



T.C.

ÇANKIRI KARATEKİN UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

**THE IMPACT OF BRECHT'S THEATRICAL
APPROACH ON QASSIM MOHAMMED'S THEATRE
IN IRAQ**

Ammar Mamdooh Mutar MGADMEE

MASTER'S THESIS

Supervisor

Asst. Prof. Dr. Tuğba ÇAĞLAK EKER

Çankırı-2022

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BİLİMSEL ETİK BİLDİRİMİ

Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak hazırladığım *The Impact of Brecht's Theatrical Approach On Qassim Mohammed's Theatre In Iraq* adlı çalışmanın öneri aşamasından sonuçlanmasına kadar geçen süreçte bilimsel etiğe özenle uyduğumu, tez içerisindeki tüm bilgileri bilimsel ahlak ve kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi ve sunduğumu, doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak yaptığım her alıntı için kaynak gösterdiğimi ve yararlandığım eserlerin kaynakçada gösterilenlerden oluştuğunu; ayrıca, yazılı izin alınmış olması dışında tezde herhangi birisine ait kişisel veri bulunmadığını, tezin bizzat teslim ettiğim basılı veya elektronik kopyasında bulunan bana ait kişisel verilerin tezde yer alması için izin verdiğimi ve telif hakkı başkasına ait olan yazılı, görsel, işitsel veya başka biçimdeki herhangi bir malzemenin ancak bilimsel etik ilkeleri çerçevesinde ve/veya gerekli izinler alınarak tezde kullanıldığını beyan ederim.

29 / 12 / 2022

Ammar Mamdooh Mutar MGADMEE

TEZ KABUL VE ONAY

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GÜZEL SANATLAR ENSTİTÜSÜ

Ammar Mamdooh Mutar MGADMEE tarafından hazırlanan *The Impact Of Brecht's Theatrical Approach On Qassim Mohammed's Theatre In Iraq* başlıklı bu çalışma, 29/12/2022 tarihinde yapılan Tez Savunma Sınavı sonucunda oybirliğiyle başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Sanat ve Tasarım Anabilim Dalı Sanat ve Tasarım-İngilizce Programında Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Prof. Dr. Ersoy YILMAZ
Enstitü Müdürü

FOREWORD

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29 / 12 / 2022

Ammar Mamdooh Mutar MGADMEE

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: The Impact of Brecht's Theatrical Approach on Qassim Mohammed's Theatre in Iraq

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Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Tuğba ÇAĞLAK EKER

Thesis Type: Master's

The research studies the impact of Brecht's theatrical approach on the Iraqi theater in general and Qassim Mohammed's theater. The research deals with characteristics that characterize Brecht's epic theater, which can be seen in Qassim Mohammed's theater. These characteristics discussed were alienation, the actor's personality on stage, decoration, music, lighting, and other critical aspects. Awareness and Westernization are among the essential characteristics advocated by Brecht. For him, awareness means making the viewer deduce ideas and analyze them to get him/her out of the problems and suffering surrounding him/her. Westernization is also a tool for replacing thoughts, as it is a surprising way to present modern ideas instead of the prevailing customs and traditions in society. Through these characteristics, some theatrical performances of Qassim Mohammed, which were selected according to their affinity with the Brecht epic theatre, will be studied and analyzed. These performances are *The Palm and the Neighbors* 1969, *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor* 1974, and the play *Once Upon a Time* 1978, which deal with modern ideas and details to enlighten the viewer and make him aware of the misery surrounding him/her. On the other hand, the attempt to revolutionize society is the dominant feature in Brecht's epic theatre. He tries to make the spectator conscious. He tries to involve him in the theatrical performance, not to make him a mere spectator. All these details and characteristics will be studied in detail in the coming chapters.

Keywords: Theatre, Iraq, Brecht, Qassim, Awareness.

ÖZET

Tezin Başlığı: Brecht'in Tiyatro Yaklaşımının Irak'taki Kasim Mohammed Tiyatrosuna Etkisi

Tezin Yazarı: Ammar Mamdooh Mutar MGADMEE

Danışman: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Tuğba ÇAĞLAK EKER

Tezin Türü: Yüksek Lisans

Araştırma, Brecht'in teatral yaklaşımının genel olarak Irak tiyatrosu ve Qassim Muhammed'in tiyatrosu üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Araştırma, Qassim Muhammed'in tiyatrosunda görülebilen, Brecht'in epik tiyatrosunu karakterize eden özellikleri ele almaktadır. Tartışılan bu özellikler, yabancılaşma, oyuncunun sahnedeki kişiliği, dekorasyon, müzik, ışıklandırma ve diğer kritik unsurlardır. Farkındalık ve Batılılaşma, Brecht'in savunduğu temel nitelikler arasındadır. Ona göre farkındalık, izleyiciyi çevresini saran sorunlardan ve ıstıraplardan kurtarmak için fikir çıkarımına ve analiz etmeye zorlamak demektir. Batılılaşma, toplumda hakim olan örf ve adetlerin yerine modern fikirlerin sunulmasının şaşırtıcı bir yolu olduğundan, aynı zamanda düşüncelerin yerini alma aracıdır. Bu özellikler üzerinden Qassim Muhammed'in Brecht epik tiyatrosuna olan yakınlığına göre seçilen bazı tiyatro gösterileri incelenecek ve analiz edilecektir. Bu performanslar, izleyiciyi aydınlatmak ve onu çevreleyen sefaletin farkına varmasını sağlamak için modern fikirleri ve detayları ele alan *Palmiye ve Komşular* 1969, *Bağdat sonsuza dek ciddiye ve mizah arasında* 1974, ve *Bir Zamanlar* 1978 oyunudur. Öte yandan, toplumu devrimcileştirme girişimi, Brecht'in epik tiyatrosunun baskın özelliğidir. İzleyiciyi bilinçlendirmeye çalışır. Onu sadece seyirci yapmaya değil, tiyatro oyununa dahil etmeye çalışır. Tüm bu detaylar ve özellikler ilerleyen bölümlerde ayrıntılı olarak incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tiyatro, Irak, Brecht, Qassim, Farkındalık.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

The catastrophe of Palestine in 1948, and the Free Officers Revolution in Egypt in 1952, had their precise impact on the political character adopted by the Iraqi theater since then, whether in terms of the struggle against the English colonialists, in exposing the corruptions of government, or in dealing with sensitive social issues. Since that stage, the name of Qassim Mohammed has emerged as one of the most influential playwrights in Iraq alongside Yusuf al-Ani, Adel Kazem, Jalil al-Qaisi, Nour al-Din Faris, Muhyiddin Zangana, Abd al-Rahman Majid al-Rubaie, and others. Although Kassem had studied theater in Russia, he was among those influenced by Bertolt Brecht's epic theater in acting performance, directing style, and text interpretation.

The play *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors* 1969 and the play *Once Upon a Time*, 1978 were among the most prominent plays directed and composed by Qassim Mohammed, which include some of the essential characteristics of Brecht's theatrical such as alienation, awareness, directing style, lighting, decoration, music and many others, which will be discussed in the coming chapters. Qassim relied on themes from the Iraqi heritage and the characters of the famous market, and he was able to mix them with a distinctive directing method with the Brecht epic theatre. Brecht, in his theater, tries to revolutionize society and shed light on capitalism, misery, and tragedy that poor societies suffer from.

Brecht's critics believe that what distinguishes his approach is that despite the fall of the Marxist ideology on which it was based, it always remains an intellectual and artistic approach applicable and places. Its importance is concentrated in that it is the only method or performance in the drama that achieves the function of enlightenment as it should be achieved. It seeks social justice in the absence of ideology.

The play *Mother Courage and Her Children* was presented, directed by Leila Youssef in the early seventies. However, Brecht leaked as a method to most contemporary playwrights who tried to discuss the nation's social and political issues. Brecht also imposed himself on the stage in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. This is seen in the works of Saadallah Wannous, Alfred Farag, Michael Roman, Mahmoud Diab,

Qassim Mohammed, and others. They were aware that the theatrical goal was to think and change through the epic approach used by Brecht. They did not stop at Brecht's techniques, for art is not sufficient to imitate; instead, it must be added. This does not prevent Brecht's method from remaining for centuries, like the Aristotelian method, and from adapting to new needs. Suppose Brecht presented the methodology of socialist construction and criticism of capitalism with all its horrors and crises (Marwan, 2019). In that case, the capitalist society still exists, and Brecht's methodology is valid for change to another open future. Brecht also infiltrated many Arab directors who combined Stanislavsky's approach with Brecht's rational approach, which can communicate the meaning more clearly to the masses.

Brecht greatly influenced all generations of playwrights in the Arab world since the fifties. That is, his imprint was and still is very clear on the Arab stage, not only from the angle of writing but from the angle of performance, directing, and decoration. The most influential writers were influenced by him, including Mahmoud Diab and Michael Roman in Egypt, Abdel Karim Bershid in Morocco, Izz al-Din Madani in Tunisia, Roger Assaf, and Nidal al-Ashqar in Lebanon, and Qassim Mohammed and Yusuf al-Ani in Iraq (Marwan, 2019).

For example, Brecht called for comprehensive illumination, not to suggest that what he was doing was real, and he called on the spectator to play a positive role and not as an opposing receiver. Al-Naqash considers that Brecht is a sign of the theater of the capitalist system and the necessity of overcoming this system and one of its human signs. It was no coincidence that Brecht was a socialist activist, poet, and theater artist, and his influence will remain as Shakespeare's did, perhaps with the same strength and momentum. It is an expression of latent needs that were not clearly expressed, as Brecht expressed. This does not mean that the Brecht current always remains the only current, as live in societies with a pluralistic nature, and other currents will emerge (Marwan, 2019). However, Brecht's current will remain strong because it considers the inspiration of deep needs in the objective transformation of man towards transcending the world of chaos and brutality to a better and higher world.

The director has come up intelligently with Brecht's foundations and rules in terms of the technical rules in the theatrical show, from the dramatic form, acting style,

decoration, music, and orchestra. These characteristics aim to break the illusion and to alienate, that is, to raise awareness of the recipient of the strangeness and contradiction of the reality in which he lives, which is illustrated through the theatrical performance. Through his plays *The Palm and the Neighbors* and *Once Upon a Time*, Qassim Mohammed presented an image of a changing city, of a patriotic sense that rejects occupation, of social groups aligned with liberation movements in the world, of organized revolutionary nuclei, and of an oven for bread as a substitute for the car. Furthermore, the car is an alternative to the cart pulled by the donkey, and the bicycle is an alternative to walking barefoot (Nassir, 2011). With these renaissance details, Qassim Mohammed introduced us to the dramatic form in the popular areas of narration, and it would not matter who the narrator was, overt or implicit; what mattered was that the voice was reaching the audience, that the Iraqis built the action, and that the locality would become a transformed and new city.

