonder whether you're entirely right about the character of Jews today. And whether we are as self-flagellating as you think. If you look at how the Jews --

JG: If David Mamet wrote --

AR: Can I finish? Can I finish? Look at how the Jewish community is organized institutionally here. And look at how we're set up in Israel. Look at how the Jewish institutions are set up in Britain as well. Do you see a lot of self-flagellating going on?

JG: Yes.

AR: You do?

JG: I think so. And by the way, I think self-criticism is ultimately a gift --

AR: I do, too.

JG: One of the reasons the Muslim world is in trouble is that self-criticism is so stifled. But there comes a point when its like, "enough already." But answer this question. If David Mamet were to write "Seven Muslim Children: An Inquiry Into Why Palestinians Allow Their Sons to Become Suicide Bombers," do you think that people would be sitting in Beirut and Amman, staging the play and having dialogue groups about whether the play was fair or not? And I use Mamet very particularly, obviously, because you know where he's coming from.

AR: He's a rough --

JG: He's a Jewish nationalist --

AR: He's the Jeffrey Goldberg of the American theater is what he is.

JG: He's the what?

AR: He's the Jeffrey Goldberg of the American theater is what he is. And you can feel good about that. He's off the rails, but at least he's got a very strong, pugnacious sense of Jewish pride.

JG: My problem with Mamet is that he doesn't allow for complications to come into his understanding of Jewish power.

AR: Right --

JG: Maybe you could just get Caryl Churchill and David Mamet on a stage together with butter knives and see who comes out alive.

AR: Funny. I like the dialogue we're having right now. It's what I hope to have with the audience. I'm not going to stop until I get you to join me --

JG: No, no, no! You're not going to get me to join you.

AR: You're going to have to own that. There you go. So you do not want to debate?

JG: I'm not going to go debate Walt and Mearsheimer either. Why? Because I think they're motivated not by facts, but by hostility.

AR: If somebody writes a play about Walt and Mearsheimer's ideas, I'd absolutely do a reading of it and talk about it.

JG: You're better than that. You're --

AR: If it was written by a halfway decent writer and somebody wrote a play about the so-called pernicious Jewish lobby that's affecting the way they make our decisions. So listen to this. Here's why we're doing it. The fact that, over eight pages, so many of the lines resonate not with the language of hate, but with the language of perception. Meaning she has overheard, she has seen, she has captured the language that Jews speak to each other with and that is astonishing.

JG: It's astonishing that she overheard the ways Jews talk at cocktail parties?

AR: Because that makes her a ten-times better theatrical reporter than anybody I've ever seen. This is play written with extraordinary precision. She wrote a play that arrested my attention. And it has a problem title. I hate the title. It is a problem place where it ends, but it is subject to an incredible amount of interpretation. It's written with multiple characters. People argue with each other. It's not written as a diatribe. And so you have to allow for the art form of theater to have its way with her text. That is what's going to happen, that's what's happening in this rehearsal room. I struggle with the play. God bless me. I'm a struggling Jew. You know?

JG: You can't decontextualize it. I'm sorry. It comes out of a certain moment and it comes out of a culture that has demonized Israel. It comes out of a particular theater subculture in Great Britain that demonizes Israel.

AR: Does this play play differently in Washington, D.C. then it does in London? The answer is absolutely and the context is tremendously important.

JG: So fine, next Tuesday night, put me on stage and I'll read The Protocols of the Elders of Zion

to the audience.

AR: We should read that thing!

JG: Oh come on!

AR: You know who did that thing, Will Eisner, the great graphic novelist, did his last work on The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in comic book form. I'd love to stage that thing.

JG: Let's put it on a show. Put on the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. I'd sooner do that than this.

AR: How on earth do you get up the balls to talk to all these Hamasniks? And you won't even sit with a play you think you know --

JG: I'm not that much of a masochist. You know, if I want a prostate exam, I'll go get a prostate exam.

AR: It's good for you.

JG: Why do I have to sit there and have this argument: "The Jews are demons!" "No they're not!" "The Jews are demons!" "No they're not!"

AR: You actually read the play five times?

JG: You're not crediting me with sincerity here. I don't think it's artistic. I think it's polemical. I think it's agitprop. And because it's polemical and agitprop, I judge it differently. I judge it as a piece of politics, not as a piece of art. And as a piece of politics it's dishonest.

AR: Can I interrupt?

JG: Yeah.

AR: Lots of people disagree with you about the nature of what it is as a work. Forget its politics. The politics, we can all agree, are pro-Palestinian and angry at Israel. Let's agree on that. It's a play for Gaza.

JG: She's trying to close a circle. "Once the Jews were oppressed, now they are the oppressors." That's her story of Jewish people. Oh, what a tragedy. It's easy, it's smug, it's fetid.

AR: Okay, just stop for a second. Let's pretend we're not talking about a play but we're talking about a painting. Let's pretend Picasso. Picasso was going to paint, à la Chagall, the story of Gaza, like in "Guernica" -- he's outraged by the killing of children in Gaza. So let's say Picasso does with simple brush strokes, little artful renderings of who his friends, the Jews, used to be; who they were in the '60s; how they were in the '90s; and what he sees today. And he does them with little strokes, little hints of this. And they just happen to be the strokes of a master artist, as opposed to an idiot. And they end with a horse braying and an electric light bulb going off and bombs falling. And that is his cry from the soul.

JG: Are you saying Caryl Churchill is Picasso?

AR: I'm saying it's Caryl Churchill's "Guernica." Come and debate this. And how did Franco feel about "Guernica?" Who knows? He was angry too. I'm angry. I don't think this is a great work of art, but I think there's a great artist doing something interesting here

JG: I know exactly what she's doing.

AR: I think she was trying to do her "Guernica" in ten minutes here.

JG: Well, she probably should have spent more time and a little bit more thought.

AR: Look, I hate the fact that she conflates the Israeli military behavior with Jewish behavior --

JG: That's not a small thing --

AR: That's not a small thing but then let's wrestle with it.

JG: I think she has a pornographic interest in Jewish immorality.

AR: I like what you're saying, but other people are going to read this and say: "Jeffrey, you're just not giving enough possibility to the fact that it's more complicated than that."

JG: I think she's the enemy of complication in this case.

AR: If she were, she wouldn't have written the play as well as she did.

JG: It's interesting to me that nothing in the last fifty years of Middle East history has prompted her to write like this until now. The Dolphinarium bombing, the slaughter of innocent people on buses across Jerusalem, the birth of a suicide cult in Gaza. That doesn't interest her. And I'm serious when I say this: I think that people like Caryl Churchill have a kind of gross, sometimes pornographic interest in proving Jewish immorality. It makes them feel better. I believe that. It makes them feel less immoral if they can prove that Jews are immoral too -- that the ultimate victims are just like everybody else. Or worse than everybody else!

AR: You do know what a fierce critic she is, as you've pointed out, of British colonialism. Of hypercapitalism. Of Thatcherite politics, of the Thatcherite economy. She has found many, many other righteous causes to be indignant about over the decades. So this is not the case that she's been waiting all her career to finally get one thing off her chest. She's been getting a lot of things off her chest for many years. Now, you and I don't know what her record of writing is and her record of political involvement on issues pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict is.

JG: Well, I've seen what she's said.

AR: We don't know what's in her dramatic writing. She has a long history -- I mean her writing on Ceausescu and the Romanian Revolution in "Mad Forest" is fucking masterful and she did that work by going to Romania --

JG: I never argued that she's not a talented person. What I worry about is that a play like this demonizes and endangers Jews. I'm sorry. Maybe that makes me limited --

AR: I don't worry about the Jews being endangered by this play one bit. I think this play --

JG: You don't think this play has the ability to possibly increase anti-Semitism?

AR: What do you feel about the articles that came out this week about the Israeli army in Gaza?

Does that have the possibility of increasing anti-Zionism, anti-IDF feeling?

JG: Of course! Of course! But that's documentable truth. What Caryl Churchill has done is written a one-sided polemic free of facts. We're talking about two different things. And I've written that Israeli behavior sometimes endangers Jews who have nothing to do with Israel. Anyway, I just don't get it. I understand your impulse -- it's controversial; she's a famous and respected playwright.

AR: It's not as dissimilar as you think to the "Merchant of Venice" issue.

JG: She says that we're "better haters."

AR: Jeffrey, Jeffrey --

JG: That's Shylock, right?

AR: I want your very, very smart blog readers to understand that the way to discuss this play is not to lift lines from the last page and a half of it. That is not how to fully experience and understand the meaning of any drama. I can't cede this to journalists who don't love theater enough to understand what's going on here. That is not a sophisticated way to regard art, by picking out a sentence here and then going apeshit over it!

JG: It's not just a sentence.

AR: She could have said worse.

JG: Oh, that's a great standard to have. She could have said worse.

AR: This is why you don't work in the American theater.

JG: This isn't even the line that insinuates the blood libel.

AR: Okay, this is right at the end. The line is, "Tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? Tell her all I feel is happy it's not her." So let's just say that this is the

fucking problem line in the whole thing. I mean, it's one of many. So we are looking at our different options theatrically in interpreting this. If I saw it as heinous I wouldn't have any actors work on it at all. But one of our actors looked at it and said she didn't see the blood libel at all. She said, "I see it as she's simply saying she is recognizing the blood spilled on a Palestinian child," and her character has been protective of her child from the beginning of this thing. And she's saying, "That child may be covered in blood, but I am at least relieved that you're not. And I recognize that that child is injured, is dead."

JG: Your argument is that Caryl Churchill is very shrewd and understands what each line means. She knows what's she's doing. She wrote this to increase people's hostility toward Israel, and based on the title, to Jews. There's politics here.

AR: Listen, I think part of what you're saying may be right. She could have written any number of solidarity plays with the Palestinians. Instead, she wrote a play to hurt Israel. And to hurt the Jewish cause. Her aim here was to hurt. We in the Jewish community are motivated to do things because we love Israel. Even if we criticize Israel, we criticize because we love. Churchill, a great artist --

JG: Criticizes because she hates.

AR: I didn't say hates. You don't know that she hates, my friend. You do not know that and you shouldn't write it. I'm going to sound like my mother for a second. You shouldn't say that, you don't know that, you know that she's angry. She wrote it to hurt. And to hurt a country that she feels has hurt Hamasniks and innocent Palestinians alike. Because both are mentioned here. The innocents and terrorists are both mentioned here. And because she has the ability to, she is hurting back. And she's hurting in the form of exposing.

JG: I just wish you weren't doing this.

AR: Really?

JG: Yeah, really.

AR: Do you think I'm helping to hurt Israel?

JG: You're the useful Jew. You've made yourself into the useful Jew.

AR: And you in your work, in all the work that you do that is critical of Israel. And when you go and talk to people who are building illegal settlements. Jeffrey, we do the same thing.

JG: No. I try to present it in a complicated way. And you do, too, except for this. I think Caryl Churchill and the political forces behind Caryl Churchill are very, very glad that Ari Roth exists because they can hide behind you. They can say, "Ah, look, how could we be anti-Semites if Jews are putting this on for us?"

AR: I find that to be stuff that makes me want to go to the theater and wrestle with it. And to say, "What's going on here?"

JG: Ari, you don't have to wrestle with everything.

AR: Wrestling is not self-flagellation.

JG: No, but it can slide into self-flagellation. I'm a self-critical Jew. I am. I wrote a book about the morally flawed occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. And self-criticism makes you stronger. This, on the other hand, is a simple polemic designed to lower Israel's stature in the world and designed to lower the stature of Jews.

AR: There's a lot at stake here. There are big intellectual and political questions. And to boycott this and to just turn away and say "We don't hear Caryl Churchill. We don't hear this criticism," that's wrong. You asked why I said yes to this. I said yes to this because it's disarmingly, and maybe even unfortunately, so well-written.

18. The blood libel brought up to date

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/mar/16/bbc-rejects-caryl-churchill-israel?intcmp=239>>

Authors: David Rich y Mark Gardner

Medium: The Guardian

Friday, May 1, 2009

Caryl Churchill's play Seven Jewish Children resonates with antisemitic tropes, amplified further by the Guardian video

The Jewish festival of Passover celebrates the Jewish exodus from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the land of Israel. [...] There is a moment in the seder when the whole family recount the names of the ten plagues visited upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians. As each plague is named, all present dip their finger into red wine – unmistakably reminiscent of blood – and spill a drop onto their plate. The Guardian chose a photograph of this scene to illustrate its [online production of Caryl Churchill's Seven Jewish Children](#). [...]

Seven Jewish Children is not a play about Israel. It was written by Churchill as a "response to the situation in Gaza in January 2009", but it is a play explicitly about Jews. Her response to Gaza is to accuse Jews of having undergone a pathological transformation from victims to oppressors. The play comprises seven brief scenes, of which the first two are generally taken to represent the Holocaust, or perhaps pogroms during an earlier period of antisemitic agitation; in other words, they take place in Europe, before Israel even existed. It is Jewish thought and behaviour that links the play together, not Israel. The words Israel, Israelis, Zionism and Zionist are not mentioned once in the play, while Jews are mentioned in the title and in the text itself. We are often told that when people talk about Israel or Zionists, it is mischievous to accuse them of meaning Jews. Now, we are expected to imagine that a play that talks only of Jews, in fact, means Israelis.

In the first two scenes, it is Jewish "uncles" and "grandmother" who are killed, despite approximately one and a half million Jewish children having perished in the Holocaust. Whereas it is elderly Jews who are killed, the Jews' victims are overwhelmingly depicted as children: there are two mentions of dead adults, namely " Hamas fighters" and "policemen", but seven of dead children: "the boy", "the family of dead girls", "babies" and "their children covered in blood". The play lands its blows in the final two scenes, culminating in a monologue of genocidal racist hatred: "they're animals ... I wouldn't care if we wiped them out ... we're chosen people." [...]