Through the preceding, there is a set of theatrical characteristics of Brecht that can be observed in the Iraqi theater. From these characteristics: Westernization, Capitalism, raising the spectator's awareness, revolutionizing, replacing old ideas with modern ones, the actor's character on the stage, the audience's participation in the events that take place on the stage, and highlighting the misery and poverty facing the individual. All these theatrical characteristics found in the plays of Qassim Mohammed will be discussed in the coming chapters.

1.1. RESEARCH TOPIC AND CONTEXT

Brecht is considered one of the most European playwrights who directly and indirectly influenced the Iraqi theater. This influence is due to how every Iraqi director lived, especially the subject of the current research, Qassim Mohammed. Brecht's approach is based on fighting capitalism and highlighting the tragic side of every society. At the same time, he tries to alienate ideas, that is, to renew or criticize them by making the viewer reach those results himself. Based on Qassim Mohammed's childhood background, his living in a poor society, and his belonging to a simple family, this way of living enabled him to get acquainted with Brecht's style in theater and then transfer those theatrical experiences to the Iraqi theater.

The research discussed the goal that both Brecht and Qassim Mohammed aim to reach: an attempt to educate the community and make it aware of the suffering and misery that surrounds it, resulting from a person's ignorance of himself. The research studied a group of Qassim's plays, through which he tries to alienate the prevailing traditions in society, that is, in other words, to replace old ideas with modern ones that do not intersect with the customs and traditions of Iraqi society. Through this method and the modern characteristics derived from Brecht's method in theatre, the importance and relationship of the research came to link the contemporary Iraqi theater with the modern European theatre, especially the Brecht method. So, the most important topics related to the topic of the current research will be discussed, namely: Westernization, awareness, the personality of the actor on the stage, decoration, music, lighting, and other characteristics that characterize the Brecht theater and that affected the Iraqi theater.

1.2. FOCUS AND SCOPE OF THE THESIS

The influence of Brecht's theater on contemporary Iraqi theater is one of the main topics that has not been dealt with very little. The importance of this subject stems from its consideration of filling some gaps related to the orientations of the Iraqi theater. The research deals with attracting and enlightening the viewer with a set of theatrical characteristics inspired by modern European approaches. It also deals with the Iraqi theatrical ability to direct society toward the necessary awareness to overcome adversity and suffering. These details encouraged to study the impact of the Brecht epic theater on the Iraqi theater, especially after choosing one of the Iraqi directors, Qassim Mohammed. The director was chosen because Brecht's theatrical approach directly or indirectly influenced his plays.

The research also discussed the extent to which theatrical performances develop awareness among the viewer and what Qassim Mohammed aims at in theater. The Iraqi director benefited from Western experiences, especially Brecht's experiences in the theater, as they contained many theatrical energies taught in colleges, institutes, and theater schools. Those schools were influenced by Brecht's methodology in acting, directing, decoration, lighting, music, and many others, which brought with it a map of the advancement of contemporary Iraqi theatre. At the same time, these theatrical characteristics can only be directly applied to Iraqi society if these

characteristics are refined and commensurate with the prevailing customs and traditions in Iraq. Based on this aspect, the relationship between the Iraqi theater and the Brecht epic theater will be linked. The method in which Qassim Mohammed tries to delve into the Brecht approach without destroying Iraqi heritage and traditions will be studied.

1.3. THE RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The importance of the research stems from its consideration as a source for many studies in the field of Iraqi theater, especially the discussion of some of its most essential chapters related to its roots in the Brecht epic theatre. The current research highlights the most critical characteristics that characterize the contemporary Iraqi theater, which derived those characteristics from European theaters, especially the Brecht Theater. The research also benefits workers in the field of theater, including writers, directors, and actors, and provides them with some experiences that others adopted earlier. The current research sheds light on the Iraqi director, Qassim Mohammed, who contributed to the formation of the foundations of modern Iraqi theater, mainly when he relied on Westernization, directing, and writing methods according to Brecht's theatrical vision. From here stems the importance of the research in being the first to delve into the analysis of some of the most critical plays of Qassim Mohammed according to a modern theatrical style that simulates in its details the Brecht epic theater. It also provides educational institutions and art education departments in the faculties of primary education and the College of Fine Arts, the theater department, with a study that will benefit them in their specialization.

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

The current research addresses some of the problems related to the orientation of contemporary Iraqi theater. The research sheds light on the most influential director who contributed to the rooting of the Iraqi theater, Qassim Mohammed. The study analyzes his plays according to a modern European vision, or what called Brecht's theatrical approach. It can be said that the research is trying to prove that the characteristics of the theatrical Brecht or the so-called Brecht Epic Theatre influenced the Iraqi theater. However, there is no evidence related to this aspect, the

study of the orientations and inclinations of the essential Iraqi directors and the presentation and analysis of his plays according to the Brecht method help to fill in the gaps related to the trends of contemporary Iraqi theatre. For more clarification, a set of questions has been developed that the research will answer, namely:

- What is Brecht's epic approach to the theatre?
- How was Brecht's theatrical approach simulated in the Iraqi theater?
- How did contemporary Iraqi directors benefit from the characteristics of the Brecht Theater?
- Who is Qassim Mohammed, whose theatrical vision was influenced by Brecht's theatrical approach?
- What are the most critical theatrical characteristics observed in Iraqi theatrical performances, especially in the plays of Qassim Mohammed?
- Is the Iraqi theater still based on Brecht's approach to the present day?

1.5. LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE RESEARCH

The research aims at a set of points that can be summarized as follows:

- Disclosure of the essential theatrical characteristics of the Brecht Theater in the Iraqi theatrical performances directed by Qassim Mohammed.
- Formation of knowledge frameworks for the Iraqi theatrical performance based on the Iraqi audience's interaction with the environmental contexts in which they live.
- To achieve the goal of the research, it will be used the descriptive analytical approach to study some of the most critical plays of Qassim Mohammed according to Brecht's theatrical vision.
- The theatrical models of Qassim Mohammed are intentionally chosen according to their authorship and directing them according to Brecht's theatrical approach to reach conclusions that contribute to analyzing the most critical theatrical characteristics adopted in the Iraqi theater in general and Qassim Mohammed's theater in particular.
- On the other hand, these plays were chosen because of the elaborate theatrical directing by senior directors who could give aesthetic and artistic value to the theatrical performance at that time according to Brecht's theatrical approach.

- As for the weaknesses in the current research, the need for sources related to the research subject sheds light on Brecht's theatrical approach in the plays of Qassim Mohammed.
- This lack of theatrical sources did not help to analyze other plays by Qassim Mohammed, nor did it help expand the field of research to Iraqi directors who were more influenced by Brecht's approach.

Regard to the research limits are as follows:

- Objective Limit: Studying the impact of Brecht's theatrical approach on Qassim Mohammed's theater in Iraq.
- Spatial limit: Iraq
- The Temporal Limit: Theatrical Performances Presented in the Twentieth Century by Qassim Mohammed.

1.7. STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

To achieve the research goal, the research had to divide the research into a group of chapters. The topic and context of the research will be dealt with in the first chapter. Here, basic information related to the research topic will be explained. The focus and scope of the research will be addressed, in addition to the importance of the research topic related to the influence of Brecht's theatrical approach on the Iraqi theater in the plays of Qassim Mohammed. On the other hand, the factors that prompted to conduct the research will be studied, in addition to the objectives, questions, and problems that were studied according to the descriptive analysis method.

The second chapter will deal with the study of theatrical values and the characteristics of theatrical performance. It introduces the theater and sheds light on its essential characteristics and values. The third chapter dealt with European theater in the twentieth century, as it dealt with the essential European playwrights and writers who influenced European theater, including Brecht. The chapter also dealt with the historical course of Brecht and his role in the theatre. He also studied Brecht's epic theater and shed light on its essential characteristics. The fourth chapter dealt with contemporary Iraqi theater and studied the most influential playwrights, authors, and directors, including Qassim Mohammed. The chapter also sheds light on

the life of Qassim Mohammed in detail and his role in building modern Iraqi theater. How did Brecht's theatrical approach influence it?

Concerning the fifth chapter, it analyzed the most important plays of Qassim Mohammed, which are *The Palm Tree and The Neighbors*, *Once Upon a Time*, and *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor* which were chosen due to their convergence with the Brecht method in performance, acting, and vision. The last chapter dealt with the most important conclusions, which were written in the form of paragraphs and points.

1.8. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopted the descriptive approach in analyzing the plays of the research, which is one of the essential scientific methods, as it fits with the nature of the research orientation. It accurately diagnoses the phenomenon by analyzing the information to achieve the research objective. The plays were selected according to a set of Brecht's theatrical characteristics observed in the selected plays. For example, Westernization, misery, suffering, the bourgeois class, decoration, music, the lack of a hero's personality on the stage, the importance of the event, revolutionizing the viewer, raising awareness, and others, through which Qassim weaved the epic theater of Brecht.

1.9. LITERARY REVIEW

The research looked at a group of previous studies and books; he stopped at three studies closest to his study. The first was the study of Fasih Jarjis Asfar (1997), entitled *Elements of Scenography in the Iraqi Theatrical Show*. It is a doctoral thesis from the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad. The thesis topic was limited to identifying the nature of scenography as a concept within the theater through the historical approach to the emergence of scenography, as the research included in the historical description and the influence of scenography elements in the theater in general. The research community consisted of the Iraqi theatrical performances that were presented in the city of Baghdad. The research sample dealt with examples of Iraqi theater performances of the experiences of four Iraqi directors, namely Sami Abdul Hamid, Salah al-Qasab, Qassim Mohammed, and Awni Karumi. The research may choose an intentional sample closest to representing his research community, and the intentional sample is formed based on the nature

and objectives of the study. Concerning the research method, it was used the descriptive approach in analyzing the sample models. Regarding the research tool, the research used the observational method to analyze his sample samples.

The second study is the study of Jabbar Judy Al-Aboudi (2009) entitled *Aesthetics of Scenography in the Iraqi Theatrical Show*. It is a master's thesis from the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad. This study was limited to scenography aesthetics only and dealt with the concept of scenography in general and what are the scenography elements. After presenting previous studies related to the subject of the current study, there were some points of similarity and difference between the current study and previous studies in the following respects: The current study differed from the first study of Fasih Jarjis Asfar, as the current research studies the impact of Brecht's theatrical approach on the Iraqi theater, especially in the plays of Qassim Mohammed. In addition, the research dealt with some of the Iraqi theatrical personalities who were dealt with in Jarjis' research. Then the research dealt with a model from the Iraqi theater, Qassim Mohammed. The research attempts to study and analyze its theatrical tendencies, especially its influence on the Brecht epic theatre. The current research is far from the concepts on which Jarjis relied in his study. This research used the extent of the influence of Brecht's theatrical approach on some Iraqi directors. This study agreed with the current study in using the descriptive approach in analyzing the sample models and the research tool; both researchers used observation in analyzing their sample models.

Concerning the second study by Jabbar Judy Al-Aboudi, this study approached the current study with some theatrical elements. However, it differed with it in terms of influence and place of influence, in addition to the formation of the research community and its units of directors and scenographers in general. It also differed from the current study, which examined only one director and analyzed the extent to which he was affected by one of the most European theatrical characteristics, the Brecht approach. This study dealt with multiple Iraqi samples, while the current study had European and Iraqi samples to clarify the closeness between these personalities and theaters. This study also came close to the current study using the descriptive approach in analyzing the sample models and the research tool; both researchers used observation in analyzing their sample models.

From the preceding, this thesis was unique in that it was a study that dealt with the influence of one of the most critical European theaters, which is the Brecht Theater, on the Iraqi theater, especially the Qassim Mohammed Theater. Also, this research found approaches between the European and Iraqi theater, especially concerning the role of characters on the stage, decoration, lighting, and many others.

The third study is a published book by Bahaa Mahmoud Alwan (2022), entitled *The German Epic Theater with an Iraqi Vision*. The book includes a study of the epic theater movement since its inception in Germany at the beginning of the last century and the factors that led to its emergence, indicating that its reflection on the theatrical movement in Iraq was at the hands of the pioneers of the Iraqi theater, such as Ibrahim Jalal (1921-1991), and Sami Abdul Hamid (1928-). The author discusses the significant influence played by the German playwright and director Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) on the world stage. It also illustrates Brecht's contribution to creating a theater that bears the concerns and sufferings of human societies through its reliance on a new method represented by epic thought, where the method of presentation and directing, as well as the use of sound effects, lighting, and decoration, intersect with the traditional theater or what is called the Aristotelian theater.

The above study differs from the current study in that it dealt with the influence of Brecht in general on international theaters, but it is a study with an Iraqi vision at the same time. It deals with some Iraqi personalities, while the current study dealt with the influence of the Brecht Theater on one personality, the Iraqi director Qassim Mohammed. In some chapters of the book, Bahaa Alwan deals with the study and analysis of the nature of the theater and the factors that led to the emergence of the epic theater, the epic theory in theater and theatrical performance spaces, and discusses several German plays that were represented in Iraq in comparison with the original versions. The current study differs from the study of Bahaa Alwan in that it is a study that sheds light on the personality of Qassim Mohammed and the extent to which the Brecht Theater influenced him. It also dealt with some of his most important plays in the twentieth century. It is a study from a narrow perspective, as it studied and analyzed some of the essential characteristics of Brecht's theatrical, in contrast to Bahaa's study, which generally dealt with Brecht's concepts globally.

CHAPTER TWO

2. ELEMENTS OF AESTHETIC COMPOSITION IN THE ARTHICAL PERFORMANCE

There are fundamental elements of theatrical production that can be addressed as follows:

First: Configuration: Composition is the art of decorating and arranging elements in different ways that the artist uses to express his emotions, as it comes from a creative skill (Al-Azzawi, 2003, p. 8). The art of theater directing is a technical craft, if it is creative and depends on what is formative, structural, structural, specific, or anthropomorphic. In other words, what can be seen can be believed to happen in the present and not in the past, as in the play (Amal, 2009, p. 16). The formation is to organize the presence of the characters and other blocks in the theatrical work, maintain their balance and stability, and consider the subject of focus.

A - Concentration is the first factor in the formation, as every theatrical group must possess a main body or body. The first problem facing the theatrical director is the problem of choosing the person on whom the spectator's eye falls directly, as this depends on the importance of the character in the scene (Harf, 2011, p. 15). The following methods can obtain focus:

- 1- Body posture: The person who adopts a complete posture will get the focus.
- 2- Surface: If all other factors are equal in force, then the surface at the bottom of the stage is the strongest and is the one that will get the focus.
- 3- The area: If several people are distributed on the stage, and they do not form a specific shape, then the actor standing in the middle of the stage is the one who will take the focus.
- 4- Height: Height attracts the viewer's attention, and the focus will be on the person standing or sitting on a chair about a group sitting on the stage (See figure 2.1).
- 5- Contradiction: by contrast, one of the factors giving importance can be found. If one of the actors is in a different position than the other actors, he will take focus (Dean, 1972, p. 135).

6- Stability: It is one of the form factors, as it stabilizes the image and links it with other parts on the stage, satisfying the spectator's desire. The Earth's gravitational force works for materials in organizing the overall picture on the stage, leading to stability. It is done by equalizing the weight of the characters at the bottom left and bottom right of the stage (See figure 2.2).

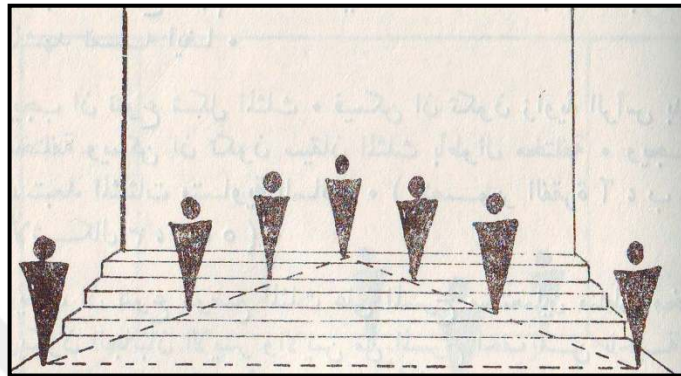


Figure 2.1. *Focusing by Height* (Hassoun & et al., 1980).

The number of stable elements needed to stabilize the theatrical image varies according to the number of materials present on the stage (O'Neill & Boretz, 2012, p. 38).

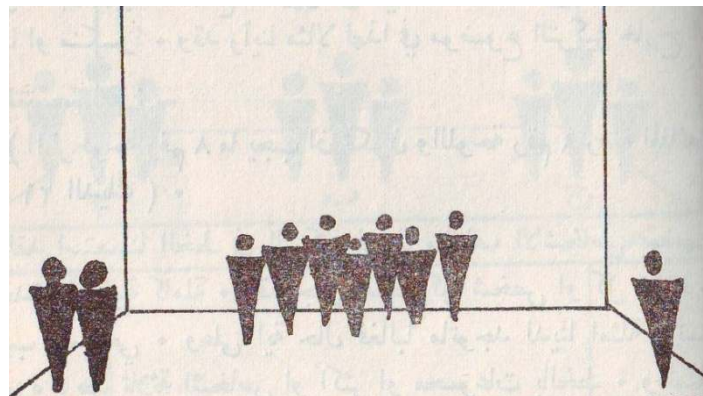


Figure 2.2. *Stability* (Hassoun & et al., 1980).

7- Relay: It links the units together on the platform by distance. This prescribed distance must be of regular frequency or recurring appearance estimated from that distance. When it was discussed succession comprehensively, it means a distance relationship (see Figure 3) (Dean, 1972, p. 177).

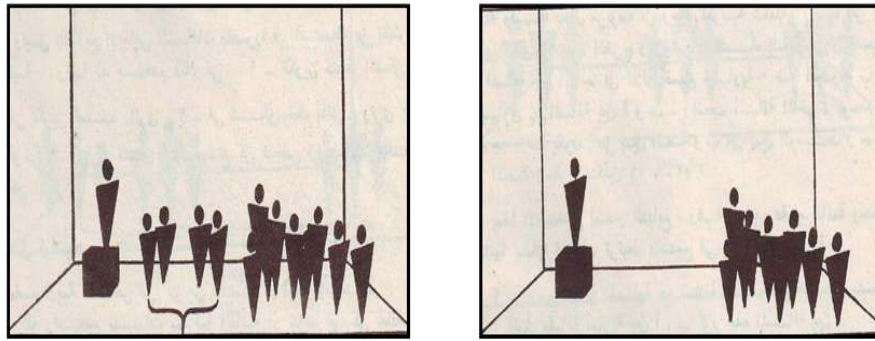


Figure 2.3. *Sequence, add these people to give the image a sequence* (Hassoun & et al., 1980).

8- Balance: It is one of the factors in achieving theatrical formation. It is an event equivalent to the theatrical picture in terms of the distribution of theatrical movements, characters, colors, shadows, sizes, and lights, (see figure 4) (Hamada, 1971, p. 119). Through the preceding, the theatrical balance can be divided by maintaining the balance of the visible masses on the stage; alternatively, through the aesthetic, sensory balance that is born from the regularity of our impressions and our senses of its balance through the equalization of the conflicting forces or the filling of the theatrical space.

Theatrical performances in the twentieth century are characterized by a diversity of more than one space in a single theatrical performance, with the employment of appropriate artistic forms in an open space so that the value of places is highlighted: Camp, cafe, bar, and others. This distinguished the scenes in Brecht's play with its dark colors and simple abstract style to perform its function efficiently.

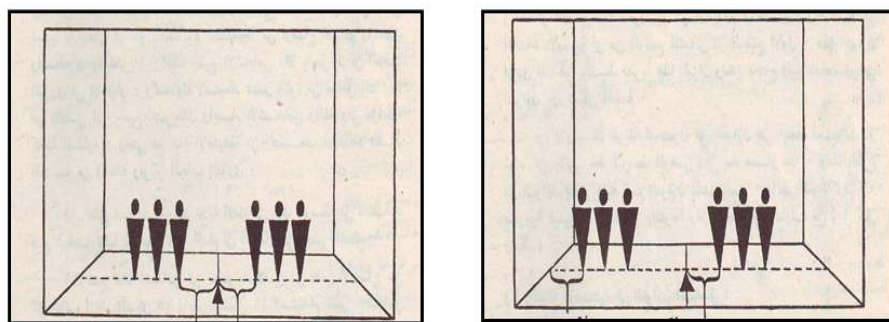


Figure 2.4. *Balance* (Hassoun & et al., 1980).

Second: Imaginative Photography: It is the integrated whole of the director's hypothesis on stage, which suggests its paths in the author's text and the movement

of the characters (Hamza, 2010, p. 39). In everyday life, one person's relationship with another and physical expression has the value of a narrative. Since instinct and instinct always make a person stay away from those he does not love or oppose while drawing closer to those he loves and trusts. This depiction of the emotional state helps the director find the appropriate place to put each of his characters on the stage so that they are related to the other characters (Dean, 1972, p. 204). The research concludes that the imaginary depiction is the embodiment of the author's idea in every moment of the play and the interpretation of the theatrical group relations visually on the stage.