The anti-Zionist conceit that, as long as you are talking about Israel, you can say whatever you want about Jews, is laid bare here. It is not even possible to discuss whether or where this play

crosses a line from criticism of Israel into antisemitism, because the play does not present us with a specific criticism of an Israeli policy or action. The Guardian's illustration of a Jewish family seder table is far more appropriate than a photograph of the Israeli cabinet table would ever have been.

The dishonesty and amorality of the adult voices in *Seven Jewish Children* is striking. Nowhere are right and wrong considered, when deciding how to answer their children's questions. Never does an adult in the play consider whether their suggested answer is true or not, nor whether this should have any bearing on which answer is given. Their only thought is which answers will best shield Jewish children from difficult moral questions. It is as if Jewish children are brought up in a moral vacuum, with Jewish power and vulnerability the only things that matter.

Michael Billington, the Guardian's theatre critic, noted that the play "shows us how Jewish children are bred to believe in the 'otherness' of Palestinians". Howard Jacobson described this as an example of "how easily language can sleepwalk us into bigotry."

Billington's use of the word "bred" should have shaken Guardian readers and editors from their slumber. After all, if used in connection with black or Muslim children, then the racism alarms would sound loud and clear. In fact, wittingly or not, Billington used exactly the right language to describe the message of *Seven Jewish Children*.

[...] There are no distinct characters: any Jew can speak any of the lines, in combination with any of the other lines, without distorting the narrative. This homogenising is bad enough, but the Guardian's production goes a step further. By presenting the play with just a single performer, speaking every Jewish voice in each time and place, the Guardian distils the play into an internal conversation inside the head of every Jew – the increasingly manic neuroses of a screwed-up people.

Howard Jacobson identified this as "a fine piece of fashionable psychobabble that understands Zionism as the collective nervous breakdown of the Jewish people". All the "tell her/don't tell her" answers in the play are really attempts to answer one simple question: what do those Jews learn as children that they behave like this as adults? The end result of this "psychobabble" is to slander Jews as being psychologically compelled to become the new Nazis. Not so much a blood libel perhaps, but certainly a deadly new libel for a new millennium.

In the play's concluding monologue, presumably set during the Gaza conflict, the Jewish speaker declares: "... tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? Tell her

all I feel is happy it's not her." What are we to make of the "all" in that sentence? This nameless Jew, seemingly representing any and every Jew, who cannot escape the pain of the Holocaust and the shame of Gaza, can now feel nothing for the other, dead, non-Jewish child, covered in its own blood.

[...] Churchill almost certainly does not intend it, but her play culminates in powerful antisemitic resonances. The Guardian's online production further amplifies them. People sometimes ask when does anti-Zionism become antisemitism. Here is a rule of thumb: when people describe Israel with the same language and imagery that antisemites use to talk about Jews, the difference between the two disappears.

Dave Rich and Mark Gardner work for Community Security Trust, a charity that monitors antisemitism and provides security for the UK Jewish community

19. Antisemitic alarm bells

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/jun/15/caryl-churchill-seven-jewish-children>>

Author: Antony Lerman

Medium: The Guardian

Monday, May 4, 2009

The outcry over Caryl Churchill's play is rendering the word 'antisemitism' meaningless.

There are already many words on record denouncing Caryl Churchill's play Seven Jewish Children as antisemitic. We can now add to them the official view of the Community Security Trust, the UK Jewish community's defence body, as presented by two of its most senior employees, one of whom, Mark Gardner, the CST's communications director, is the public face of the organisation. And their verdict is damning. Although they grant that "Churchill almost certainly does not intend" the play to be antisemitic, the entire thrust of their article is to argue that it is, in effect, virulently so.

But not everyone agrees, and I would suggest that the reasons Rich and Gardner give for their views are utterly unconvincing.

Before they say anything substantive about the play, they devote the first three paragraphs to insinuating a link with the blood libel, the accusation that Jews use the blood of Christian children in religious rituals, even though there is nothing in the play that remotely resembles this. Towards the end of their article, Rich and Gardner seem to distance themselves from this implication ("not so much a blood libel perhaps, but certainly a deadly new libel for a new millennium"), but the damage is done. You are already primed to understand that the play is antisemitic.

They then make three statements in quick succession designed to bolster the impression of antisemitism. Firstly, the play, meant to be "a response to the situation in Gaza in January 2009", is not about Israel (implying disingenuousness by Churchill); secondly, it is "explicitly" about Jews; and lastly, Churchill accuses "Jews of having undergone a pathological transformation from victims to oppressors."

The first two statements are pure sophistry. The offensive against Gaza was launched in the name of the Israeli state. Israel declares itself to be "the Jewish state" and the offensive was carried out by Jews – not by Arab or Palestinian citizens of Israel. So to try and make a distinction between the Israeli state and Jews is unsustainable. It's therefore perfectly justified for this play to be exclusively about Jews.

But in making the charge that Churchill "accuses", Rich and Gardner reveal a mindset that undermines their entire argument: they simply don't seem to know how to read, see or hear this play. Rich and Gardner fail to see what the author of a piece that attempts to be a work of art is trying to do: from the very beginning, they seem to have made up their minds that it is a piece of political agitprop.

Churchill doesn't accuse. She suggests a psychological link between past trauma and present brutality. Rich and Gardner, quoting Howard Jacobson, regard this as "psychobabble". So, it's fine for Jacobson to use psychological insight to illuminate the motivations of his characters in his novels, but not for Churchill to do the same in her play.

The constant "tell/don't tell" refrain – the central device of the play – lays bare the inability of the adults to explain terrible events to their children. It's a sign of confusion in extreme circumstances. Far from being "dishonest and amoral", these people are only too human. They are grappling with questions of right and wrong, not bringing up their children in a "moral vacuum". My heart went out to them. When one character says about the Hamas fighters, "Tell her they're filth", and about the Gazans, "They're animals living in rubble now", I winced and

understood it to be terribly wrong, but the play also shows an understanding of how they could reach a point where they would condone brutality. To understand is not to excuse. Similarly, to show someone expressing brutal feelings is not to deny them some understanding.

For Rich and Gardner, the play's final scene reveals antisemitism in all of its ugliness, in what they call "the monologue of genocidal racist hatred". Again, this is a complete misreading. In the printed text, these are the only words set out as a continuous paragraph. It's perfectly obvious that this marks a point of personal desperation during the Gaza offensive. The "tell/don't tell" refrain falls away and sustained resentment pours forth. Anyone who has followed the contradictory Jewish reactions to Gaza will recognise the authenticity of different voices in this monologue. The last sentence is profoundly disturbing: "Tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood, and what do I feel? Tell her all I feel is happy it's not her."

But put it in context. Israel berated the world for crying over Palestinian babies and not acknowledging the years of trauma the residents of southern Israel had to endure. Is it therefore inconceivable that an Israeli Jew, believing that the world only cares for the Palestinians, might think to themselves, at a moment of extremism, that all that matters is that their child is safe, that in their heart, at that moment, they have no sympathy for anything else? Rich and Gardner want us to see this as genocidal racism; I believe Churchill wants us to see it as wrong and reprehensible, but also painfully understandable.

It is a distortion to say the play asks one simple question: "What do those Jews learn as children that they behave like this as adults?" The play asks a very complex question: "What has gone wrong with the Jewish journey from genocide in Europe to what Israel is today?" Yes, there are some Jews who will say "nothing". But to pretend that there isn't a very strong and deep vein of disquiet among loyal Israelis, Zionists and sympathetic critics to Israel's current path, who indeed believe that Israeli Jewish children and Jewish children elsewhere are brought up "to believe in the otherness of Palestinians", is just burying your head in the sand.

Nowhere in the text of this play is there any "[Describing of] Israel with the same language or imagery that antisemites use to talk about Jews". But in Rich and Gardner's final word, they state that this is their rule of thumb for when "anti-Zionism becomes antisemitism." So, by their own test, this play is completely devoid of any antisemitism.

By producing the play using a single performer, according to Gardner and Rich, the Guardian is also guilty of "further amplifying" the "powerful antisemitic resonances", because it "distils the play into an internal conversation inside the head of every Jew". But what could be wrong in

that? Only if you agree that that conversation would concern "the increasingly manic neuroses of a screwed up people". This, however, is a distortion of the frame of mind of the characters in the play, who are grappling with difficult questions. And to make this statement – "Jews, children, blood and, for the Guardian at least, the Passover seder: this mixture has a murderous antisemitic past" – is to imply that the first three words perform an antisemitic function in the play, a charge the CST writers fail to prove.

How should we explain why they get this play so wrong? I suggest two reasons.

First, they're trapped in a self-generated atmosphere of extreme defensiveness. They genuinely believe that antisemitism is at such a high level, fuelled largely by anti-Zionism, which they regard as mostly antisemitism, that any critical discourse about Jews sets alarm bells ringing. Second, the continued insistence on unmasking anti-Zionist antisemites leads to fatal confusion about what antisemitism is.

I sympathize with those who watch the exchanges over this play's alleged anti-Semitism with bewilderment. The fight against anti-Semitism gains nothing from trying to turn the play into an anti-Semitic incident. All that's achieved is a further slide down the slippery slope towards rendering the word anti-Semitism meaningless.

20. From victimhood to aggression: Jewish identity in the light of Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children*

URL: <<http://www.gilad.co.uk/writings/from-victimhood-to-aggression-jewish-identity-in-the-light-o.html>>

Author: Gilad Atzmon

Medium: Author's website

May 4, 2009

[...] Caryl Churchill's play *Seven Jewish Children*, <http://royalcourttheatre.com> that was written and performed in the light of the last Israeli military devastating campaign in Gaza, turns the floodlights on the confusion within Jewish identity.

On the face of it, the short play is an historical journey from victimhood into aggression. In just nine minutes we are joining an expedition that departs in the horror of the Shoah. [...]

As much as Churchill's reading of Jewish's recent history as a transformation from innocence into ruthless barbarism is not a revelation, the message is delivered in a rather profound and sensitive manner.

But there is a far deeper layer in Churchill's play that is hardly discussed or addressed. Churchill, like other commentators engaged in issues to do with Jewish identity, is highly observant of the elastic qualities of Jewish identity, history and reality. Jews can be whatever they want to be as long as it serves one cause or another. The Jewish narrative is obviously neither coherent nor consistent.

The Israeli Historian Shlomo Sand elaborated on the phantasmic qualities within the Jewish historical discourse in his recent book 'When And How The Jewish People Was Invented'. Sand manages to demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that the Jewish people never existed as a 'nation-race', they never shared a common origin. Instead they are a colourful mix of groups that at various stages in history adopted the Jewish religion. Similarly, at a certain stage in history they had invented their national identity. As we sadly realize, the phantasmic qualities at the core of Jewish identity politics do not stop Jews from celebrating their aspiration at the expense of the Palestinian people. The reason is simple, as Sand proves in a scholarly way and as Churchill conveys theatrically, Jewish identity is a very flexible realm.

The Jewish narrative is the art of making a story. It has no commitment to facts or truth. Accordingly, you make sure that you "don't tell her they were killed", so she can keep up the cosmopolitan dream. Or maybe, you better "tell her they were killed", so she can rush back to the Ghetto and stay with us. Alternatively she may learn the 'necessary' lesson and join the IDF so she can spread death amongst the enemies of Israel. Anyhow, make sure you "don't frighten her", as if she isn't frightened enough already.

The Jewish identity is a form of tactical detachment. It is a methodical strategy that creates an imaginary symbolic order with a clear pragmatic agenda. "*Tell her for miles and miles all round*

they (the Arabs) have lands of their own." Misleading her to think that Palestinians and Arabs are literally the same thing.

"Tell her again this is our promised land." As if the Jews are people, as if their origin is in Zion, as if the biblical promise has any legal validity, as if they actually believe in the Torah. [...]

Churchill seems to be very observant tracing the disastrous toll Jewish identity politics achieved in turning the Jewish state into a cold blooded murderer.

And yet, one may wonder, who is that young innocent girl whom Caryl Churchill referring to. Who is the protagonist at the receiving end of the text, who is the hidden 'her' that is referred to in each line of this interesting play? [...]

I allow myself to guess that Churchill's little girl refers metaphorically to the 'people of Israel'. The newly born Jewish nation is indeed a very young concept that is submerged with righteousness and innocence. The little girl at the receiving end of the play is there to convey an image of naivety and blamelessness. But it is also that little girl's metaphorical innocence that makes Israel's crimes so sinister. In the light of the Israeli propaganda that presents the Jewish state as a vulnerable innocent blameless entity, the devastating reality of Israeli brutality leads towards the inevitable cognitive dissonance.

The reality of the racist ethnic cleansing 'Jews only state' together with the images of the Israeli war machine pouring tons of white phosphorous on Gazans does not leave much room for doubt. Israel has nothing to do with the phantasmic self-image of a 'little blameless girl'. If anything, the image of the naïve girl makes things worse for the Israeli Hasbara project. We are dealing here with a horribly naughty child who was despised first then 'she' turned into a bully and soon after proved to be ruthless, sadistic and monstrous with no comparison.

Seemingly we are dealing here with a uniquely and seriously disturbed immature nation. We are dealing with a self-loving narcissistic child who is terrorized by 'her' own cruelty. It is the sadistic youngster who is horrified by the demons 'she' finds in herself. The more the Israelis love themselves and their delusional phantasmic innocence, the more they are frightened that people out there may be as sadistic as they themselves proved to be. This behavioral mode is called projection.

*"Tell her we love her.
Don't frighten her."*

So ends Churchill's play. Seemingly, Jews have a very good reason to be frightened. Their national state is a racist genocidal entity.