Third: Theatrical movement: It is an essential factor that must be considered as a contributing factor in the theatrical performance with the change of scenes in the theatrical performance. It contributes to creating a compelling image that expresses the change in the existing relationships between the characters, leading to the creation of a renewed graphic image. It is also not limited to the movement of the actor but the movement of decoration as well, and both must be based on a motive for it that serves as logical reasoning for the movement (Kashi, 1989, p. 10). Accordingly, the theatrical movement is divided into three sections according to the motive that causes it, namely:

1- Straight movement: it occurs when the motives are strong, and this type is usually reserved for critical situations.

2- Curved movement: People get used to walking in a curved line unless there are vital motives that push them to walk in a straight line. Moreover, often a person walks in a curved line if he engages in multiple relationships, such as the movements of the character of Hamlet before he is determined to avenge his father; they are curved movements.

3- Zigzag movement: Either relationships attract a person towards something or push him away from it. If the two relations come together simultaneously, the person revolves around the thing and does not know whether to advance or decline. The movement has multiple values, some tactical, such as entry and exit, and what is necessary, imposed by the scene's situation. Like the movements of Othello's character after he suspects that his wife is cheating on him, it expresses zigzag

movements (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 45). It aims to get rid of monotony to reach what the story tries to reveal through the movement of the characters and the beautiful formations formed in their wake, whether these movements bear a local or global character (Hamza, 2010, p. 41). There are three possibilities for timing movement with dialogue: movement before, movement after dialogue, and movement with dialogue. The first confirms the dialogic sentence, the second emphasizes the movement itself, and the third reinforces the movement and the sentence (O'Neill & Boretz, 2012, p. 61). The kinetic aspect is not limited to the actor's movement but depends on the viewer's movement. Some plays need a change of scenery after each chapter, after each scene, or during the scene. In this case, the director must create harmony and harmony between the movement of the actor and the movement of the decorator. In addition, some movements strengthen the theatrical scene, exceptionally long scenes such as eating, drinking, and sports (Hamada, 1971, p. 188).

From the preceding, the research concludes that there are two types of different movements, some of which are required by the theatrical text, and the director or actor suggests some.

Fourth: Rhythm: its purpose is to create harmony between the parts of a single theatrical element or between all the elements. Rhythm in acting is the observation of vocal and kinesthetic combinations and their associations. The directional rhythm indicates the harmonious relationship between lighting, representation, and scenery. The vigilant director discovers that each character has its rhythm of movement, emotion, and sound. Some characters are slow, and some are fast, and each of these cases has its personality (Hamada, 1971, p. 86). It is a feeling that the actor adopts in arranging his reactions, whether these actions are visible or audible, and they are organized together to organize the movement of the action.

Furthermore, since naturally inclined to order and renounce chaos, responding to the rhythm with something represents an adaptation and harmony that makes us feel satisfied. Rhythm is the factor that gives life to the play, and it links them together in a homogeneous form of action, actors, and dialogue. Each play has a basic rhythm that is distinguished by it, there is a rhythm for dialogues and sentences, there is a rhythm for the environment, place, and time, and there is a rhythm for each character

(Hamza, 2010, p. 44). Theatrical performance that has a single pace and does not depend on diversification tires the audience. The director prefers to introduce rhythm into his play through the spontaneous emotions of his sensitive actors towards the sentences, then place the text suggests, the movement of the play, and the characters they portray.

In addition to the full knowledge of the types of scenes that are often parallel, complex, or transitional, they may carry the features of the climax of these scenes or the turning point in the course of the play in general (Hamza, 2010, p. 46). In this case, it was believed that the director must maintain the basic rhythm of the play through these escalating changes towards the climax. However, the rhythm did not come to the play on its own, so the director must work to impose it on his own by defining the beginning and end of each scene.

Fifth: Mime: it is the action that the actor performs without accompanying words through facial gestures and body movements to convey a specific idea away from speech and sound. The actor may be able alone to present a work depicting a dramatic story using mime as the actor tells the story and content of the play through pointing, dancing, and movements with the help of expressive means (Annjev, 2009, p. 34). The actor must also be able to express feelings and thoughts by communicating with the audience through movement rather than speech. It relies on the body as a tool for communication, suggestion, illusion, symbol, body muscle movements, and expressions, known as body language. In body language, the plot is performed by the actor's physical expressions without words. In other words, the actor's body creates all the other visual elements (Krotrosky, 1982, p. 31).

There are various means by which actors can extract the underlying meaning of a sensation to draw attention to their state of mind at a particular moment during acting (Stanislavsky, 1973, p. 80). One of these examples is dance, as dance forms an integral part of mime. A distinction must be made between mime and work. The growth and development of mime depend on the decorations on the stage, the characters, and their entry and exit points. The gestures, postures, and movements not related to the instruments on the stage are called mimes (Nicole, 1980, p. 230).

2.1. DRAMATIC VALUES

Dramatic values represent the fundamental pillars and ingredients in the play, such as the idea, personality, plot, dialogue, and general psychological atmosphere. The playwright is the best who realizes the secrets of his literary work, but he cannot convey the meaning to the workers in the production and raise the actor's mind to bring him closer to the spirit of the text. Therefore, rearranging and coordinating requires the theater director to be familiar with the fundamental laws that control the dramatic creation process proposed by the playwright in his text. The dramatic action is essential through the force of the conflict, whether this conflict is embodied in the physiological motor act or the emotional or intellectual act that governs the characters. He must also be able to rearrange life and not photograph it. The dramatic text is not required to depict life as live it but rather as it should be through the careful selection of life events and actions, which fit with the general idea of the play (Kashi, 1989, pp. 36-39). These dramatic values can be identified as follows:

First: The basic idea the seed in the play: Every play has an idea; every play must be based on an idea or a basis or what critics call a logical introduction that is accepted. The first step in the theatrical director's work is excavating, revealing, and interpreting the seed of the play. Through this, the playwright tries to prove it with the events and people he chooses to represent and embody this idea (El-Desouky, 1962, p. 397). Undoubtedly, the interpretation of the play and highlighting of its content must bear the personal character and the subjective justifications of the director and actors. Despite this, it is necessary to carefully consider the author's artistic nature by understanding his mentality, values, and ideals, which could be revealed as a creative seed for the play (Ashour, 1983, p. 238).

The theatrical director must also try to discover the main idea with a quick mind, a bright thought, a delicate sense, and knowing what the writer wanted to say. The theatrical director must interact with the play in thought, sense, goal, and technical skill to present theatrical scenes with something of innovation, contemporary, and creativity (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 115). Just as the play, whatever its type and model, is not devoid of the basic idea the seed or the goal, whether this idea is original and the author's creativity himself, or it has been prepared anew by another author.

Second: The plot or the knot: What is meant by the plot is the general organization of the play as a united being. It is the process of engineering theatrical parts and linking them together, and accordingly, every play, even if it is absurd, is not without plot (Hamada, 1971, p. 127). The plot is defined as the story that the writer organizes in a way that achieves the purpose that the writer aims at when writing his play. The play of this type attracts the viewers and their eagerness to know the consequences of the occurrence of events, which are the fruitful results of the characters' actions. These characters cannot grow and progress unless they are based on convincing and exciting events simultaneously. Therefore, the plot is the arrangement of the story's context with its events, attitudes, and actions, and the preparation of its characters, movements, and conflicts in an elaborate, exciting, and beautiful manner.

Third: Personality: There can be no play without the characters' presence; they help create the event and speak the dialogue. The playwright creates the dramatic character, who relies on his life experience to download it as part of the ideas he wants to convey to the recipient. It considers the development of the conflict aspect, the creation of the dramatic situation, and the interpretation and analysis of the external human behavior stemming from the internal motives of the personality (Rushdi, 1968, p. 48).

There is a conflict in all the characters and the possibilities of the character's conflict with another character, a group of people, self, environment, and non-living materials. These conflicts must move from the principle of generating the dramatic action arising from the conflict, even if it is not revealed in the dialogue (O'Neill & Boretz, 2012, p. 290).

When the theater director studies the dramatic values in the play, he must study the character as an essential value of the dramatic through the dimensions of each character and the knowledge of the qualities that characterize it. Gary describes these dimensions that every human being consists of three dimensions and components, which are his physiological physical or organic entity, his physiological entity social, and his psychological entity psychological. If examine these dimensions, it will noticed that the physical, social, and mental entity includes the genes that drive our actions. Moreover, personality is the natural fruit of the material being of humanity and the influences imposed on it by its environment (Aegrey, 1956, p. 124).

Considering what has been mentioned, the successful dramatic character must be rooted in reality and influence the play's events. The director must realize the different dimensions of the characters of his play to communicate them to the actors so that they can embody them in a way that appeals to the recipient.

Fourth: Dialogue: Dialogue is one of the essential elements of theatrical composition, as it clarifies the basic idea, evaluates its proof, discloses the characters, and bears the burden of the rising conflict to the end. Dialogue exists to be said, so there should be specifications in the dialogue such as the phonetic character, shortness, length, and its relevance to the event and the characters. For dialogue to be distinguished, there must be an ascending conflict, which gives it strength and life. The dialogue must also bear the characteristics of the characters, so every sentence a person says should reveal the present and indicate what will be in the future because the theatrical dialogue is no less potent than any muscular or psychological dramatic act (Bakther, 1984, p. 81).

Moreover, the language of dialogue must match the personality, and the purpose of matching the language of dialogue to the personality is to bring it closer to the living reality and to carry the intellectual, sensory, and emotional dialogue also to the viewer (Ashour, 1983, p. 227). The theater director, whenever he is a connoisseur of literature and a writer, is closer to understanding and comprehending dialogue and awareness of the meaning and significance of each line in the play. Then he can communicate that understanding to the actors to embody it in the play dramatically.

Fifth: The general psychological atmosphere: The general psychological atmosphere is one of the dramatic values that give the recipient new feelings and sensations from what he watches or listens to. It affects his psychological, mental, and emotional state. Those influential impressions harmonize, mix and escalate, putting the spectator in an excellent psychological and mental state. It also allows the recipient to integrate what he feels from the psychological repercussions and the theatrical work presented to him (Al-Salami, 2009, p. 64).

2.2. ELEMENTS OF CREATING THE GENERAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ATMOSPHERE

The elements that make up the general psychological atmosphere in the play are:

- 1- Dialogue: It could be found the general psychological atmosphere through the rhythm of the word, the meanings of the sentence, the music of dialogue, and the distinctive structure of dialogue in the play.
- 2- Plot: There are easy, complex, and other factors that arouse great interest, and each type of plot creates a different general psychological atmosphere.
- 3- Characters: Characters create the general psychological atmosphere through the characters' quality, nature, and internal and external actions.
- 4- The main idea: the idea creates a general psychological atmosphere through the comic and seriousness of the idea.
- 5- The place: places for their own sake and privacy create a general psychological atmosphere, for the atmosphere of the desert is different from that of the swamps, for example.
- 6- Time: The general psychological atmosphere varies from time to time; for example, our era differs from a previous era, just as any season of the year or any time of the day or night produces different psychological rhythms.
- 7- Movement and formation configuration: it is formed through the details of silent movement pantomime and formations of various types.
- 8- Fashion: Costumes' quality, colors, and styles create a different psychological atmosphere and multi-forms and colors.
- 9- Theatrical scene: creates a theatrical scene and the related theatrical elements accessories and theatrical equipment used by the actors to change the general psychological atmosphere.
- 10- Lighting: Thanks to the advancement of technologies in the field of lighting, the director can take advantage of lighting to create a unique and exciting psychological theatrical atmosphere, according to the nature of the event and scene.
- 11- Social and psychological status: The social and psychological status of the characters, such as social status, knots, and mental illness, can create a general psychological atmosphere for us, and the theater director can benefit from it in his

work (Harf, 2011, p. 13). The theatrical director must be familiar with the type and character of the general psychological atmosphere in order to be able to create the psychological and mental state of the recipient during the dramatic artistic work that he embodies.

2.3. THE DIRECTOR WORKED WITH THE DRAMATIC VALUES IN THE PLAY

The director goes through several stages from the moment he adopts the direction of the play until it is presented to the audience. These stages are:

1- Discovery stage: The first stage of the interaction between the director and the theatrical script before proceeding with the directing process.

It is the beginning and the first station from which the director's work starts, as it requires the director to be educated and aware of all kinds of cultures and philosophies so that he can extract the dramatic essence from the theatrical text (Kashi, 1989, p. 50). It is done when the director has the artist's imagination, the teacher's sensitivity, and skill, the executive director's wisdom and competence, and his ability to organize (Whiting, 1970, p. 210). After that, the director re-reads the text more than once to understand the play and reproduce it again according to the director's vision. This vision is also clarified to the actors and technicians and a statement of the artistic and aesthetic purposes of the work and the place and time of the theatrical performance.

2- Covering stage (packaging): After the theater director finishes the discovery stage and studies the basic idea well, he packages the dramatic values in the play. It is called the coverage stage, i.e., strengthening the weak values and closing the gaps in the offer until the exit moves to the third stage (Hamza, 2010, p. 44).

3- The stage of embodiment: It is the stage of revealing the directorial vision in front of the audience, called theatrical performance. It is done only by raising questions about each part of the theatrical act.

The more specific the director's questions from the beginning were, the more quickly he could reach the playwright's intent to complete the process of external

embodiment. It transforms the fictional narrative imagination into a tangible physical representation (Kashi, 1989, p. 53).

Theatrical directing executive steps: There are several executive steps for theatrical directing, for which the director is primarily responsible, and they can be divided into the following sections: it is based on the preceding, one of the theatrical director's duties is to realize the goal that the author wanted to convey to the viewer and to know the details of the text and the intellectual and emotional values it contains to announce them aesthetically in the theatrical performance system.

1- Choosing the actors: This process is critical and carries a lot of complexity and high sensitivity. Most directors who allow compliments that may lead to the failure of theatrical work fall into it. Therefore, the director must adopt one of the accepted selection methods by interviewing the actors. It is also possible to rely on communication to announce the existence of theatrical work and specific characteristics of the actors and then interview the applicants. Sometimes directors' resort to contacting private offices to help get the exemplary character (Hamza, 2010, p. 45).

2- Assigning roles to actors: It is the process of selecting actors and assigning the play's roles to each. It is done after studying each actor's sensory and technical characteristics according to his circumstances, role, and personality (Hamada, 1971, p. 119). For the director to be able to assign the actor to the role that suits him, he must keep in mind the characteristics of each character to match them with the capabilities of each actor. The director's audition process checks the actor's vocal, physical, and cultural abilities and adaptability to the work group. Therefore, a section of the directors deliberately conducts multiple tests for the actors to settle on a group of them believed to be able to perform the roles as required. These features enable the director to interpret, analyze and understand the character and the style of its embodiment (Kashi, 1989, p. 81).

3- Exercises: After the first readings, the director organizes schedules prepared for him by the theater director for work and group and individual exercises. The number of these exercises depends on the length and nature of the play. It goes through several stages:

The first stage: This means the joint session of the work team and the integration of their technical, administrative, and technical frameworks, which is preceded by the stage of preparation and preparation (Al-Obaidi & Abboud, 2002, p. 87). In the first reading, the director explains his ideas about the play, how to treat it, the dimensions of the characters, their relationships, and developments. It also shows the dramatic values, as discussions occur between the working actors, and the director presents his designs for decoration, lighting, and makeup to show to the actors (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 50).

The second stage: After conducting the first readings, the director prepares an output plan and a complete study of the exercises after clarifying the idea for the work group and building the output plan. He moves the imagination that he saw in the text in theory on paper the script. It also shows the main lines of his directorial vision for the work group so that they can know his point of view and deal with him according to these constants to allow the actors to memorize roles (Hamza, 2010, p. 47).

In the third stage: the director is busy at the moment of starting the theatrical work, especially at this stage, with the gradual training of the actors. This is done by preparing and regulating walking, movement, the body of the actors, and their position relative to each other and their place according to the audience's vision of them (Intaghem, 1983, p. 42).

Fourth stage: It is the final stage that takes place in the presence of decoration, lighting, costumes, makeup, music, and sound effects, two or three days before the theatrical performance. In the meantime, the director tries to provide a rehearsal for the theatrical work without interruption so that he can watch the work entirely and allow the actors to give and integrate and adopt the feelings of the scene and know the time limit of the theatrical performance (Whiting, 1970, p. 226). Many plays require rehearsal periods of four to six weeks, six days a week, three hours a day. Some professional teams may cut the training period in half and double the application time per day 3 weeks of training, six days per week, 6 hours per day (O'Neill & Boretz, 2012, p. 406).

Theatrical directing, like the rest of the arts, rejects stagnation, repetition, and the situation in a specific, non-renewable form. It gives way to experimentation, contrast, and diligence. Intelligence, imagination, and desire enter into the revival of the written theatrical text. This is through a renewed directorial vision that differentiates its reading from one director to another through the way they invest in the elements of the aesthetic composition in the theatrical performance.



CHAPTER THREE

3. HISTORY OF EUROPEAN THEATRE & PIONEERS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The drama was not born with the beginning of the emergence of the ancient Greek theater in the fifth century BC, but it began as seeds in the poems of Homer, which is considered the first product of Greek thought. In the history of theatrical production, the closest person to the director's personality is the chorus coach in Greek drama. It is like what came to us from the ancient Sumerian civilization in the dialogues of the epic of Gilgamesh, the Babylonian holidays, or the Pharaonic civilization in the dialogues Osiris. Although these genres are technically known as epics, it can be noted that the dialogue scenes Dialogue occupy the most significant part of these epics so that they stand side by side with the storytelling (Ibrahim, 1994, p. 6).

Moreover, the directing process, in its beginning, was classified as the secondary task of the author, and it was no more than a process for organizing and presenting the presentation; that is, it is an organization of what will be presented. Since the author is the basis for the theatrical act process from the beginning of the writing of the text to its presentation, on this basis, he was the first to undertake the process of organizing the text (Amal, 2009, p. 12). His work was not limited to teaching the craftsmanship of dance to the dancers individually and mastering the timing of the movement, but also an interpretation of the content of poetic recitation and responding to it in the form of situations, movement, and rhythm (Dean, 1983, p. 40).

The ancient Romans were the first imitators of the Greeks in the practice of theatrical art. They borrowed many techniques, whether in text, presentation, or architecture, with other additions to their innovation. Historians and critics have unanimously agreed that medieval theater took on many traditions and nature of Roman theater. There are many plays by the Roman poets, such as Ennius (239-169 BC), Pachyphus (220-130 BC), and Acius (170-68 BC). It is evidence of the reverence and adherence of the Romans to the Greek ideals (Stump, 1961, p. 11). The Gospel plays were performed inside the church and then moved outside, where a simple platform was erected on which the actors act in the public squares. Moreover, the view on the platform developed later, as three rooms were built, the first representing Heaven, the

second representing Hell, and the third being the middle representing Earth. In the Renaissance, significant developments occurred in theater architecture and theatrical scenery. The Italians developed a covered theater building with a frame that separates the stage from the spectators' hall. Painted scenes were also used, and their organization and preparation became a specialist, similar to our theater director, who was called the show teacher or master of the show (O'Neill & Boretz, 2012, p. 251).

Theatrical productions and performances followed this method in the Middle Ages in Europe, during the Tudor era in England, and during the reign of Louis XIV in France. He was the first actor in the band to organize the show and direct the group where Shakespeare was known to have done this task, as did Molière in France. In the play *The Storm* in 1547, the show's supervisor was holding the text with his hands and directing the show. There was also another supervisor for the decor and another for preparing the music and effects in the plays of the secrets (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 10). The director's tasks have gradually crystallized so that directing becomes an art that consistently organizes all the elements participating in the theatrical performance. It is considered that Leon de Suomi, who worked as a theater guide for the Mantuan Palace, as the first artist who paved the way for the emergence of the modern director (Harf, 2011, p. 11).

There is no definite beginning to know who deserves to be called the first director in history, as is the case with most of the beginnings of things. However, some justifications support taking the starting point for *the Duke of Saxe-Meningen*, that amateur whose band first appeared with its precise output in Berlin on May 1, 1874 (Whitting, 1970, p. 202). The Duke did most of the work in theatrical productions, designing the scene, the clothes, the movements of the actors and their poses, and interfering in the details (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 14). Furthermore, he had laws in the band's dealing with the text represented in how to accomplish and achieve it ultimately, and among these laws are:

- Structured and long-term training
- Preparing scenes belonging to the historical period covered by the text
- Preparing clothes belonging to the era
- How to deal with accessories (Amal, 2009, p. 25)

It must be noted that the Duke of Saxe-Meningen inspired many artists after him, led by Andre Antoine in France and Konstantin Stanislavsky in Russia (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 15).

In Britain, the efforts of the great actors who lead the theatrical show are becoming more focused until they have complete power over it. This power involves selecting the text and the actors and discussing the technicians. The idea of allocating one individual to supervise theatrical production was also settled, and David Garrick (1717-1779) was one of the most critical technical trainers. He also had a significant role in influencing all aspects of the theatrical profession. He was followed by a group of pioneers in the English theater to develop the profession of directing, among them the actor Philip Campbell (1757-1823) and the actor William Charles Macready (1793-1873), who was called the Prince of Directors (Harf, 2011, p. 12). For Jordan Craig, 1872-1966, it is considered the most prominent name in the history of English theater in the twentieth century. He is considered one of the pioneers of the natural opposition and one of the advocates of returning the theater to its origins in magic and poetry. However, England, which gave birth to Shakespeare, a writer, and director, and the founder of an immortal theatrical movement, kept pace with the developments of the theater in the twentieth century and contributed to many of the creators of theatrical work (Ardash, 1979, p. 279).