After the Shoah, Jews had an opportunity to transform their fate, to turn a new page. They could even explore collectively the notion of forgiveness and mercy. A few Jewish intellectuals insisted that Jews must locate themselves at the forefront of the battle against racism and oppression. As it happened, it took just six decades for the Jewish national state to establish its primacy as the ultimate racist nation state that employs the ultimate sadistic ruthless oppressive tactics. "Don't frighten her," says Churchill. If to be honest, the young girl must be frightened for a very good reason. If she ever would be courageous enough to look in the mirror, she would be gravely devastated.

21. Caryl Churchill Correspondence with Ari Roth

URL: < <http://theaterjblogs.wordpress.com/2009/03/24/caryl-churchill-speaks-part-1/> >

Author: Ari Roth

Medium: The Theatre J Blog

May 24, 2009

Caryl Churchill has answered in a very thoughtful and considered way some of the questions I posed to her this weekend. She's allowed me to share that correspondence with our audience in the theater this week and on the blog. Here's a part of our correspondence; there will be more on Wednesday and Thursday,, nights at Theater J (at 8 and 10 pm, respectively).

—Original Message—

From: Caryl Churchill

To: Ari Roth

Sent: Tue, 24 Mar 2009 8:22 am

Subject: RE: 7JC

Dear Ari

First, thank you for the warm things you say about the play...

There's so much that could be said that it's hard to know how to put it concisely. And I would always rather a play could just be seen without any comment from the writer. But there are things you raise that I'd like to try and answer. I'll start with your two specific questions.

You say some people ask why the play is called *Seven Jewish* rather than *Seven Israeli Children*. I think that is a question that comes from people who have heard about the play but not read it or seen it, as it is clear from the text that most of the children are not Israeli. The first scene is set at some time of persecution, which could be nineteenth century Russia (as I think I was inclining towards when I wrote it) or (as we chose at the Royal Court) in thirties Germany. The second scene is some time after the Holocaust in England (or indeed America.) The third scene, a few years later, has people from England (or America) deciding to go to Israel. In the fourth scene a (different) family has just arrived in Israel. So in none of those scenes is the child who is spoken of an Israeli. In the RC production the child in scene 6 wasn't Israeli either as we imagined she was coming from England to visit relatives in Israel, which is why so many things would have to be explained to her, but of course she could be an Israeli child. So it is called *Seven Jewish Children*, because that is what they all have in common. I find it astonishing that anyone would think, as you suggest, that it means that all Jewish people are being blamed for what happened in Gaza. I don't think it is wrong to suggest that all (most?) Jewish people take an interest in what happened in Gaza and might well have to explain it to their children, as well as the other history that is touched on in the play.

Your second question. You ask whether the play inevitably foments a rage in the audience against the characters on stage. I think it's hard for the writer to answer that question, it is really one for the audience. I'd have thought the answer was no. If it makes people feel angry about what happened in Gaza, I think that is a good reaction. It is hard to think about what happened without anger and grief. It may make the audience angry with the character who has the long speech, though I think even that is a more complicated feeling because of seeing how it bursts out as a reaction against all the attempts to soften what is going on and present it acceptably to the child. Even if it does make people feel angry with the character in that scene, I don't think that is a bad thing. It doesn't make the anger extend to all the characters in the play right back to the early scenes. When I wrote the scene I wanted it in some small way to reflect the shock and

enormity of what happened in Gaza. I think it does that relatively mildly. And the recent reports of course, the soldiers' statements, the t-shirts, confirm what seemed to be happening at the time, and make the speech seem inadequately mild in comparison. You ask if that scene shows "a legacy of historical trauma". Yes, I would say that the play overall puts it in a context of people who are aggressive because they not surprisingly feel defensive. (It's perhaps relevant that I was told of one audience member who said she came to the theatre feeling angry with Israel but left feeling more understanding towards it.)

This leads me to your saying that the play faces charges that it shows "a terrible historical irony, that Jews once under siege are now laying siege." I'm not sure why that is a charge. It seems a fact.

You refer to my being quoted in the Guardian as saying that "Israel has done lots of terrible things in the past but what happened in Gaza seems particularly extreme." I stand by that, though to explain why in detail would get us into a whole discussion of Israeli history. There are of course things I admire about Israel, but... the refusal to comply with UN resolutions to withdraw from the occupied territories, the compliance in the massacre in Shabra and Shatilla, the treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories ... the checkpoints, the bulldozings, the wall, and with Gaza the killing of a thousand people during the truce... the siege... Someone who writes about all this well, I think, is Avi Shlaim, who is Israeli and a professor at Oxford. (You can find an article he wrote for the Guardian at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/07/gaza-israel-palestine> or simply google avi shlaim + guardian + gaza .) But I'm sure you know all this, better than I do, and of course supporters of Israel will justify these things. **I am not going to pretend that I am not critical of Israel, or that the play was not written out of anger about Gaza. But it was also written out of a more complicated anguish about the whole history, which I know is shared by many Jewish people outside Israel as well as many Israelis.**

It's hard not to see the more extreme reactions against the play as an attempt to distract attention from criticism of Israel with smears of antisemitism, which then become the topic. But I know that some people who are upset by it don't have that agenda, but are really so closely identified with all the good things Israel can mean that they cannot bear to think ill of it, and who identify their own Jewishness so closely with Israel that any attacks on it seem to be an attack on all Jews. I can only say that that is not at all my

intention, and to urge your audience to look instead at Gaza, and to share your hope of peace and reconciliation through talking about these things, and through being able to disagree with each other with understanding.

Do please share as much of this as you want with your audience.

If the BBC's refusal to broadcast the play comes up, it's important to be clear that they said it was because the BBC's guidelines say they must be "impartial over all services and outputs" and that it would be hard to find a play putting the opposite point of view, i.e. a political objection, not because they considered it anti-Semitic. There's been some outcry about this, of course, as they don't usually try to bring this subject of balance into drama, and certainly not in relation to individual plays balancing each other, which could be ludicrous – the Writers Guild here have issued a press release about it. It seems to connect with the BBC's refusal to broadcast the charities appeal for Gaza. It's a whole other issue, but I don't like to think people are trying to use the BBC to bolster their accusations of antisemitism.

[Note that more from our exchange will be shared on Wednesday and Thursday,, nights at the theater].

>>

I hope all this goes some way, Ari, to answering your questions and letting you know where I stand. As I said, it's hard to do concisely and accurately. Please give my best wishes to your audience and of course to all those taking part in the readings. I'm looking forward to hearing how it goes.

Caryl

—Original Message—

From: Ari Roth

To: caryl@....co.uk

Sent: Tue, 24 Mar 2009 9:47 am

Subject: Re: 7JC

Dear Caryl,

I'm terrifically moved by your taking the time to write to me. Only days ago I was "afraid" to

enter into correspondence as I feared that my own questions and public wrestling with your play would seem somehow professionally impertinent. It's not how we like to make our introductions to distinguished theater colleagues, by immediately questioning choices made in a ten minute piece of writing. Better to try to approach any writer of merit with an attempt first to understand and honor their enterprise before getting down to the nitty-gritty wrestling with structure and meaning. But you have heard me and absorbed the questions I've posed and you've replied openly and with great care. I'm pleased that you'll allow me to share your important thoughts with others.

As a playwright, you've also given our actors important insights into better understanding the play and I think it will lead to an even more fully realized presentation later this week. I value the fact that you've taken so long to consider questions that have been posed about the play and I value all the balance that's in your prose—and, yes, in the play as well—as you consider the twin legacies of Jewish history in Europe in the 20th Century and the trajectory of Zionism since the founding of the State of Israel. Your letter, I believe, will put the focus of conversation back on the rightful topic—as we take stock of a people and a state long under siege executing Operation Lead Cast (as it was called) in Gaza and all the fall-out from that campaign that's been openly discussed in Israel, in courts in Geneva, and in newspapers around the world.

Finally, for this round of dialogue, may I end with this wish: That the good transmission of ideas and thoughts and, yes, questions, that marks your exchanges with Jewish artists in America, London and Israel, inspire you to allow your work to be once again performed in Israel by people who know how important it is to share your plays with the Israeli public. You're in very good hands with a director like Sinai Peter who is using art to transform consciousness. Your work, your voice, your dialogue is needed in Israel in order to effectuate change from within.

Oh, and one more request: Shimon Levy, the dean of Israeli Theater scholars and critics, was so moved by your piece that he, all in the same day, translated it into (a beautiful) Hebrew, with some deep resonance in referencing the language of Zionist idealism that's already touched upon in your play. May I invite an actress who reads Hebrew to read the opening scene (chapter 1) as either a symbolic prologue — or epilogue — to your play? I only want to include this if you approve.

All best,

ari

>>

22. Theatre and politics

URL: <<http://www.socialistreview.org.uk/article.php?articlenumber=10843>>

Author: Paul O'Brien

Medium: Socialist Review

May 2009

Paul O'Brien looks at the recent controversies over England People Very Nice and Seven Jewish Children

Twenty years on from the death threats to Salman Rushdie and the public burning of his book *The Satanic Verses*, there has been a succession of literary and cultural events that highlight the often fraught relationship between culture and politics. The recent furor over Richard Bean's play *England People Very Nice* and Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children* is a case in point.

Written in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Gaza, *Seven Jewish Children* asks a simple question: what should Jewish parents tell their children about their history? But the answers Churchill provides are far from simple; rather they are complex and contradictory. In this ten-minute play Churchill outlines the rise of anti-Semitism, the pogroms and the Holocaust, and charts the trajectory of Zionism since the foundation of the Israeli state. In both Britain and the US the play has engendered fierce reactions. Churchill has been accused of "an open vilification of the Jewish people" and perpetrating a "blood libel" where Jews revel in the sacrifice and death of others. [...]

Both of these plays raise questions about how we engage politically with literature and art. What is the balance between an aesthetic response to a work of art and a political one? We are against censorship. However, literature or art does not have to be balanced or fair. It can't be. Any great work exists because its creator had a particular vision of the world and felt compelled to express that vision. How political that vision should be is not fixed; it is a historical question.

There are times when art and literature are forced to ask political questions. The rise of fascism in the 1930s demanded an intellectual response. George Orwell spoke for that generation in his

essay "Why I Write": "It is invariably where I lacked a political purpose that I wrote lifeless books and was betrayed into purple passages, sentences without meaning." In the 1960s no anti-war demonstration was complete without one of the standing army of poets declaiming from the platform. Today the war in the Middle East, the economic crisis, unemployment and the collapse of the old certainties have elicited a comparable artistic response. At such times there is a fluidity between art and politics that responds to the changes in how we experience the world.

In the past, crude left wing critiques often started with an analysis that defined a work on the basis of its political message. The difficulty with this approach means that we are unable to engage with great writers such as TS Eliot, CS Lewis and Ezra Pound, who were politically on the right. Art and literature have to be judged on their own terms - as works of art. We must start by understanding the artistic value of any piece of writing or art before getting down to the nitty gritty of wrestling with structure and meaning. [...]

The Irish writer WB Yeats believed that theatre should be a forum for debate. The Jewish theatre group Theatre J, in Washington, who produced *Seven Jewish Children* knowing it was controversial, is dedicated to taking its dialogues beyond the stage. It offers an array of innovative public discussion forums which explore the theatrical and social elements of its work. It initiated a debate and opened up its website to different points of view regarding *Seven Jewish Children*, which included a contribution from Caryl Churchill.

23. Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children* staged in Tel

Aviv

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2009/jun/12/caryl-churchill-seven-jewish-children-tel-aviv>>

Author: Rachel Shabi

Medium: *The Guardian*

Friday, June 12, 2009

Controversial Gaza play, unveiled earlier this year at the Royal Court and filmed by the Guardian, is performed in Hebrew at Rabin Square.

Daisy Lewis in the Royal Court production of Seven Jewish Children in February. Photograph: Tristram Kenton

Seven Jewish Children, the controversial play written in response to Israel's assault on the Gaza Strip, was performed for the first time in the Jewish state last night, with a couple of hundred people gathering to watch the Hebrew-language production in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square. [...]

Some Jewish leaders accused the Royal Court of violating a theatrical rule: that plays critical of, and entirely populated by, characters from one community are only defensible if written by a member of that community. Others championed the play as an empathetic and nuanced work.[...]

The Israeli production was staged as part of a wider campaign organised by a coalition of leftwing groups against the two-year blockade of the Gaza Strip.

"I love the way [Churchill] wrote it," said one of the cast, Sarah von Schwartz. "You can see she understands how Israelis came to be in this situation."

The new production was directed by Samieh Jabbarin, an Arab-Israeli theatre artist based in Jaffa. Jabbarin is currently under indefinite house arrest after being apprehended in protests against the far right at the Arab-Israeli town of Umm al-Fahm in February; he directed proceedings via phone and Skype.

"Churchill has achieved a beautiful artistic communication of a fundamental yet subversive truth: profound pain has no home," he said. "Pain is pain is pain. Pain is universally human."

The performance in Rabin Square featured a terror-stricken woman constantly rearranging a row of sacks around her baby's pram, in increasingly restrictive barricade formations. Around her, three actors debate, argue and advise on what to tell the child about the Holocaust, Israel, Palestinians and the war in Gaza.

"Political plays can be really superficial, but this one was serious and very significant," said Danielle Shworts, 27, from Tel Aviv. Another audience member from the city, George Borestein, 58, agreed. "I am really shocked," he said. "It was a fascinating performance and, to my great sorrow, there is a lot of truth to this play."

For many of last night's audience, the production was their first chance to engage with the play's content and to consider its meaning. "I really connected to the human message," said Esther

Grabiner, a lecturer who lives near Jerusalem. "I got a lump in my throat watching – because it shows the absurdity of the situation, for both sides.

24. Open door

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2009/jun/15/caryl-churchill-seven-jewish-children>>

Author: Siobhain Butterworth

Medium: The Guardian

Monday, June 15, 2009

The Readers' editor on ... the Guardian's production of Seven Jewish Children: an act of journalism or art?

The Guardian made its first foray into filming drama two months ago with a video production of Caryl Churchill's controversial work Seven Jewish Children. The eight-minute play, read by Jennie Stoller, was posted on the website on 25 April and **has been downloaded more than 20,000 times since**.

A reader who was "sickened" by it asked me to review the Guardian's decision to produce the video. **"If I am right about the nature of the play, then it is difficult to see how staging and publishing a production of it is consistent with the Guardian's core values,"** he said.

By the time the Guardian staged its own production there was already a fierce debate going on about Churchill's work; blog posts about it on the Guardian's Comment is free (Cif) website had attracted hundreds of comments from readers. "It is one thing to publish diverging views on a controversial play. It is quite another for a newspaper to make its own production," said the complainant. "It seems to me that the Guardian, as a newspaper, has to face up to the question, 'Is this play anti-Semitic?'" He added: "I am in no doubt that the correct answer to that question is 'yes'."

Churchill wrote Seven Jewish Children in January as a response to the conflict in Gaza. Anyone can perform it - the only condition Churchill imposes is that there is no admission charge and that a collection should be made for Medical Aid for Palestinians (declaration: I made a donation

to this charity in January). The play uses the device of family members discussing what to tell children (sentences begin "Tell her"/"Don't tell her") to explore perspectives on the history of Israel and the conflict with Palestinians. Because the dialogue is not assigned to individual speakers the text works as a reading by one person or as a conversation between characters in different time periods.

Several critics have concluded that the text contains anti-Semitic tropes. Dialogue from the final scene is often quoted: "Tell her we're chosen people, tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? Tell her all I feel is happy it's not her." Writing in the Spectator, Melanie Phillips accused the Royal Court of "staging a 10-minute blood-libel".

In the Independent, Howard Jacobson wrote: "Caryl Churchill will argue that her play is about Israelis not Jews. But once you venture on to 'chosen people' territory - feeding all the ancient prejudice against that miscomprehended phrase - once you repeat in another form the medieval blood-libel of Jews rejoicing in the murder of little children, you have crossed over."

In a Cif blogpost, following the Guardian's video production, Dave Rich and Mark Gardner joined critics who have deconstructed the play and characterised it as anti-Semitic. It is not for me to challenge this analysis and I accept that it is one possible interpretation. What I don't accept is the complainant's suggestion that it is the only possible reading. Jacobson, in a Cif response to Jacqueline Rose, attempted to head off at the pass the idea that, as a literary work, the text is open to different interpretations by asserting that the play is propaganda, not art, but ultimately this is simply another point of view not shared by all.

There are other readings of the play: Michael Billington in his Guardian [review](#) called it "a heartfelt lamentation". And in another [Cif piece](#), in response to Rich and Gardner, Antony Lerman wrote: "These people are only too human. They are grappling with questions of right and wrong, not bringing up their children in a 'moral vacuum'. My heart went out to them."

The Guardian's head of multimedia, Tom Happold, explained his motivation for producing the video: "We put it on because it was part of the debate about Gaza and it was a significant work of art by a significant artist," he said. "It was an innovative thing for the multimedia department to do. We want to be as broad in our remit as G2, Weekend, or Saturday Review."

25. El porqué de nuestra elección

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/03/antisemitism-hatred-wont-go-away>>

Author: Isabel Díaz

Medium: Blog de La Factoría

May 22, 2010

La Universidad es un espacio de conocimiento, de investigación e innovación que permanece atenta y se involucra en su entorno social. Tomando esta realidad como punto de partida, los montajes que pone en escena el Aula de Teatro se ajustan a esa amplitud de miras que, desde el presente, recorre paso a paso un camino en permanente construcción.

Ese es el motivo de estrenar dos magníficas obras de una excelente dramaturga europea con una sólida formación teatral puesta al servicio de la sociedad. El teatro de Caryl Churchill es transgresor, comprometido y de una lúcida inteligencia que no puede quedar en los márgenes de nuestra inquietud intelectual y de nuestra superación emocional.

(The play's director, about University of Almería's production, in May, 2010).

26. Antisemitism: the hatred that refuses to go away

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/03/antisemitism-hatred-wont-go-away>>

Author: Jonathan Freedland

Medium: The Guardian

Thursday, March 3, 2011

[...] What most Jews object to is not, in fact, criticism of Israel itself, but when that criticism comes wrapped in the language or imagery of Jew-hatred. In *Trials of the Diaspora*, his forensic study of English antisemitism, the critic and lawyer Anthony Julius provides example after

example. He cites Tom Paulin's polemical poem *Killed in Crossfire*, published in the *Observer* at the height of the second intifada, or Caryl Churchill's 2009 play *Seven Jewish Children*, suggesting they are the latest in a long line of English literary works that tap into the "blood libel" – the medieval accusation that Jews hanker after the blood of gentile children, a defamation that led to massacres of Jews in England and far beyond.

27. Theatre of war

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2011/mar/04/antisemitism-feeding-homeless-cctv-hamlet>>

Author: Caryl Churchill

Medium: The Guardian – "Letters"

Friday, March 4, 2011

Jonathan Freedland (G2, March 3) denies that criticism of Israel is often wrongly called antisemitism. His point isn't helped by quoting Anthony Julius's allegation that my play *Seven Jewish Children* "tap[s] into the 'blood libel'". The line he is referring to is "tell her there's dead babies, did she see babies?" It refers to babies killed in the attack on Gaza in 2009 and shown on TV. When people hear of babies killed in a war, they don't usually think of medieval accusations of Jews consuming Christian children's blood, but of babies killed in a war. If readers want to judge the play for themselves it is on the Guardian website and the text can be obtained on the internet and performed without charge to raise money for Medical Aid for Palestinians.

Caryl Churchill

London

28. Antisemitism debate

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2011/mar/07/antisemitism-debate-caryl-churchill-anthony-julius>>

Author: Anthony Julius

Medium: *The Guardian* – “Letters”

Monday, March 7, 2011

In *Trials of the Diaspora*, I argue that Caryl Churchill's play *Seven Jewish Children* is anti-Semitic. Churchill (Letters, 4 March) denies this characterisation, writing that I rely on the line "tell her there's dead babies, did she see babies?".

I had in mind the following lines, among others. "Tell her we killed the babies by mistake / Don't tell her anything about the army." "Tell her I look at one of their children covered in blood and what do I feel? Tell her all I feel is happy it's not her." "Tell her I wouldn't care if we wiped them out." "Tell her I don't care if the world hates us, tell her we're better haters, tell her we're chosen people."

In this play, Jews confess to lying to their own children and killing Palestinian children. They also confess to something close to a project of genocide. And they freely acknowledge the source of their misanthropy to be Judaism itself.

None of this seems to bother Churchill – nor, indeed, the *Guardian*. As she correctly notes, the play is available on your website.

Anthony Julius

London

29. Proportionate play

URL: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian/2011/mar/08/get-carter-accents-maypoles-spinal-tap>>

Author: Caryl Churchill

Medium: *The Guardian* – “Letters”

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Antony Julius ([Letters](#), March 7) quotes more lines from my play *Seven Jewish Children* to bolster his claim that it is anti-Semitic. What he doesn't seem to realise is that these lines are not spoken as he suggests by "Jews" in general but by individual Israelis, desperate to protect their own child, during an attack of disproportionate violence on Gaza. I don't think the play is a disproportionate response to that attack. It should be possible to pillory the defensive self-righteousness and racism of some – not all – Israelis without being called anti-Semitic.

Caryl Churchill

London

Appendix C: Stage Productions of *Seven Jewish Children* in Eight Countries

1. Royal Court Theatre – London, UK

Company: Royal Court Theatre

Date: February 6-21, 2009

Place: Jerwood Theatre, at Royal Court Theatre

Format: Stage performance – World premiere

Directed by: Dominic Cooke

Produced by: Royal Court Theatre

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: English

Actors: 9

Cast: Ben Caplan, Jack Chissick, David Horovitch, Daisy Lewis, Ruth Posner, Samuel Roukin, Jennie Stoller, Susannah Wise, Alexis Zegerman

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 10:00

URL: <http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/seven-jewish-children-a-play-for-gaza>

2. The Guardian – London, UK

Company or production: The Guardian, London, U.K.

Date: N/A

Place: Online streaming

Format: Short film

Directed by: N/A

Produced by: Elliot Smith

Language: English

Actors: Stand-alone

Cast: Jeannie Stoller

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 9:25

URL: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/video/2009/apr/25/seven-jewish-children-caryl-churchill>

3. Rooms Production – Chicago, USA

Production: Official Rooms Production

Date: March 12-14-15, 2009

Place: Rooms Gallery, Chicago, Illinois

Format: Loop installation - Filmed performance

Directed by: Andrew Manley

Produced by: Rooms Productions

Filmed or recorded by: Todd Frugia (March 14, 2009)

Language: English

Actors: 12

Cast: Ryan Puckett, Jenni Cheers, Adam Todd, Jessica Manley, Cassie Holland, Cody Crawford, Alex Domeyko, Danielle Puterbaugh, Rebecca Pyles, Marrakesh, Heather Durham, Vince McClelland,

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 15:05

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wBl1ONa8CE&feature=related> and
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gV3iAskzQkg&feature=related>

4. Beyond the Pale Radio Show – New York, USA

Production: Beyond the Pale

Date: March 22, 2009

Place: WBAI 99.5 Radio studio

Format: Radio streaming

Directed by: N/A

Produced by: Artists Against Apartheid (not confirmed)

Recorded by: Beyond the Pale

Language: English

Actors: 5

Cast: Kathleen Chalfant, Brian Jones, Daren Kelly, Una Aya Osato and Brian Pickett.

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 6.45

URL: <http://beyondthepale.org/segment/2009/03/22/seven-jewish-children-play-gaza>

5. New York Theater Workshop – New York, USA

Company: New York Theater Workshop

Date: March 25-27, 2009

Place: New York Theater Workshop, New York, USA.

Format: Theatre reading with open discussion

Directed by: Sam Gold

Produced by: NYTW

Filmed or recorded by: --

Language: English

Actors: 7 actors

Cast: Robin Baitz, George Bartineff, Aya Cash, Michael Cristofer, Laura Esterman, Ebon Moss-Bachrach, Lola Pashalinski

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: N/A

URL: http://www.nytw.org/churchill_reading.asp

6. Cambiare Productions – Austin, USA

Company: Cambiare Productions

Date: March 27, 2009.

Place: Dougherty Arts Center, Austin, Texas, USA

Format: Filmed theatre reading

Directed by: Travis Bedard

Produced by: Will Hollis Snider

Language: English

Actors: 7 actors

Cast: Robert Matney, Heather Barfield Cole, Paula Gilbert, Jenny Underwood, Robert Deike, Norman Blumensaadt, and Ev Lunning, Jr

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 19:43

URL: <http://www.cambiareproductions.com/live.html>

7. Theaters Against War – New York, USA

Company: Theaters Against War

Date: March 2009

Place: Brecht Forum, New York, USA

Format: Theatre reading

Directed by: N/A

Produced by: THAW

Filmed or recorded by: --

Language: English

Actors: 6 actors

Cast: Kathleen Chalfant, Brian Jones, Daren Kelly, Ellen McLaughlin, Una Aya Osato & Brian Pickett.

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: N/A

URL: <http://www.thawaction.org/>

8. Drama Department – Aristotle University - Thessaloniki, Greece

Production: Drama Department, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece

Date: March 2009

Format: Soundtrack and slides

Place: Neos Kosmos Theatre, Athens, Greece

Directed by: T. Chalkias

Composer: Kostas Vomvolos

Cast: G.Gennatas,I.Gennata,I.Kanellopoulou,E.Kounadi,A.Peleanos,V.Tsakiri,T.Chalkias

Version: Greek translation (No information about translator.)

Time: 3:39

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pj_s_CdFOg0>

9. Street Demonstration at Washington, USA

Company or production: Brian Hennessey

Date: May 4, 2009

Place: Washington Convention Center, Washington, USA

Format: Rally and street reading rehearsal in front of the delegates to the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee.

Directed by: Brian Hennessey

Produced by: N/A

Filmed or recorded by: William Hughes, pro bono

Language: English

Actors: 12

Cast: N/A

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 9:09

URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_mKkf5vnos&feature=related

10. Grit-TV - New York, USA

Company or production: Free Speech TV

Date: May 11, 2009

Place: Estudios de GritTV

Format: TV

Directed by: Grid TV Studios

Produced by: N/A

Filmed or recorded by: Grit TV

Language: English

Actors: 6

Cast: Kathleen Chalfant and others (Brian Jones, Daren Kelly, Ellen McLaughlin, Una Aya Osato & Brian Pickett)

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 8:47

URL: <http://www.mefedia.com/watch/22010013>

11. Coalition of Women for Peace – Tel Aviv, Israel

Company: N/A

Date: June 11, 2009

Place: Rabin Square, Tel Aviv, Israel

Format: Filmed street performance.