Jordan Craig also realized theatrical production units and looked at scenery, lighting, and clothing as interconnected production units related to the whole. Moreover, he invented decorative folded and portable curtains used in a theatrical performance Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with Russian director Stanislavsky in Moscow in 1911 (Dean, 1972, p. 30). It was believed that a disciplined theatrical show is the product of the collective effort of a group of artists under the leadership of the director, who ultimately sets the standards for the artistic, intellectual, and methodological unity of the show. Harley Granville Parker (1877-1946) was also considered one of the first modernizing directors who contributed to the arrival of modern directing art in the English theater. He also has many theoretical studies in directing and the art of the actor, the most important of which is his book *The Theatre, the Example* in 1922, in which he presents his theory learned from his studies and experience. In this book, he reveals an essential fact in formulating the theatrical performance that can be called

diversity within the framework of unity. He means the human experiences represented by the group of participants in the theatrical work (Ardash, 1979, p. 280).

Parker calls for alignment between the performer on the one hand and the artist-writer on the other. Tyrone Jettry (1900-1971) is also considered one of the most influential theorists of the director's work, although, like Parker, he works on the traditional grounds of neorealism. He also has subtle touches in theorizing the director's work, including saying that the right way is for the director to study the possibility of the actors presenting the best interpretation of the character. It is better for the owner of the central role to be contemporaneous with all the steps of the work from the beginning and to create a human atmosphere of understanding with all members of the working party. This factor allows the possibility of exchanging ideas and unifying the language of understanding to reach a theatrical performance resembling a musical symphony (Ardash, 1979, p. 286). Peter Brooke aimed for the theater to be as necessary to people as eating and to begin its struggle with fundamental problems.

Peter Brook formed his troupe of actors of different nationalities in Paris in 1970 under the title *International Center for Dramatic Research* to achieve this goal. He created a new language called Urgast and devised a play with the same name represented by his actors in 1971 at the Shiraz Festival. For many who watched it, Orgast was an unforgettable experience and was said to be the beginning of something not only new to Brooke but no parallel in the history of the theatre. As Brooke sees it, the theater must include the serious and the comic, the spiritual and the insane, because theater is for the elite and the ordinary people. It is to create a distinct form of theater that anyone on earth can understand.

By founding an international band, Brooke did not intend to develop a global synthetic style of acting but to exchange cultural experiences in which language is a significant experience. It was why Brooke was interested in exploring the language of tones and sounds that had no comprehensible meaning. In this regard, he says, "The actor must be able to construct his psychoanalytic language of sounds and gestures in the same way that a great poet creates the language of his words" (Avens, 2007, p. 256). What distinguishes the creative director from others is that he possesses the power of imagination and the ability to establish individual connections

between things and link them to conscience to achieve a state of creativity in theatrical performance.

In Russia, the directors were divided between supporters of the idea of honesty over the author's ideas, and this was called the interpreter director. He does what he can to show that basic idea and communicate it to the spectator through his tools. Alternatively, an opponent of this idea, that is, the director is a new author looking for other ideas in the play to highlight them through the basic idea called for by the original author. This type was called the creator director. Although Stanislavsky (1863-1938) was one of the directors who was concerned with the fidelity of the text and the interpretation of the author's ideas, he mentioned that the play should not come out as it was written but as his imagination suggested to him (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 24). Stanislavsky's method was known as the psychological technique, which aims to teach the actor how to arouse the unconscious creative nature in himself, leading to the vital unconscious creative work. Stanislavsky's approach is divided into two main parts:

- 1- The work of the inward and outward actor about himself
- 2- The work of the esoteric and exoteric actor relates to his role (Bentley, 1975, p. 225).

Stanislavsky says, "The unreal time on the stage was over, and we needed not to depict life itself as it takes place in reality, but rather as we feel it" (Avens, 2007, p. 19). The actor is one of the essential tools of the director through which he conveys the ideas and values that the author presents to the audience. The old method was for the director to introduce the character in front of the actor and the actor to imitate the director. As for the modern method, it is the indirect method that depends on the analysis of the character and the interpretation of its motives by the director, and the actor, based on that, plays the role, sensing the sincerity of the internal motives of the character's action.

Stanislavsky was the first to adopt this method in his famous method called emotional memory. Robert Lewis has drawn a graph of Stanislavsky's method, noting that his method, which he cited in his books *Actor Preparation* and *Character Building*, is one of many acting techniques. Stanislavsky says, "If your cheeks swell

or your face turns pale when you recall an experience, and as long as you are still afraid to recall a particularly traumatic event, we can conclude that you have an emotional memory” (Stanislavsky, 1973, p. 222). Likewise, the feeling of the honest representative is part of total honesty (Lewis, 1983, p. 134).

First and foremost, the theater must earn the respect of the spectators and force them to pay attention to what is happening on the stage. In this regard, Stanislavsky states that the spectator must be trained to act within the limits of order, to force him to sit in his seat before the start of the theatrical performance, to make him attentive and not to make noise or sneeze during the theatrical performance (Stanislavsky, 1973, p. 324). It was not long before several artists following Stanislavsky and his school came out and started calling for new ways of treating character, theatrical performance, acting, and animating actors. At the head of these was Fez Fuld Meyerhold, who invented the biomechanical method, i.e., body mechanics and structural view. He sees the task of creativity in an actor as more than simply introducing the viewer to the director's plan.

The actor cannot influence the spectator unless he absorbs the author and the director together and expresses himself on stage. The director suggests to the actor some movements that, in his opinion, would compel the spectator to understand the internal dialogue in the way the director and the actors hear it. The movements of the hands, the postures of the body, looks, and silence determine the reality of people's mutual relations (Saber, 2017, p. 81). Theatrical performance art depends on skilled artisans in technical crafts that transform the show into a workshop for an architectural building in which people and actions interact and move. It is a world of its own.

In Germany, Max Reinhardt (1873-1943) appeared to deny the realist style that prevailed in that period. Influenced by Craig and Appiah's ideas, Max dispensed with painted surfaces to enter stereoscopic scenes. In 1910 he directed the play *Oedipus the King* at the Schumann Circus in Frankfurt to capture that mix of actor and spectator that goes back to ancient Greek theatre. One critic describes this by saying:

The circus accommodated about five thousand people and was full of spectators until the doors. I was utterly overwhelmed by the emotional impact of this

substantial astonishing work as I listened to the influential German voices. As I watched the enormous arena filled with trained crowds and chanting Oedipus Oedipus under the colored floodlights, this was the product of a continuous arena (Avens, 2007, p. 98).

Thus, Max Reinhart preceded the time of these modern experiments with this directing by fifty years. As for Piscator, from 1893 - 1966, he was the first to embrace the idea of political theater and present it from two aspects: form and philosophical position. He did not want to play the artist's role but rather the leading political role through the medium of art. The masses must play their role in the theatre, for without their participation, the theater loses its meaning and becomes a form of luxury.

He wants a theater that expresses the basic needs of the masses, he also believed that political theater should not be satisfied with presenting individual events but rather go beyond that to analyze their social and economic repercussions and report all the historical facts related to them (Ardash, 1979, p. 197). Piscatore says about the play *The Pluritary*: "We have excluded the word art from our program. Our plays are statements by which we try to interfere in contemporary events and break into the arena of political action" (Kamal, 1966, p. 45). Furthermore, Piscatore is the one who started practicing epic directing using modern cinematic means, narrating historical and documentary facts and presenting time-spaced events that are shown at the same time. He also used the magic lantern to display photographs of real characters and provided viewers with information and addresses written on signs explaining the plot. He also interrupted a performance to broadcast a recording of Lenin's voice (Saber, 2017, p. 71).

Piscatore's purpose was to transform the theatrical performance into a powerful demonstration of solidarity with the working class, who made up the majority of spectators, where the representatives were from the same class, and it was necessary to unite all of them to achieve their common cause (Ronald, 1972, p. 83). From the preceding, it is noted that Piscatore does not hesitate to use any possibility available to serve the theatrical performance, not only to provide entertainment to the audience but to invite them to take positions of interest to them. After them came Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), the most significant German dramatist of his time, and perhaps

wrote more extensively on theater theory than any other playwright (Bentley, 1975, p. 74). A full title will be written about Brecht due to his prominent role in European and world theater in the twentieth century.

In France, André Antoine (1858-1943) carefully planned the theatrical movement. His landscapes were sometimes extreme, to the point of erecting the fourth wall, when he called for the need to reconsider the relationship between the stage and the hall. That is the necessity of a complete separation between the two spaces through the fourth wall and the illusion that what is happening in the plank area is a natural reality. To achieve this, he distributed decorative pieces in a way that generates in the spectator an illusion (Whiting, 1970, p. 203). Jean-Louis Barrow (1910-1994) also appeared in France, which Yaghi describes by saying,

France in the twentieth century was made available to one of the famous theater figures, Jean-Louis Barrow, who seems to have been greatly influenced by Craig's method. After reading the theatrical text, he is subject to the idea that he has and pays attention to all the artistic and psychological impulses and influences that he enlists in the service of the text (Yaaghi, 1980, p. 74).

In Switzerland, the writings of Adolf Appiah (1862-1928) had an impact on strengthening the practical witness to the importance of the director, and he was the first to call for intermarriage between all theatrical arts. Appia was interested in designing the visual technology for theatrical performance to ensure a state of harmony between the actor and his visual surroundings, allowing the actor to move quickly in it and achieve an aesthetic, poetic image (Whiting, 1970, p. 202). He also emphasized the unity and homogeneity between the components of the theatrical performance, as he wanted his theatrical works to be distinct and ideal. Therefore, he preferred directing the modern play to fit the arts of decoration, lighting, and movement.

In Ireland, George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950) broke many rules during his long life. He turned the stage upside down when he produced his plays *The House of a Broken Heart* 1919 and *St John*, 1923 (Caesar & Cleopatra, 1898). His play is a historical play of great importance, with some excellent scenes. However, the play *Man & Superman*, 1903 contains the essence of Shaw's philosophy. Perhaps the play *In the Golden Days of the Good King Charles* 1939 makes clear its shimmering

flicker, in which there is a pleasant imaginary page of history; it also contains an elaborate interview between the characters of Charles II and his brother James (Vargas, 2005, p. 191). By employing the historical figure, Bernard Shaw wanted to put forward a meaningful and purposeful idea: that these personalities do not differ from us in their characteristics and features except that they lived in different stages. He stripped historical figures of the character of legend (Asslin, 1987, p. 45).