Directed by: Samieh Jabbarin (via Skype and MSN, director under house arrest)

Produced by: Coalition of Women for Peace - Codepink

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: Hebrew

Actors: 4

Cast: Sara Von Schwarze, Gabi Aldor, Layla Batterman, Ramie Hoyberger

Version: Hebrew translation by Uri Shani and Shimon Levy

Time: 11.00

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48TunnObj4&NR=1>

12. Warwick Student Drama – Warwick, UK

Company: Warwick Student Drama Production

Date: June 2009

Place: Warwick Student Arts Festival

Format: Filmed performance

Directed by: Caitlin Mcleod and Cora Verkerk

Produced by: N/A

Filmed by: Tegid Cartwright

Language: English

Actors: 7 actors

Cast: Lydia Rynne, Clem Garity, Nikki Marland, Tanya Wells, Bertrand Lesca, Charly Ash, Charlene Barton

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 10.15

URL: <http://www.caitlinfrenchmcleod.com/SevenJewishChildren.html> /

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JFpMH963sk>

13. Another Jewish Voice Production – New Mexico, USA

Company: Another Jewish Voice

Date: July 12, 2009

Place: El Museo de Cultural, Santa Fe, New México, USA
Format: Filmed theatre reading
Directed by: Maura Dhu Studi
Produced by: AJV
Filmed or recorded by: AJV
Language: English
Actors: 10 actors
Cast: N/A
Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill
Time: 11.41
URL: <http://anotherjewishvoice-santafe.blogspot.com/search?q=seven+jewish+children>

14. Slack Space Festival – Colchester, UK

Production: Slack Space Monthly Festival
Date: August 2009
Format: Filmed staging
Place: Colchester, UK
Directed by: Charlotte Bayford
Produced by: Slack Space Festival Community
Actors: 7
Cast: N/A
Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill
Time: 12.45
URL: <http://vimeo.com/6425889>

15. Shades Repertory – New York, USA

Production: Shades Repertory Theater
Date: September 2009
Format: Filmed staging
Place: Haverstraw Youth Theatre, New York, USA
Directed by: Samuel Harps
Produced by: Shades Repertory
Actors: 5
Cast: N/A
Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill
Time: 10:29
URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGeHIn_oGH0

16. Maine Video Activist Network - Maine, USA

Production: Maine Video Activist Network

Date: December 31, 2009

Format: Filmed street end-of-year performance against war

Place: Castonguay Square, Waterville, Maine

Directed by: N/A

Produced by: CodePink – Lisa Savage

Actors: 7

Cast: Lee Sharkey, Kala Ladenheim, Lisa Savage, Henry Braun, Lynn Hargrave, Mark Roman, Abbey Shahn.

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: 8:07

URL: <http://blip.tv/file/3134070>

17. Theatre J - New York, USA

Company or production: Jewish Community Center

Date: March, 2010

Place: Theater J and Forum Theater

Format: Theatre reading and open discussion

Directed by: Ari Roth

Produced by: Theater J

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: English

Actors: N/A

Cast: N/A

Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill

Time: N/A

URL: N/A

18. Universidad Complutense de Madrid – Madrid, Spain

Company: Todos Somos Palestina

Date: March 4, 2010

Place: Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología

Format: Dressed rehearsal for public

Directed by: Indalecio Corugedo

Produced by: Todos Somos Palestina

Filmed or recorded by: Fotogracción

Language: Spanish

Actors: 6 actors

Cast: Ana Hernández, Constanza Hernanz, Ángel Pardo, Fernando Ramallo, Alejandro Rull, Eduardo Villamil

Version: *Siete niñas judías*. Spanish translation by César Roa.
Time: 90:00 including speeches, presentation and discussion.
URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48gGX1sdmx4>

19. Lebanese American University – Beirut, Lebanon

Company: Students Centre – Department of Arts and Communication
Date: April 8 -11, 2010
Place: Gulbenkian Theater – Beirut Campus
Format: Filmed performance with live music
Directed by: Fuad Haluani
Produced by: Department of Arts and Communication
Filmed or recorded by: The Institute for Media Training and Research
Language: English
Actors: 2
Cast: Assil Ayyash, Hussein Nakhal / Musicians: Imad Hachicho, Kevorg Manougian, Aram Papazian, Clara Christensen
Version: Mona Knio, based on the original text by Caryl Churchill
Time: 22:01
URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neQyAZPFrmg>
<http://www.youtube.com/user/fuadhalwani#p/a/u/1/jT5ffWlj758>,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT5ffWlj758>

20. Artworks Community Theater – Waiheke, New Zealand

Company: ACT
Date: April 13, 2010
Place: Artworks Community Theater, Waiheke Island, New Zealand
Format: Filmed performance and open discussion
Directed by: Carol Weitzel
Produced by: Artworks Community Theater
Filmed or recorded by: Scott Ewing
Language: English
Actors: 5
Cast: Liz Eastmond, Anna Mayne, Denis Powell, Denny Reid, Carol Weitzel
Version: Original text by Caryl Churchill
Time: 18:40
URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wBl1ONa8CE&feature=related>

21. El Infierno de los Vivos – Buenos Aires, Argentina

Company: Teatro Faro

Date: April 17, 2010

Place: Espacio Cultural Nuestros Hijos – Ex Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada

Format: Filmed performance

Directed by: Marcos Arano y Sergio Amigo

Produced by: “El infierno de los vivos”

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: Spanish for Argentina

Actors: 8 actors

Cast: Marcos Arano, Federico Costa, Lucas Silvani, Melisa Tivolesi, Ada Dorrego, María Ana Céliz,

Federico Paulucci, Josefina Lamarre - Músicos: Agustín Arano, Federico Russo

Version: Spanish translation by Sergio Amigo (See “Comparative Textual Analysis”)

Time: 9.24

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwtfBHJaou4>

22. Teatro Cervantes – Almería, Spain

Company: La Factoría – David del Pino

Date: May 26, 2010

Place: Teatro Cervantes – Universidad de Almería

Format: Theatre

Directed by: Isabel Díaz

Produced by: David del Pino

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: Spanish

Actors: 7 actors

Cast: Fran Ruiz, Susana Muñoz, Cristina Jiménez, Pol Andreu, Cécile Vicart, Antonio Baldó, Manuel

Ferre

Version: N/A

Time: 10:00

URL:

http://cms.ual.es/UAL/universidad/organosgobierno/gabcomunicacion/noticias/21MAY2010_TEATRO_UAL

23. Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático – Madrid, Spain

Production: Resad – Teatro del Gesto

Date: June 10-11, 2010 / July 3, 2010

Place: Sala María Guerrero - Teatro del Gesto / Círculo de Bellas Artes de Madrid

Format: Theatre installation

Directed by: Sol Garré

Filmed or recorded by: Miguel Sepúlveda

Produced by: Teatro del Gesto

Language: Spanish

Actors: 8 actors each unit

Cast: (Two units) Alba Blanco, Miguel Branca, Bea Fernández, Alberto Frías, Angélica García, Alexandra Hervás, Zdenka Josefi, Santi López, Pilar Martínez, Jesús Melen, Irene Montes, Laura Ramírez, Sirpa Riuttala, Paula Ruiz, Genoveva Santiago, Miguel Sepúlveda.

Version: N/A

Time: Introduction, 1.16

URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERMi-HE_vk4

24. RESAD – Círculo de Bellas Artes – Madrid, Spain

Production: RESAD – Tercero de Teatro del Gesto

Date: July 10-11, 2010

Place: Sala Fernando de Rojas – Círculo de Bellas Artes

Format: Theatre installation

Directed by: Sol Garré

Produced by: Teatro del Gesto - RESAD

Language: Spanish

Actors: 9 actors

Cast: Alba Blanco, Miguel Branca, Bea Fernández, Alberto Frías, Alexandra Hervás, Irene Montes, Laura Ramírez, Paula Ruiz and Genoveva Santiago.

Version: N/A

Time: 80:00

URL: http://www.circulobellasartes.com/ag_escenicas.php?ele=235&mod=futuro&eve=151

25. Stéphane Jacques – Montreal, Canada

Company: Stéphane Jacques

Date: September 2010

Place: Théâtre Les Enfants de la Balle. Montreal, Canadá

Format: Filmed performance – Lectura pública

Directed by: Stéphane Jacques

Produced by: Voix Juives Indépendantes – Chartes des responsabilités humaines

Filmed or recorded by: N/A

Language: French

Actors: 7 actors

Cast: Cécile Laserre, Esther Hardy, Nathalie Costa, Dominique Daoust, Jean-Pierre Matte, Emilie-Lune Sauvé y Alexandre Préfontaine.

Version: *7 enfants juifs - une pièce pour Gaza* - French translation by Jocelyne Doray.

Time: Trailer, 2.01

URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKyMbQTCAcw>

APPENDIX D: Caryl Churchill and her sayings

A. Affiliations to political causes

Carol Churchill is publicly known to be a patron of Palestine Solidarity Campaign, and as such she appears at their website, with her photograph and profile:

http://www.palestinecampaign.org/Index5b.asp?m_id=1&l1_id=2&l2_id=12.

She has helped fund-raising for Palestine in several occasions, not only with her strategy on *Seven Jewish Children*. In 2001 a performance of her play *Far Away* supported by the Royal Court raised funds for two Palestinian theatres.

B. Carol Churchill about *Seven Jewish Children*

“There’s so much that could be said [about *Seven Jewish Children*] that it’s hard to know how to put it concisely. And I would always rather a play could just be seen without any comment from the writer. [...]

Some people ask why the play is called Seven Jewish rather than Seven Israeli Children. I think that is a question that comes from people who have heard about the play but not read it or seen it, as it is clear from the text that most of the children are not Israeli.

The first scene is set at some time of persecution, which could be nineteenth century Russia (as I think I was inclining towards when I wrote it) or (as we chose at the Royal Court) in thirties Germany. The second scene is some time after the Holocaust in England (or indeed America.) The third scene, a few years later, has people from England (or America) deciding to go to Israel. In the fourth scene a (different) family has just arrived in Israel. So in none of those scenes is the child who is spoken of an Israeli. In the RC production the child in scene 6 wasn’t Israeli either as we imagined she was coming from England to visit relatives in Israel, which is

why so many things would have to be explained to her, but of course she could be an Israeli child. So it is called *Seven Jewish Children*, because that is what they all have in common.

I find it astonishing that anyone would think [...] that it means that all Jewish people are being blamed for what happened in Gaza. I don't think it is wrong to suggest that all (most?) Jewish people take an interest in what happened in Gaza and might well have to explain it to their children, as well as the other history that is touched on in the play.

[I'll try to answer] whether the play inevitably foments a rage in the audience against the characters on stage. I think it's hard for the writer to answer that question; it is really one for the audience. I'd have thought the answer was no.

If it makes people feel angry about what happened in Gaza, I think that is a good reaction. It is hard to think about what happened without anger and grief. It may make the audience angry with the character who has the long speech, though I think even that is a more complicated feeling because of seeing how it bursts out as a reaction against all the attempts to soften what is going on and present it acceptably to the child. Even if it does make people feel angry with the character in that scene, I don't think that is a bad thing. It doesn't make the anger extend to all the characters in the play right back to the early scenes.

When I wrote the scene I wanted it in some small way to reflect the shock and enormity of what happened in Gaza. I think it does that relatively mildly. And the recent reports of course, the soldiers' statements, the T-shirts, confirm what seemed to be happening at the time, and make the speech seem inadequately mild in comparison.

[I am asked] if that scene shows "a legacy of historical trauma". Yes, I would say that the play overall puts it in a context of people who are aggressive because they not surprisingly feel defensive. (It's perhaps relevant that I was told of one audience member who said she came to the theatre feeling angry with Israel but left feeling more understanding towards it.)

[Some people say] that the play faces charges that it shows "a terrible historical irony; that Jews once under siege are now laying siege." I'm not sure why that is a charge. It seems a fact.

[I have been] quoted in the *Guardian* as saying that "Israel has done lots of terrible things in the past but what happened in Gaza seems particularly extreme." I stand by that, though to explain why in detail would get us into a whole discussion of Israeli history. There are

of course things I admire about Israel, but... the refusal to comply with UN resolutions to withdraw from the occupied territories, the compliance in the massacre in Shabra and Shatilla, the treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories ... the checkpoints, the bulldozings, the wall, and with Gaza the killing of a thousand people during the truce... the siege... Someone who writes about all this well, I think, is Avi Shlaim, who is Israeli and a professor at Oxford. ([There is] an article he wrote for the Guardian at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/07/gaza-israel-palestine> or simply google “avi shlaim + guardian + gaza“.)

But [...] of course supporters of Israel will justify these things. I am not going to pretend that I am not critical of Israel, or that the play was not written out of anger about Gaza. But it was also written out of a more complicated anguish about the whole history, which I know is shared by many Jewish people outside Israel as well as many Israelis.

It's hard not to see the more extreme reactions against the play as an attempt to distract attention from criticism of Israel with smears of anti-Semitism, which then become the topic.

But I know that some people who are upset by it don't have that agenda, but are really so closely identified with all the good things Israel can mean that they cannot bear to think ill of it, and who identify their own Jewishness so closely with Israel that any attacks on it seem to be an attack on all Jews.

I can only say that that is not at all my intention, and to urge [the] audience to look instead at Gaza, and to share their hope of peace and reconciliation through talking about these things, and through being able to disagree with each other with understanding. [...]

[As for] the BBC's refusal to broadcast the play [...], it's important to be clear that they said it was because the BBC's guidelines say they must be “impartial over all services and outputs” and that it would be hard to find a play putting the opposite point of view, ie a political objection, not because they considered it anti-Semitic. There's been some outcry about this, of course, as they don't usually try to bring this subject of balance into drama, and certainly not in relation to individual plays balancing each other, which could be ludicrous – the Writers Guild here have issued a press release about it. It seems to connect with the BBC's refusal to broadcast the charities appeal for Gaza. It's a whole other issue, but I don't like to think people are trying to use the BBC to bolster their accusations of anti-Semitism [against me]. [...]

Caryl

(From a letter to Ari Roth, director of a reading of Seven Jewish Children at the Jewish Community Center Theater J, in New York, in response to some questions posed by him about the play and the ideology behind it. Please see the chronological "Appendix: Reception and Reviews", for the complete literal exchange of letters, dated Tue, March 24, 2009.)

"Jonathan Freedland ('Letters', *The Guardian*, March 3, 2011) denies that criticism of Israel is often wrongly called anti-Semitism. His point isn't helped by quoting Anthony Julius's allegation that my play *Seven Jewish Children* "tap[s] into the 'blood libel'". The line he is referring to is "tell her there's dead babies, did she see babies?" It refers to babies killed in the attack on Gaza in 2009 and shown on TV. When people hear of babies killed in a war, they don't usually think of medieval accusations of Jews consuming Christian children's blood, but of babies killed in a war. If readers want to judge the play for themselves, it is on the Guardian website and the text can be obtained on the internet and performed without charge to raise money for Medical Aid for Palestinians."

Caryl Churchill

(Letter to The Guardian ("Letters"), dated March 4, 2011, clarifying her position in response to an article written by Jonathan Freedland and published the day before, where contentions of anti-Semitism were mentioned.)

"Antony Julius ('Letters', *The Guardian*, March 7, 2011) quotes more lines from my play *Seven Jewish Children* to bolster his claim that it is anti-Semitic. What he doesn't seem to realise is that these lines are not spoken —as he suggests— by "Jews" in general but by individual Israelis, desperate to protect their own child, during an attack of disproportionate violence on Gaza. I don't think the play is a disproportionate response to that attack. It should be possible to pillory

the defensive self-righteousness and racism of some – not all – Israelis without being called anti-Semitic.”

Caryl Churchill

(Letter to The Guardian (“Letters”), dated March 8, 2011, denying Antony Juluis implications that Seven Jewish Children was an anti-Semitic libel, because in it Jews confess to lying to their own children and killing Palestinian children, they also confess to something close to a project of genocide, and they freely acknowledge the source of their misanthropy to be Judaism itself. To read this and the previous full exchange, please see the chronological “Appendix: Reception and Reviews”.)

“Dear Paula Tizzano:

Thanks for your interest in *Seven Jewish Children*. I'll try and answer your questions.

[My first question had been: «Why did you title the play "Seven Jewish Children" and not "Seven Jewish Girls", if the seven children implicit in the scenes are all girls? Did you choose "children" as opposed to "girls" with a specific purpose which should be kept in mind by translators? Which would that reason be?»]

1. Children is a more general word. I wasn't intending to suggest it was only girls, even though I have referred to the children as "her": and "children" of course can be used to refer to boys or girls or both. I realise that's a problem in languages where words are more specific about gender. It's probably better to go for "niñas" in the title as it wouldn't make sense to have the potentially general niños if there are no boys referred to in the text. Another option would be to make some of the off stage children boys. I don't really think it matters very much since the gender of the children isn't important to the scenes.

[My second question had been: «Which was your specific point in omitting punctuation? If you had to deconstruct the intentionality "behind" this decision and instruct what of this

should be kept in the translation, even if punctuation could not be omitted in a different language, what would you suggest or instruct as the author of the play?»]

2. Punctuation. You'll notice that there isn't no punctuation. There are full stops sometimes. The dialogue moves on quickly, coming to a slight pause at the full stops. It isn't correct in English either to do without punctuation, so it shouldn't be relevant that it is not correct in other languages. I would expect translators to follow the punctuation I have written.

[My third question had been: «Have you taken active part in the translation process of your play to other languages or you just left these matters in the translators' hands without interfering? If you have, which conclusions or suggestions could you offer firsthand about the translation process of this specific play of yours?»]

3. Usually I just let translators get on and do what they do, as I know so few languages well enough to be much involved, it would take a lot of time, and it seems better to trust that people can do their jobs well. I have occasionally been involved in looking at a French test, or answering questions from other translators. Occasionally I have looked at translations, even in languages I don't really know, and have been able to see real misunderstandings of what I've written, so I suppose it's a risky business.

I hope this is helpful

Yours,

Caryl Churchill

[On receiving this, I asked again for some clarification: "I tentatively get from your reply that you used no punctuation to create the feeling that 'the dialogue moves quickly, coming to a slight pause at the full stops'. Is this understanding right? Does this mean that the purpose of the non-punctuated text is to instill a fast tempo in the scene action? Or did you have any another reason for choosing this stylistic resource? If so, could you please elaborate on the reasons behind your choice? Furthermore: What do you want to convey with the lack of punctuation that makes you expect that translators follow your criteria?

(Please notice I am not questioning your criteria, just trying to make explicit what is implicit to move one step beyond, because I am not confident yet that I have understood this well.)]

Dear Paula:

It's not so much a fast tempo to the scene, as that each speech will follow at once from the one before where there is no punctuation, as people develop each other's thought.

[Then I had asked her to elaborate on some differences in interpretation which I had found along several translations and mise-en-scenes, as follows: «In scene 4, we read "Don't tell her home, not home, tell her they're going away". In different performances and translations, I have seen two diverging interpretations of the sentence (back translated to English): a) Don't mention "home", don't tell her this, tell her they're going away. / b) Don't mention either "home" or "not home", tell her they're going away.]

About Scene 4, "home, not home", the interpretation in (b) is right, meaning don't get into the issue of it being their home or not. Pity about the misunderstanding in (a), but I can see that it could seem to mean that.

[Then I mentioned ambiguities in interpretations in two lines of scene 7 and ask her to comment on them.]

In the Scene 7, as you quote, I agree the meaning is ambiguous, but can't go into all that now, sorry.

[Then I asked her to comment on situations related to translations and misunderstandings of her plays. This is what she said:]

I remember in *Fen* that [the word] "copper stick" was understandably translated as a stick made of copper, when it refers to a wooden stick used to stir clothes being washed in a big tub, called a "copper", which would be put over the fire.

The Skriker is very hard to translate as many of the speeches depend on puns and associations of words. I remember being alarmed to find that "window cleaner" was in a translation, when it was only there in the English as part of a sequence that went "everything gone with the window cleaner" where the important part of the meaning was just "everything gone", which ran on with an association to "gone with the wind", and "wind" led to "window cleaner". It seemed unlikely that the main sense was being kept and appropriate associations made in the other language.

That is an almost impossible play to translate, I think, and if you like researching translations it would probably keep you busy for years comparing translations of it!

[...]

Caryl

APPENDIX F: the Spanish versions

1) *Siete niños judíos*, translated by Miguel Talens

SIETE NIÑOS JUDÍOS

Monólogo en un acto dedicado a Gaza

Caryl Churchill

Traducido por Manuel Talens, disponible al público en
<http://www.rebellion.org/noticia.php?id=85103>

Título original: *Seven Jewish Children*

La infancia –destinataria genérica del enunciado del discurso en esta obra de teatro– está ausente aquí. Las voces discursivas, que aluden en cada una de las siete escenas a una niña distinta, son de adultos: de sus padres o, si se prefiere, de cualquier otra persona relacionada con los niños. El monólogo corre a cargo de diferentes personajes, tantos como se desee, que son distintos en cada pequeña escena, puesto que el tiempo teatral y los niños también lo son.

1

Dile que es un juego

Dile que es grave

Pero no la asustes

No le digas que la van a matar

Dile que es importante que no haga ruido

Dile que si es buena le darás pastel

Dile que se acurruque en la cama

Pero que no cante.

Dile que no salga

Dile que no salga incluso si oye gritos

No la asustes

Dile que no salga incluso si no oye nada durante mucho tiempo

Dile que vendremos a buscarla

Dile que estaremos aquí todo el tiempo.

Dile algo sobre los hombres

Dile que son los malos del juego

Dile que es un cuento

Dile que se irán

Dile que, si no se mueve, se irán

Por arte de magia

Pero que no cante.

2

Dile que ésta es una foto de su abuela, sus tíos y yo

Dile que sus tíos murieron

No le digas que los mataron

Dile que los mataron

No la asustes.

Dile que su abuela era inteligente

No le digas lo que hicieron

Dile que era valiente

Dile que me enseñó a hacer pasteles

No le digas lo que hicieron

Dile algo

Ya le dirás más cuando sea mayor.

Dile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos

No se lo digas

Dile que eso ahora se acabó

Dile que todavía hay gente que odia a los judíos

Dile que hay gente que ama a los judíos

No le digas que haga diferencias entre los judíos y los que no lo son

Ya le dirás más cuando sea mayor

Dile cuántos cuando sea mayor

Dile que fue antes de que ella naciera, así que no corre peligro

No le digas que hay peligro.

Dile que la queremos mucho

Dile que todos sus familiares, vivos o muertos, la queremos

Dile que su abuela estaría orgullosa de ella.

3

No le digas que nos vamos allí para siempre

Dile que puede escribir a sus amigos, dile que sus amigos quizá puedan venir a visitarla

Dile que allí hace sol

Dile que vamos a nuestro país

Dile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio

No le hables de religión

Dile que su recontratarabuelo vivía allí

No le digas que lo expulsaron de allí

Dile, por supuesto, dile que a todos los expulsaron y que el país está esperando nuestro regreso

No le digas que no es de aquí

Dile, por supuesto, que le gusta aquí, pero que allí le gustará más.

Dile que es una aventura

Dile que nadie se reirá de ella

Dile que tendrá nuevos amigos

Dile que puede llevarse sus juguetes

No le digas que puede llevarse todos sus juguetes

Dile que es una niña especial

Háblale de Jerusalén.

4

No le digas quiénes son

Dile algo

Dile que son beduinos, gente que va de un lado para otro

Háblale de camellos en el desierto y de dátiles

Dile que viven en tiendas

Dile que éste no era su país

No menciones la palabra país, país no, dile que se van de aquí

No le digas que ellos no la quieren

Dile que tenga cuidado.

No le hables de quienes vivían en esta casa

No, pero no le digas que su tatarabuelo vivía en esta casa

No, pero no le digas que unos árabes dormían en su habitación.

Dile que no sea grosera con ellos

Dile que no se asuste

No le digas que no puede jugar con los niños

No le digas que puede invitarlos a casa.

Dile que tienen muchísimos amigos y familiares

Dile que tienen kilómetros y kilómetros de tierras que son tuyas, pero fuera de aquí

Dile otra vez que ésta es nuestra tierra prometida.

No le digas que decían que era una tierra sin pueblo

No le digas que yo no habría venido de haberlo sabido.

Dile que quizá podamos compartirla.

No le digas eso.

Dile que hemos ganado la guerra

Dile que su hermano es un héroe

Dile los enormes que son sus ejércitos

Dile que los hicimos retroceder

Dile que somos combatientes

Dile que hemos conquistado más territorio.

6

No se lo digas

No le hables de los problemas a causa de la piscina

Dile que el agua es nuestra, que tenemos derecho

Dile que esa agua no es para sus campos

No le digas nada sobre el agua.

No le hables del bulldozer

No le digas que no mire el bulldozer

No le digas que estaba derribando la casa

Dile que es un solar para construir

No le digas nada sobre los bulldozers.

No le hables de las colas en el puesto de control

Dile que llegaremos enseguida

No hables de nada que ella no te pregunte

No le digas que mataron al niño de un tiro

No le digas nada.

Dile que estamos creando nuevas granjas en el desierto

No le hables de los olivos

Dile que estamos construyendo nuevos pueblos en terreno baldío.

No le digas que tiran piedras

Dile que no son muy buenos contra los tanques

No le digas eso.

No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés

Dile que, dile que ponen bombas en los cafés

Dile que tenga cuidado

No la asustes.

Dile que necesitamos el muro para estar seguros

Dile que quieren arrojarnos al mar

Dile que no quieren arrojarnos al mar

Dile que quieren arrojarnos al mar.

Dile que nosotros matamos a muchos más de ellos

No le digas eso

Dile eso

Dile que somos más fuertes

Dile que estamos en nuestro derecho

Dile que sólo entienden la violencia

Dile que buscamos la paz

Dile que vamos a bañarnos en la piscina.

7

Dile que no puede ver las noticias

Dile que puede ver dibujos animados

Dile que puede quedarse hasta muy tarde y ver *Friends*.

Dile que nos están atacando con misiles

No la asustes

Dile que sólo unos pocos de los nuestros han muerto

Dile que el ejército ha venido a defendernos

No le digas que su primo se negó a servir en el ejército.

No le digas cuántos de ellos han muerto

Dile que los combatientes de Hamás han muerto

Dile que son terroristas

Dile que son escoria

No se lo digas

No le hables de la familia de las niñas muertas

Dile que no puedes creer lo que ves en la televisión

Dile que matamos a los bebés por equivocación

No le digas nada del ejército

Háblale, háblale del ejército, dile que tiene que sentirse orgullosa del ejército. Háblale de la familia de las niñas muertas, dile sus nombres, por qué no, dile que si todo el mundo lo sabe ella también debe saberlo. Dile que hay bebés muertos, ¿vio a los bebés? Dile que no tiene por qué avergonzarse de nada. Dile que ellos se lo buscaron. Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para que la gente se apiade de ellos, dile que yo no me apiado de ellos, dile que no se apiade de ellos, dile que es de nosotros de quien hay que apiadarse, dile que a nosotros no nos pueden hablar de sufrimiento. Dile que ahora el puño de hierro lo tenemos nosotros, dile

que es la niebla de la guerra, dile que no vamos a dejar de matarlos hasta que nos sintamos seguros, dile que me dio risa cuando vi a los policías muertos, dile que son animales que ahora viven entre escombros, dile que no me importaría nada si los exterminásemos, el mundo nos odiaría, eso es lo único, dile que no me importa si el mundo nos odia, dile que nosotros odiamos mejor, dile que somos el pueblo elegido, dile que cuando miro a una de sus niñas cubierta de sangre me siento feliz porque esa niña cubierta de sangre no es ella.

No le digas eso.

Dile que la amamos. No la asustes.

Siete niños judíos es la respuesta de Caryl Churchill a lo ocurrido en Gaza en enero de 2009, cuando escribió esta obra.