In Bologna, Distinguished directors appeared here and there and made several additions to theatrical direction. The most prominent addition to contemporary theatrical directing is the Polish Jerzy Grotowski, who called for a return to the essential element of theater and relying on it, which is the actor. The actor should be away from all the later additions in decor, costumes, and makeup (Krotosky, 1982, p. 129). The importance of the director in the twentieth century in theatrical productions has evolved until one play has more than one director: one for dancing, another for musical parts, and a third for lighting and others. They all usually work under the supervision of a general director who may have his assistants and advisors (Hamada, 1971, p. 236).

Through the preceding, the European director in the twentieth century had a comprehensive vision of all elements of theatrical performance, starting from the dramatic text and the accuracy of its selection to the employment of the place and benefiting from the data of theatrical space and scenography use. With the scenographer's help, the European director developed the methods of directorial processing and the mechanism of technical work to provide a reading commensurate with the spirit of the age. In the same context, the Arab director has proven his ability to lead the representative performance of the performers and create a circle of interconnected relationships that bring these formats together in a unified aesthetic and artistic system.

3.1. BERTOLT BRECHT (1898 - 1956)

Brecht is considered one of the few artists who renewed and experimented in art, as he combined the greatness of the thinker and the greatness of the writer. He is a beautiful quotation and a creative man of the theatre, as theatrical experiences matured him until he came out with new results that are still under discussion to the present day, especially in his re-reading of the previous and contemporary theater record (see figure 3.5). Among the German authors who influenced Brecht was the writer and poet Georg Büchner, who furthered Brecht's penchant for the Elizabethan history style. The two preferred the opposing hero Voystik for Buechner and Andreas Krugler of the night drums for Brecht (Owen, 1981, p. 23). Georg Kaiser also had a significant impact on Brecht's theater through elaborate dramatic construction and masterful dialogue management through the influential word; he also addressed the characters with scenes full of controversy and developed historical events by using them as an example that carries the author's message (Hamdan, 2014, p. 21).



Figure 3.5. *Bertolt Brecht, the father of epic theater* (Rai, 2014).

The Brecht Theater is called the Epic Theatre. The epic theater aims to enlighten the spectator, regardless of his level of education or culture, with social and historical reasons and facts, with the intent of provoking him to move towards changing the world. It tries to make the spectator an observer, stalker, questioning, and attentive, rather than exhausting his vitality and effectiveness by merging emotional participation with what is happening on the stage. The epic is initially dramatic poetry that narrates the events and does not represent them. Its work is limited to the play, the tale of accidents, and the narration of what happened to its heroes from the

events away from these accidents and characters (Bentley, 1986, p. 74). As for the epic term associated with Brecht's name, it is derived from the usage that Aristotle applied to the story that is not subject to the unity of time (Teller, 1990, p. 189). It indicates that the basic meaning of the term, according to Brecht, is what indicates a sequence of events narrated without being bound by time and place.

Brecht addresses the masses' emotions and consumes their fighting energies by realizing the passions of pity and purification. Brecht aimed to revolutionize the public through teaching and awareness, revealing scientific facts learned from reality, and exposing history in front of it, with the intent of provoking it to participate in reforming the world positively. It tries to turn viewers into revolutionaries by presenting and analyzing contemporary historical facts (Ardash, 1979, p. 206). He did not use history in the abstract. However, He included it in his ideological message by using the data of historical events and comparing them with the current situation experienced by the public. In this, Brecht says, "We must seek pure and strange formal innovations. We must extract the original intellectual content of the work and study for this purpose the historical situation at the time of its emergence; we also get acquainted with the position and special feature of the classical author" (Al-Zubaidi, 1983, p. 133).

The epic theater is based on the method of Westernization, history, and dialectics as theoretical foundations for a theater that serves man at the level of education, education, and awareness. If in his book *The Art of Poetry*, Aristotle had adopted the concept of purification as the centerpiece of his theory of classical theatre, then Brecht had worked to undermine this theory from its foundation. He also presented the theoretical and practical alternative to it for a non-passive active theater, so he came up with the concept of westernization, whose goal was to create a state of separation between the audience and the theater. It is a method that prevents the audience from uniting with the play and remaining conscious by demolishing the fourth wall that separates the audience from the theater.

The theory of epic westernization is that the author, director, and actor put a distance between himself and the audience so that he thinks, understands, analyzes, and realizes all the events presented to him without showing an emotional inclination or influence. The westernization of the event or the character means losing everything

obvious, familiar and straightforward and raising astonishment and curiosity because of the incident itself (Brecht, p. 124). The play illustrates situations that can change in real life, while westernization makes the familiar strange. The characters in Brecht's theater were distinguished by introducing themselves, becoming narrators, and then commenting on the action.

It describes the sequence of thoughts of the other characters, predicts the outcome of the action, and solves the complexity of the play. In the British tale that replaces the traditional plot concept, a series of scenes do not steadily present the action but are rather fragmentary. Sometimes representation takes place from two sites simultaneously (Feiler et al., 2012, p. 32). In his quotations from the world theatrical heritage, this is clear, as in *Antigone* on Sophocles, *St. John* on Bernard Shaw, and *Edward II* on Marlowe. In these treatises and quotes, Brecht favors the theory of art commitment and its social effectiveness over the theory of artistic value. He also sets the new political epic law to supersede the old law of dramatic theater developed by Aristotle (Ardash, 1979, p. 207).

The purpose of the drama for Brecht was to teach society how to survive, Brecht wanted to provoke a reaction rather than encourage the kind of passive acceptance found in the old bourgeois theater (Avens, 2007, p. 106). For Brecht to achieve Westernization, he used several means: narrator, music, mask, lighting, decoration, as well as history, whether famous or legendary. Then re-presenting the history after emptying it of its emotional aspects by presenting a picture of what happened during these events and not what happened. The author also strips these events of the element of temporal connection and emotional emotion; Brecht resorts to using the narrative element of epic theatre, whether through the narrator or the chorus, which is compatible with the nature of historical, mythological, and popular writing (Ardash, 1979, p. 210).

In this way, the narration achieves many advantages, as it informs the audience of the background of events and describes the ideas and motives of the characters. The director sometimes informs the audience of the end of the play before it takes place to protect the audience from anticipation and to wait and allow them to think and judge. It deals with historical events and theatrical heritage texts with alteration and change to subject them to westernization. Westernization makes the phenomena that

appear to a person at first glance to be self-evident, and there is no need to study them. They are suspicious phenomena, and man must develop in himself that strange view that helped Galileo to observe the vibration of the chandelier; it helped 'Newton' to notice when the apple fell from its tree to the ground, thanks to which they came up with laws that were not known before. History in Brecht's approach has uses and applications that differ from those of its predecessors, as the author and director in this theater rely on what Brecht calls 'history'. It means presenting what is historical or heritage in a contemporary form from the point of view of the audience's age. It allows the audience to judge these events given their distance from them in time and, therefore, their emotional separation for the public to know that as long as things have changed, it is possible to change the present conditions (Mohammed, 1984, p. 84).

It applies historiography to create an alienating effect in the theatrical text. It means responding to history or making history. It does not aim at a theater that makes human feelings within reach and which the historical field of human relations allows, but rather a theater that plays a decisive role in social change. It is by exposing the different social structures of the past eras of the differences between them so that they all seem similar in one way or another to our era (Sakran, 2001, p. 46). He relied on two main ideas in his theatrical work Westernization instead of the sympathy that the theater walked for a long time, which traces its origins back to Aristotle. As for just, it means the sign that emphasizes the westernization factor. He also used all kinds of arts to reach the goal, such as singing, dancing, documenting, narration, and light to focus on the gesture to express social behavior. Brecht called for a non-Aristotelian drama to break the chain of temporal and spatial units and the unity of the subject, which Aristotle referred to in his book *The Art of Poetry* (Drunk, 2001, p. 41).

From the preceding, the European theater director in the twentieth century is the planner of the theatrical production project. At the same time, he is the thinking and creative mind of the details and faculties of theatrical performance, starting with selecting a group of good actors to embody the play's characters and their training. He is also the technical and intellectual leader of the theatrical process through his supervision of the implementation and the leadership of the craftsmen, workers, and

technicians involved so that the theatrical performance expresses the vision that the director settled on in directing the text.

3.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF BRECHT'S THEATRE

The idea of giving an epic character to the theater, as formulated by Brecht, is an integrated theory in the theater because it deals with the theatrical process in all its dimensions, including writing the text, preparing the work for presentation, directing, performance form, decoration, scenography, and music. It also includes the impact on the spectator (Elias & Hassan, 1997, p. 456).

Brecht's epic play relies on narration, as it is constantly exposed to the past. From here, the director must scientifically follow the narrative to convey the event to the viewers who consciously attended to follow up and realistically convey a legend (Sadiq, 1998, p. 129). Some studies indicated that Brecht borrowed the term epic from Aristotle to define a narrative type that allows describing several parallel events (Frederick, 2011, p. 156). This term was used because the epic did not adhere to a specific time and place. The Brecht Theater aims to make the spectator a part in changing reality; that is, it refuses to make theater a means of entertainment but rather a means of raising awareness among the viewer and trying to change his reality.

As Nahid El-Deeb defines it, Brecht's epic theater is a theater that tells a story in the form of independent paintings, far from illusion. Its characters stem from the individual's social function, on the basis that the individual is a product of the environment and social conditions. The auxiliary elements of the show, such as decoration, lighting, and music, are based on a kind of independence, without being complementary to the text, as they do not contribute to any dramatic effect under the slogan of dispelling the illusion (El-Deeb, 1983, p. 286).

Among the characteristics that the Brecht Theater bears is the disappearance of the upward structure. That is, there is no culmination of the event, and the conflict in it is not presented as a declared and direct conflict between man and man or between man and the world, but rather the spectator deduces it as a conclusion (Elias & Hassan, 1997, p. 457). Brecht's vision of the theatrical character differs from the dramatic vision. He focused on her behavior, which is a historical, social behavior. It is not an

integrated thing that represents the person in life but consists of a group of actions and incompatible speeches.

Brecht tries to get the viewer out of the negative state of delusion by urging the authors and directors to try to deceive the audience with the truth, avoid simulating reality in the usual way in the traditional theater and turn to a new kind of composition, whose purpose is scenes and paintings that narrate certain events, which in their totality express An idea or issue, without creating tense situations and dramatic conflict that arouse the viewer's emotions or push him to delusional truth or merge with some of the characters (Al-kit, 1978, pp. 421-422).