Seven Jewish Children fue publicada inicialmente en Gran Bretaña en 2009 por Nick Hern Books Limited, 14 Larden Road, London W3 7ST, en asociación con el Royal Court Theatre, Londres

Seven Jewish Children copyright © 2009 Caryl Churchill Limited

Caryl Churchill ha hecho valer su derecho a que se la identifique como autora de esta obra

Composición de Nick Hern Books, Londres

ISBN 978 1 84842 047 2

Derechos de puesta en escena

La versión original de *Siete niños judíos* fue puesta en escena por primera vez en el Royal Court Theatre de Londres el 6 de febrero de 2009.

Esta obra puede leerse o representarse en cualquier lugar y por cualquier número de personas. Quien desee hacerlo debe ponerse en contacto con el agente de la autora (véanse los detalles más abajo), que le otorgará los permisos de puesta en escena sin costo alguno, a condición de que la representación sea gratuita y de que en ella se realice una colecta de dinero destinada a

Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, *tel* +44 (0)20 7226 4114, *dirección electrónica* info@map-uk.org, *sitio web* www.map-uk.org

Agente de la autora: Casarotto Ramsay and Associates Ltd, Waverley House, 7-12 Noel Street, London W1F 8GQ, *fax* +44 (0)20 7287 9128, *dirección electrónica* agents@casarotto.co.uk

Este texto puede descargarse gratuitamente de los sitios web enumerados a continuación:

Casarotto Ramsay - www.casarotto.co.uk/page/sjc

Nick Hern Books - www.nickhernbooks.co.uk

Royal Court Theatre - www.royalcourttheatre.com

Tlaxcala, la red de traductores por la diversidad lingüística - www.tlaxcala.es

Hasta que se agoten las existencias disponibles se pueden obtener ejemplares impresos de esta obra escribiendo a Nick Hern Books, cuya dirección está aquí arriba. El dinero recaudado se enviará a Medical Aids for Palestinians.

El escritor y traductor español Manuel Talens es miembro de Tlaxcala, la red de traductores por la diversidad lingüística. Tlaxcala ofrece gratuitamente esta traducción y también anima a quienes deseen leerla en público o ponerla en escena a que recauden fondos entre los asistentes y los envíen a Medical Aids for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, *teléfono* +44 (0)20 7226 4114, *dirección electrónica* info@map-uk.org, *sitio web* www.map-uk.org

¡Larga vida al pueblo palestino!

The Spanish writer and translator Manuel Talens is a member of Tlaxcala, the network of translators for linguistic diversity. Tlaxcala donates this translation and also encourages anyone desiring to read or perform this play to collect money from the audience and to send it to

Paula Tizzano Fernández

Paula.Tizzano@alumail.uji.es

Medical Aids for Palestinians (MAP), 33a Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB, *tel* +44 (0)20 7226 4114, *e-mail* info@map-uk.org, *web* www.map-uk.org

Long live the Palestinian people!

www.tlaxcala.es

30. *7 niños judíos*, translated by Sergio Amigo (theatrical text)

Transcripción del vídeo disponible en: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwtfBHjaou4>

7 NIÑOS JUDÍOS

Una obra para Gaza

Caryl Churchill

Traducción teatral de Sergio Amigo

UNO

Decile que es un juego.

Decile que es en serio.

Pero no la asustes.

No le digas que la pueden matar.

Decile que es muy importante que se quede quieta.

Decile que hay torta si se porta bien.

Decile que se haga un ovillo como cuando está en la cama.

Pero que no cante.

Decile que no salga.

Decile que no salga aunque oiga gritos.

No la asustes.

Decile que no salga aunque no se oiga nada.

Decile que estaremos aquí todo el tiempo.

Decile algo sobre los hombres.

Decile que no juegan limpio.

Decile que es un cuento.

Decile que se irán.

Decile que ella puede lograr que se vayan si se queda quieta.

Como por arte de magia.

Pero que no cante.

DOS

Decile que esta es una foto de su abuela, de sus tíos, y mía.

Decile que sus tíos murieron.

No le digas que los mataron.

Decile que los mataron.

No la asustes.

Decile que su abuela era una mujer sagaz.

No le digas lo que hicieron.

Decile que era una mujer valiente.

Decile que me enseñó a preparar tortas.

No le digas lo que hicieron.

Decile algo.

Decile más cuando crezca.

Decile que existía gente que odiaba a los judíos.

No le digas eso.

Decile que ya pasó.

Decile que todavía existe gente que odia a los judíos.

Decile que también existe gente que ama a los judíos.

No le digas nada sobre los judíos o sobre los no judíos.

Decile más cuando crezca.

Decile cuántos fueron cuando crezca.

Decile que sucedió antes de que naciera, y que no corre ningún peligro.

Decile que la amamos.

Decile que viva o muerta, toda su familia la ama.

Decile que su abuela estaría muy orgullosa de ella.

TRES

No le digas que nos vamos para siempre.

Decile que podrá escribirle a sus amigos.

Decile que quizás, alguna vez, sus amigos podrán ir de visitas

Decile que allá brilla el sol.

Decile que volvemos a casa.

Decile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio.

No le digas nada religioso.

Decile que su tatará, tatará, tatará, tatará tatará... un montón de tatarabuelo vivió allí.

No le digas que fue expulsado.

Decile, por supuesto, decile a ella y a todo el mundo que fue expulsado, y que el país está esperando nuestro retorno

No le digas que no es de aquí.

Decile que es lógico que a ella le guste aquí, pero que allí le va a gustar mucho más.

Decile que será una aventura.

Decile que allí nadie le va a hacer burla.

Decile que tendrá nuevos amigos.

Decile que puede llevar sus juguetes.

No le digas que podrá llevar todos sus juguetes.

Decile que es una nena muy especial.

Decile de Jerusalén.

CUATRO

No le digas quiénes son.

Decile algo.

Decile que son beduinos, que viven de aquí para allá.

Decile de los camellos en el desierto, de los dátiles...

Decile que viven en tiendas.

Decile que este no es su hogar.

No le digas nada de hogar o de no hogar. Decile que se van a ir.

No le digas que no la quieren.

Decile que tenga cuidado.

No le digas quién vivía en esta casa.

No, pero tampoco le digas que su tátara tátara tátara tatarabuelo vivía en esta casa.

No le digas que en su cuarto dormían árabes.

Decile que no sea irrespetuosa con ellos.

Decile que no tenga miedo.

Decile que son gente de bien que trabaja para nosotros.

No le digas que no puede jugar con los chicos.

No le digas que los puede invitar a casa.

Decile que ellos ya tienen un montón de amigos y de parientes.

Decile que son dueños de kilómetros y kilómetros de tierra en las afueras.

Decile de nuevo que esta es nuestra tierra prometida.

No le digas que ellos sostenían que esta era una tierra desierta.

No le digas “No hubiera venido de haber sabido”.

Decile que, tal vez, podamos compartirla.

No le digas eso.

CINCO

Ahhhh.... Decile que ganamos.

Decile que su hermano es un héroe.

Decile cómo pasaban los tanques.

Decile lo grandes que son sus ejércitos.

Decile que los hicimos retirar.

Decile que somos gente de lucha.

Decile que tenemos una nueva tierra.

SEIS

No se lo digas.

No le digas del problema con la pileta de natación.

Decile que el agua es nuestra, y que tenemos derecho.

Decile que no es agua para sus terrenos.

No le digas nada del agua.

No le digas de la topadora.

No le digas que no la mire.

No le digas que demolerá casas.

Decile que es una obra en construcción.

No le digas nada de la topadora.

No le digas nada de los puestos en control

Decile que pronto estaremos allí.

No le digas nada que no pregunte.

No le digas que el chico murió acribillado

No le digas nada.

Decile que estamos construyendo granjas nuevas en el desierto.

No le digas de los olivos.

Decile que estamos construyendo pueblos nuevos en el desierto.

No le digas que nos tiraron piedras.

Decile que se asustan con los tanques.

No le digas eso.

No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés.

Decile, decile que ponen bombas en los cafés.

Decile que tenga cuidado.

No la asustes.

Decile que necesitamos el muro para estar seguros.

Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar.

Decile que no.

Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar.

Decile que nosotros matamos a muchos más que ellos.

No le digas eso.

Decile que somos más fuertes.

Decile que tenemos derecho.

Decile que el único idioma que entienden es el de la violencia.

Decile que nosotros queremos la paz.

Decile que iremos a nadar.

SIETE

Decile que no puede ver el noticiero.

Decile que puede ver dibujitos.

Decile que se puede quedar hasta tarde viendo su serie favorita.

Decile que están atacando con misiles.

No la asustes.

Decile que mataron a muy pocos de los nuestros.

Decile que el ejército llegó para defendernos.

No le digas que su primo se negó a servir en el ejército.

No le digas a cuántos de ellos matamos nosotros.

Decile que los líderes de Hamas están todos muertos.

Decile que son terroristas.

Decile que son basura.

Noo.

No le digas nada de los familiares de las nenas muertas.

Decile que no creemos lo que muestran en la televisión.

Decile que matamos a los bebés por equivocación.

No le digas nada del ejército.

Decile, decile del ejército, decile que se sienta orgullosa del ejército.

Decile de las familias de las nenas muertas, decile sus nombres

¿Por qué no?

Decile que el mundo entero lo sabe, que lo sepa ella también.

Decile de los bebés muertos, ¿o acaso nunca vio a un bebé?

Decile que no hay nada de lo que deba avergonzarse.

Decile que ellos nos hicieron lo mismo.

Decile que utilizan las imágenes de los bebés asesinados para que la gente los compadezca, decile que yo no los compadezco, decile que no los compadezco, decile que somos nosotros los que merecemos compasión, decile que no nos van a enseñar a nosotros lo que significa el sufrimiento.

Decile que ahora nosotros somos la mano dura; decile del pueblo que provoca la guerra; decile que no detendremos las muertes hasta estar seguros y a salvo; decile que me reí a carcajadas cuando vi al policía muerto; decile que son como animales como ratas viviendo entre los

escombros; decile que no me importa si los liquidamos a todos y el mundo nos odia por ello; decile que me tiene sin cuidado que el mundo nos odie, decile que nosotros somos mucho mejores si de odiar se trata; decile que somos el pueblo elegido; decile lo que siento cuando veo a uno de sus niños chorreando sangre; decile que me siento feliz de que no sea ella.

No le digas eso.

Decile que la amamos.

No la asustes.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwtfBHJaou4>

31. *Siete niñas judías*, translated by César Roa (theatrical text)

SIETE NIÑAS JUDÍAS

Por Caryl Churchill

Traducción de César Roa - Con permiso y por gentileza del traductor

I

Dile que es un juego.

Dile que es algo muy serio.

Pero no la asustes.

No le digas que quieren matarla

Dile que no se mueva

Dile que, si se porta bien, tendrá un regalo

Dile que se acurruque como si estuviera en la cama

Pero que no cante

Dile que no salga

Dile que no salga, aunque oiga gritos

No la asustes

Dile que no salga aunque esté mucho tiempo sin oír nada

Dile que volveremos y que la encontraremos

Dile que luego no nos moveremos de aquí

Dile algo sobre los hombres

Dile que son los malos

Dile que es un cuento

Dile que se irán

Dile que puede hacer que desaparezcan si se está quieta

Mediante un truco de magia

Pero que no cante

II

Dile que es una fotografía mía con su abuela y sus tías

Dile que sus tías murieron.

No le digas que las mataron

Dile que las mataron

No la asustes

Dile que su abuela era muy inteligente

No le digas lo que les hicieron

Dile que la abuela fue muy valiente

Dile que me enseñó a hacer pasteles

No le digas lo que les hicieron

Dile algo

Dile algo más cuando sea mayor

Dile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos

No se lo digas

Dile que eso ya se acabó

Dile que aún hay gente que odia a los judíos

Dile que hay gente que quiere a los judíos

No le digas que piense en términos de judío o no-judío.

Dile algo más cuando sea mayor

Dile a cuántos nos mataron cuando sea mayor

Dile que eso sucedió antes de que ella naciera y que ahora no corre peligro

No le digas que ya no hay peligro

Dile que la queremos

Dile que viva o muerta toda su familia la quiere

Dile que su abuela estaría muy orgullosa de ella

III

No le digas que nos vamos para siempre

Dile que puede escribir a sus amigos, dile que quizás puedan venir a visitarla

Dile que allí siempre hace bueno

Dile que volvemos a casa

Dile que es la tierra que nos dio Dios

No le hables de religión

Dile que sus antepasados vivieron allí

No le digas que los echaron

Dile, díselo, dile que los echaron a todos y que el país espera impaciente que volvamos a casa.

No le digas que no es su tierra

Dile que claro que le gusta esto, pero que aún le va a gustar más

Dile que es una aventura

Dile que no se meterán con ella

Dile que hará nuevos amigos

Dile que puede llevar sus juguetes

No le digas que se puede llevar todos sus juguetes

Dile que es una niña muy afortunada

Háblale de Jerusalén

IV

No le digas quiénes son

Dile algo

Dile que son beduinos, que están de paso

Háblale de los camellos en el desierto

Dile que viven en tiendas

Dile que no son de aquí

No le digas esas cosas, dile que se van

No le digas que no la quieren

Dile que tenga cuidado

No le digas quién vivía antes en esta casa.

No, pero no le digas que en esta casa vivía antes su tatarabuelo

No, pero no le digas que en su dormitorio dormían antes los árabes

Dile que no sea grosera con ellos

Dile que no tenga miedo

No le digas que no puede jugar con los niños

No le digas que puede traerlos a casa

Dile que tienen muchos amigos y parientes

Dile que más lejos tienen mucha tierra para sí

Repítete **que esta es nuestra tierra prometida**⁴¹

No le digas que nos aseguraron que era una tierra despoblada

No le digas que, si lo hubiera sabido, no habríamos venido

Dile que quizá la podamos compartir

No le digas eso

V

Dile que hemos ganado

Dile que su hermano es un héroe

Háblale sobre lo fuerte que es nuestro ejército

Dile que les hicimos retroceder

Dile que somos buenos guerreros

Dile que tenemos más tierras

VI

⁴¹ Las negritas del texto son del traductor.

No se lo digas

No le cuentes el incidente de la piscina

Dile que es nuestra agua, que tenemos derecho

Dile que este agua no es para sus campos

No le digas nada sobre el agua

No le hables del bulldozer

No le digas que no mire al bulldozer

No le digas que estaba derribando la casa

Dile que es una zona en construcción

No hables de los bulldozers

No hables de las colas en el puesto de control

Dile que llegamos enseguida

No le digas que no pregunte

No le digas que mataron al chico

No le digas nada

Dile que estamos montando nuevas granjas en el desierto

No le digas nada de los olivos

Dile que estamos construyendo nuevas ciudades en el páramo

No le digas que nos tiran piedras

Dile que no valen nada contra los tanques

No le digas eso

No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés

Dile que ponen bombas en los cafés

Dile que tenga cuidado

No la asustes

Dile que nos hace falta el muro para protegernos

Dile que quieren echarnos al mar

Dile que no

Dile que mataremos más

No le digas eso

Díselo

Dile que somos más fuertes

Dile que tenemos derecho

Dile que sólo entienden la fuerza

Dile que queremos la paz

Dile que de aquí no nos echa nadie

VII

Dile que no puede ver las noticias

Dile que vea los dibujos animados

Dile que puede acostarse tarde y ver *los Simpsons*

Dile que atacan con cohetes

No la asustes

Dile que sólo algunos de los nuestros han muerto

Dile que el ejército ha venido a defendernos

No le digas que su primo ha objetado

No le digas cuántos de ellos han muerto

Dile que han matado a guerrilleros de Hamas

Dile que son terroristas

Dile que son basura

No

No le hables sobre esa familia de las niñas muertas

Dile que no se crea todo lo que vea en televisión

Dile que matamos a los niños por error

No le digas nada del ejército

Dile, háblale del ejército, dile que tiene que estar orgullosa de su ejército. Cuéntale lo de la familia de las niñas muertas, dile sus nombres, ¿por qué no?, dile que todo el mundo lo sabe, ¿por qué ella no?, dile que han muerto bebés, ¿vio los bebés muertos? Dile que no tiene nada de lo que avergonzarse. Dile que se lo hicieron a sí mismos. Dile que quieren que maten a sus hijos para dar pena a la gente, y dile que a mí no me dan pena, y dile que a ella tampoco le deben dar pena, dile que los que debemos dar pena somos nosotros, dile que a nosotros nadie nos va a dar lecciones de sufrimiento. Dile que ahora somos el puño de hierro, dile que es la guerra, dile que no vamos a dejar de matar hasta que no estemos seguros, dile que me reí cuando vi muertos a los policías, dile que ahora son animales viviendo entre escombros, dile que no me importaría si los borrásemos del mapa, lo único malo es que el mundo nos odiaría, dile que me tiene sin cuidado que el mundo nos odie, dile que a la hora de odiar nadie nos gana, dile **que somos el pueblo elegido**,⁴² dile que cuando veo a uno de sus hijos cubierto de sangre..., ¿que qué siento?, pues que me alegro de que no sea ella

No le digas eso

Dile que la queremos

No la asustes

⁴² Las negritas son del traductor.

Paula Tizzano Fernández

Paula.Tizzano@alumail.uji.es

32. *Siete niñas judías*, translated by Paula Tizzano

SIETE NIÑAS JUDÍAS

Una obra para Gaza

Translated by Paula Tizzano Fernández

En la obra no aparecen niños. Los parlamentos están a cargo de adultos, que representan a los padres o, si se prefiere, a otras personas cercanas a las niñas. El texto puede repartirse entre los personajes en forma libre, a elección. Cada escena ocurre en momentos diferentes de la historia y se refiere a niñas distintas, por eso los personajes cambian. La obra puede ser representada por una cantidad indeterminada de actores.

1

Decile que es un juego

Decile que es en serio

Pero no la asustes

No le digas que la pueden matar

Decile que no haga ruido por ningún motivo

Decile que si se porta bien va a haber torta

Decile que se quede acurrucada, como cuando duerme

Pero que no cante.

Decile que no salga

Decile que no salga aunque oiga gritos

No la asustes

Decile que no salga aunque pase mucho tiempo y no oiga nada

Decile que vamos a venir a buscarla

Decile que vamos a estar acá todo el tiempo.

Decile algo de los hombres

Decile que son los malos

Decile que es como un cuento

Decile que se van a ir

Decile que si se queda quieta, hará que se vayan

Como por arte de magia

Pero que no cante.

2

Decile que esta foto es de su abuela, sus tíos y yo

Decile que sus tíos murieron

No le digas que los mataron

Decile que los mataron

No la asustes.

Decile que su abuela era inteligente

No le cuentes lo que hicieron

Decile que era valiente

Decile que me enseñó a hacer tortas

No le cuentes lo que hicieron

Algo contale

Mejor contale cuando crezca.

Decile que había gente que odiaba a los judíos

No se lo digas

Decile que eso ya pasó

Decile que sigue habiendo gente que odia a los judíos

Decile que hay gente que ama a los judíos

No le enseñes a discriminar entre judíos y no judíos

Mejor contale cuando crezca

Cuando crezca, contale cuántos fueron

Decile que eso fue antes de que ella naciera y que ahora no hay peligro

Del peligro ni le hables.

Decile que la adoramos

Decile que en su familia, vivos o muertos, la amamos todos

Decile que su abuela estaría orgullosa de ella.

3

No le digas que nos vamos para siempre

Decile que puede escribirles a sus amigos, decile que ojalá vengan a visitarla sus compañeritos

Decile que es un lugar lleno de sol

Decile que nos vamos a nuestra tierra

Decile que es la tierra que Dios nos dio

No le hables de religión

Decile que allí vivió su tátara tátara requetetátara abuelo

No le digas que de ahí lo expulsaron

Decile, más vale, decile que los echaron a todos, y que ahora el país está esperando que
volvamos

No le digas que esta no es su tierra

Decile que acá, naturalmente, le gusta vivir, pero que allá le va a gustar más todavía

Decile que es una aventura

Decile que nadie se va a burlar de ella

Decile que va a tener nuevos amigos

Decile que va a poder llevarse sus juguetes

No le digas que va a llevarse todos los juguetes

Decile que es una nena especial

Hablale de Jerusalem.

4

No le digas quiénes son

Decile algo

Decile que son beduinos, gente que vive viajando

Contale de los camellos, del desierto, de los dátiles

Decile que viven en carpas

Decile que esta no es su patria

No le digas si es o no es su patria, decile que se van a ir

No le digas que no la quieren

Decile que tenga cuidado.

No le digas quiénes vivieron en esta casa

No, pero no le digas que en esta casa vivió su tátara tátara requetetátara abuelo

No, pero no le digas que en su cuarto durmió algún árabe

Decile que no los trate mal

Decile que no tenga miedo

No le digas que no juegue con los chicos

No le digas que los invite a casa.

Decile que ellos ya tienen montones de amigos y de parientes

Decile que ya tienen kilómetros y kilómetros de tierras que son suyas,

Decile otra vez que esta es nuestra tierra prometida.

No le digas que nos contaron que acá no vivía nadie

No le digas que si yo hubiera sabido, no venía.

Decile que a lo mejor la podríamos compartir.

Eso no le digas.

5

Decile que ganamos

Decile que su hermano es un héroe

Contale lo grande que era ejército de ellos

Contale que los hicimos retroceder

Decile que somos combatientes

Decile que conquistamos un nuevo territorio.

6

No se lo cuentes

No le hables del problema que se armó con la pileta

Decile que es nuestra agua y que tenemos derecho

Decile que esa agua no era para los campos de ellos

Mejor del agua no le hables

No le hables de la topadora

No le digas que a la topadora no la mire

No le digas que estaba tirando la casa abajo

Decile que era una obra en construcción

De la topadora ni le hables.

No le hables de las colas en el puesto de control

Decile que vamos a llegar enseguida

No le digas nada que no te pregunte

No le hables del chico que mataron

No le digas nada.

Decile que estamos haciendo nuevas granjas en el desierto

No le hables de los olivos

Decile que estamos construyendo pueblos nuevos

en tierras inhóspitas

No le digas que nos tiran piedras

Decile que las piedras no sirven de nada contra los tanques

No le digas eso.

No le digas que ponen bombas en los cafés

Decíselo, decile que ponen bombas en los cafés

Decile que ande con cuidado

No la asustes.

Decile que necesitamos el muro para estar a salvo

Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar

Decile que eso no es lo que quieren

Decile que nos quieren empujar al mar.

Decile que matamos a muchos más de los suyos

Eso no le digas

Decíselo

Decile que somos más fuertes

Decile que tenemos derecho

Decile que el único idioma que ellos entienden es la violencia

Decile que nosotros queremos la paz

Decile que nos vamos a la pileta a nadar.

7

Decile que no vea los noticieros

Decile que mire dibujitos animados

Decile que se puede quedar hasta tarde mirando *Friends*.

Decile que nos están tirando misiles

No la asustes

Decile que de nuestro lado mataron a muy pocos

Decile que vino el ejército para defendernos

No le cuentes que su primo no quiso ir al frente a combatir.

No le digas cuántos de ellos murieron

Decile que los de Hamas están muertos

Decile que son terroristas

Decile que son una basura

Eso no le digas

No le hables de los familiares de las chicas muertas

Decile que no hay que creer en lo que muestra la televisión

Decile que a los bebés los matamos por error

No le cuentes nada del ejército

Decile, contale del ejército, decile que del ejército se sienta orgullosa.

Hablale de los familiares de las nenas muertas, decile cómo se llamaban, por qué no, contáselo, todo el mundo lo sabe, por qué no va a saberlo ella, decile que hay bebés que murieron, ¿a los bebés los vio, no? Decile que no tiene nada de qué avergonzarse. Decile que todo esto lo provocaron ellos mismos. Decile que a ellos les conviene que haya bebés muertos para que todo el mundo les tenga lástima, decile que yo no los compadezco, y que ella tampoco les tenga lástima; decile que lástima hay que tenernos a nosotros; que no nos vengan a hablar de sufrimiento justo a nosotros... Decile que ahora el poder es nuestro, decile que todo esto son daños colaterales, decile que no vamos a parar de matar hasta que estemos a salvo, decile que cuando vi a los policías muertos me largué a reír, decile que son como animales viviendo entre los escombros, decile que si los exterminamos a todos no se me va a mover ni un pelo; a lo sumo nos odiará el mundo, y a mí qué; decile que si el mundo nos odia, lo lamento por ellos, decile que nosotros sabemos odiar mejor, decile que somos el pueblo elegido, decile cómo me siento cuando veo a una de esas nenas bañadas en sangre..., decile que me alegro, me alegro de que no sea ella.

No le digas eso.

Decile que la amamos.

No la asustes

FIN

Siete niñas judías es la respuesta de Caryl Churchill a la situación generada en Gaza en enero de 2009, momento en que fue escrita la obra.

*

La obra original, *Seven Jewish Children*, se publicó por primera vez en 2009 en Gran Bretaña, con sello de Nick Hern Books Limited, 14 Larden Road, Londres W3 7ST, en asociación con el Royal Court Theatre de Londres.

Seven Jewish Children

Copyright © 2009

Caryl Churchill Limited

Caryl Churchill reafirma su derecho moral a ser identificada como autora de esta obra.

ISBN 978 1 84842 047 2

Derechos de representación teatral

Seven Jewish Children se estrenó en el Royal Court Theatre de Londres, el 6 de febrero de 2009.

La obra puede ser leída o representada en cualquier lugar y por cualquier número de actores.

Los interesados deben tomar contacto con los agentes de la autora, en la dirección indicada abajo, quienes autorizarán la puesta en escena sin cargo, siempre y cuando la entrada al público sea libre y gratuita, y que en cada función se recauden fondos voluntariamente para la organización Medical Aid for Palestinians

Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)

33a Islington Park Street,

London N1 1QB.

Tel +44 (0)20 7226 4114.

Correo electrónico: info@map-uk.org.

Sitio en internet: www.map-uk.org

Agentes de la autora:

Casarotto Ramsay and Associates Ltd,

Waverley House, 7-12 Noel Street,

Londres W1F 8GQ.

Fax: +44 (0)20 7287 9128.

Correo electrónico: agents@casarotto.co.uk

El texto de esta obra puede descargarse gratuitamente de internet en los siguientes sitios:

Casarotto Ramsay - www.casarotto.co.uk/page/sjc

Nick Hern Books - www.nickhernbooks.co.uk

Royal Court Theatre - www.royalcourttheatre.com

Se podrán adquirir ejemplares impresos de la obra, hasta agotar existencias, en las oficinas de Nick Hern Books, en la dirección antes mencionada; lo recaudado se donará a Medical Aids for Palestinians.

*

La presente traducción al español de Argentina es de propiedad intelectual de su autora, Paula Tizzano Fernández, sin cuya autorización no puede ser reproducida, publicada o interpretada.

Algunos párrafos del original que admitían lecturas ambiguas, ya sea en el contexto de la puesta teatral o de la traducción, han sido objeto de correspondencia escrita entre la traductora y Caryl Churchill, quien tuvo la gentileza de esclarecer o comentar las interpretaciones desde el punto de vista de sus intenciones como autora. Se ha procurado que las aclaraciones de la autora quedaran reflejadas en esta traducción.

Esta traducción es parte de un artículo académico de investigación sobre traducción teatral basado en *Seven Jewish Children*, en el marco de la cátedra de Géneros Literarios del Máster Universitario en Traducción e Interpretación, Universitat Jaume I de Castellón, España.