So, the purpose of theater for Brecht is not integration but rather urging the viewer to think and play a positive role. That is why Brecht was keen on building, directing, and acting the play to give the spectator another position, which is criticism by retrieving the educational function of the theatre and by introducing the elements of westernization, which is the basis of epic theory.

In sum, Brecht's epic theater is characterized by a set of elements, which are: narrates events, awakens interaction in the spectator, forces the spectator to take a stand, presents the viewer with a picture of the world, makes the spectator confront something, the spectator confronts events and studies them, carries both the spectator and the viewer A specific personality in order to allow them to think critically, the human being is subject to change and has the power to change things, the human being is the subject of research, each scene stands alone, relying on quantitative accumulation, and reliance on the mind in interpreting the scenes, the hero has no status in his capacity but rather is a symbol of collective destiny, In addition to features related to decoration, lighting, accessories, and music.

3.2.1. Westernization in Brecht's Theatre

Another characteristic of Brecht's epic theater is Westernization. The simplest definition of this term is to make the familiar strange, which allows the viewer to see familiar things in a new light that raises surprise and strangeness in himself. Then he seeks to understand it in a new way (Elias & Hassan, 1997, p. 457).

Brecht defines Westernization by saying, “The Westernization of an incident or a personality simply means ridding that incident or personality of what is in it that is apparent, known, or self-evident, and awakening amazement or curiosity instead of it” (Brecht, 2002, p. 80). In other words, Westernization is to rediscover things again with a new vision and style. The purpose of this theatrical method is to allow the spectator to resort to constructive criticism from a social point of view (Bentley, 1986, p. 82).

Also, Westernization was not only at the level of an element of the theatrical show but also included all theatrical show elements: text, actor, decoration, lighting, and others. Therefore, it is necessary to apply an integrated approach to all theater elements and tools to achieve the required Westernization effect. Westernization, in its broadest sense, is not a matter of artistic methods but rather an approximation of daily life to the area of feeling, and it is not a formal technique. However, a means to awaken the recipient's awareness and urge him to take a position.

3.2.2. Brecht and Theatrical Experimentation

Brecht is considered the most critical playwright engaged in experimentation in Western theatre. He revolted against the Aristotelian theater by turning the corner of the stage into a stage for a contest and an epic polemical and polemical struggle, to involve the audience to issue its positions and decisions on a range of social, humanitarian, and political issues.

In this epic, famous mass theater, the actor has turned into a lawyer using dialectical logical dialogue, armed with arguments and evidence. The Brecht Theater is political and politicized and stems from ideological dimensions with leftist and communist tendencies. He intended to push the audience present to express his opinion frankly and objectively. Brecht rejected the concept of purification and personal reincarnation and replaced them with the concept of dialectical change. That is, the theater has the function of revolutionizing and enlightening society and urging it to change its conditions. Brecht advised the actors to avoid being absorbed in their roles and to reveal to the audience that they were acting. The actor's divergence from his role in the Brecht dramatic format is called Westernization or non-integration.

Among the techniques he used at the level of directing was breaking the fourth wall and hanging political and revolutionary banners and slogans. Like his teacher Piscator, he also used the movie screen to convey realistic and natural scenes from society.

Hence, Brecht is considered one of the most important pioneers of documentary theater, or documentary theater, along with Peter Weiss and Piscator, and this is evident in his play *The Greatness and Misery of the Third Reich*. One play that is taken as evidence of Brecht's rebellion from the traditional Aristotelian drama is *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. This play includes two themes: the conflict over the land and who is more entitled to its ownership. Is it the actual owner by inheritance who left the land barren, or the farmer who planted it and miserably cultivated it, planted it, fertilized it, and harvested it? The first topic remained unresolved to be answered by the second part.

The second topic is represented in the struggle of the natural and breastfeeding mother over who has the authority to take care of the son and raise him; the natural mother has neglected her son because of her self-interest and adornment. Not to mention her evasion of the heavy responsibilities of raising children. As for the incubator, she breastfed the child, fed him, and assumed his responsibility until he grew up and became handsome. Finally, the mother wanted him back. However, the incubator refused, claiming she was the son's birth mother. The case was submitted to the judge, who demanded that a circle be drawn with chalk, and the child be placed in the middle of this circle, and he ordered the mother and the incubator to pull the child firmly so whoever attracted him quickly the child was hers.

So, the mother attracted him with lightning speed, about to cut off his hands. At the same time, the incubator refused to do so out of sympathy for the child and pity for him to avoid offending him, so the judge ruled for the incubator, depriving the birth mother of him because she was not worthy of raising a child, caring for him, and taking care of him. Brecht's theatrical renewal is that it is the only dramatic one that radically revolted against the Western Aristotelian theater, establishing a theater called the Aristotelian theater based on westernization, breaking the fourth wall, using cinema in the theater, and using the documentary theater. After that, different types of theatrical experiences appeared that carved the curve of artistic and aesthetic

experimentation, such as the experience of the theater of the absurd, the Dadaism movement, the Antonin Artaud theatre, the surrealist theatre, the existential theatre, the contemporary theater in its various directions, currents, and schools.

3.2.3. Brecht and the Non-Integration School

This dramatic school is associated with the German director Brecht, who revolted against the Aristotelian theater and the elements of classical theatre. He tried to create an experimental theater based on westernization, the theory of divergence, and non-integration in the role, especially in his book *A Little Organum for the Theatre*, in which the actor must move away from purifying reincarnation and integration into the role. He must show the spectator that he is only acting, so he must change his clothes in front of the audience, and the lighting is clear and luminous so that the spectator does not fall into his false illusions (Shakir, 2005, p. 43).

Hence, in Brecht's perspective, the function of theater is based on education, enlightenment, awareness, incitement, and change, not moral, religious, and psychological purification. A group of Arab and Iraqi theatrical trends, theories, data, and directorial experiences were influenced by Brecht's approach, which is based on breaking the fourth wall, which represents the technique of non-integration, and belief in the theory of westernization and exclusion (Shakir, 2005, p. 43). It also can notice this in the plays of the Iraqi director Mohammed Qassim, whose details and their relationship to the Brecht method will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. HISTORY OF THEATER & ACTORS IN IRAQ

4.1. CONTEMPORARY IRAQI THEATRE

Iraq cannot be mentioned without directly jumping to mind that great ancient civilization, the civilization of Mesopotamia, the Tigris and Euphrates, and the oldest known written languages Sumerian, and cannot pass easily without stopping long at Babylonian literature. How not, and the epic of Gilgamesh, written in twelve books, is a witness to that. Between Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, and Babylon, the Iraqi cities remained a source of civilizational and cultural radiation, of which the theater had a large share (Tamara, 1985).

The first establishment of the Iraqi theater was in the eighteenth century in the city of Mosul, through presenting some theatrical performances in churches and religious schools. The most important real theatrical experience was at the hands of Priest Hanna Habash, who wrote the comedy *Adam and Eve* and *Youssef Al-Hassan*, a romantic comedy, so these three texts were the real beginning of the Iraqi theater. Then this theatrical movement moved to Baghdad in Christian and Jewish schools and then to Islamic schools, which had reservations about this kind of art as a departure from religious ideals (Habash, 2022). The revolution of 1920 against the English colonialists had a tremendous and profound impact on theater development in Iraq, where a theatrical movement emerged that kept pace with the revolution and expressed it through youth theater groups.

Among the most important of these was the national theater troupe founded by Haqqi al-Shibli around 1927, when they presented their plays in social forums and clubs, including the play *The Martyr of the Constitution*, the play *Wa'tasimah* and *Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi*, all of which are titles that bear a revolutionary patriotic breath and call for liberation and defeating colonialism. There, Haqqi al-Shibli's talent developed and matured, and when he returned, the government at that time sent him to France to study, and when he returned from France, he established the acting branch at the Institute of Fine Arts. After the first group graduated from the Institute of Fine Arts, a troupe was formed called The People's Acting Troupe; among its founders were Ibrahim Jalal and Jaafar al-Saadi, and they presented one work, which

is for the sake of the homeland. After that, the Modern Art Theater troupe was found in 1952, and these troupes began to present their theatrical activities. Transmitted from the foreign theater (Habah, 2022).

Furthermore, with the interaction of the audience with the theater in the Institute, he encouraged theatrical groups to go out to theaters that operate daily outside the scope of the Institute, so Professor Jalal established the Baghdad Theater, which was a warehouse that he equipped and prepared to become a theater. The Palestinian Nakba and the revolution of the free in Egypt had a significant influence on the political nature of the Iraqi theater movement. In the 1950s, the playwright Youssef Al-Ani appeared, a model of the satirical political writer who presented scathing critical plays and established the phenomenon of famous comedy theatre. Among his plays are *Six Dirhams* and *Ras al-Shalila*. He formed a distinguished duet with Dr. Jalal in *The Palm and the Neighbors* and many plays with critically patriotic political content (Tamara, 1985).

In 1958, the Cinema and Theater Authority was established, and its first director was the artist Youssef Al-Ani. With this interest's establishment, another tributary of the Iraqi theater stimulated competition in performances. The actor and theater director Sami Abdel Hamid also emerged, who worked with Professor Hakki Al-Shibli, Director of the Cinema and Theater Department in 1964, and produced four theatrical performances with him under the name the national acting troupe, which won the admiration of everyone (Tamara, 1985). On the other hand, there were many theatrical groups, such as the July 14th Band and the Artists Union Theater Band and more than twenty-two other groups, in addition to the Government Theater Band

After the Folklore Dance and Singing Troupe, the national acting troupe was established in 1968 with the impetus and enthusiasm of Haqqi al-Shibli, following the example of the National Theater in Egypt. This troupe attracted many distinguished artists from all over Iraq, such as Aziz Abdul-Sahib and Mohsen Al-Azzawi, who says he built his hopes on graduates of the Institute of Fine Arts and had a role in persuading the families of those graduates to work in the National Theater (Habah, 2022).

During the sixties, several playwrights were sent to European and American countries. They returned with new cultures and schools to start a new phase in the Iraqi theater at the hands of Ibrahim Jalal and Qassim Mohammed, who paid more attention to the Iraqi folk heritage. They included it in their theatrical experiences, as in the play *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*. In the seventies of the last century, it was the golden age of Iraqi theater, when many theatrical groups appeared and flourished, such as the Popular Theater Band, Al-Risala Band, and Modern Artistic Theater Band. The private theatrical groups joined the national acting troupe, which created great competition between the national theater troupes and the state troupe.

Also, theatrical techniques developed a lot in this era, and the interest in decoration, scenography, costume, colors, and lights became greater. The seventies witnessed the renaissance of the Iraqi theater, and one of the most critical performances in this period was the play *The Pick and the Driver* based on the German playwright Brecht's text. The orientation of most Arab artists and intellectuals at the time towards socialist thought marked the works of writers and directors with their evident character, even at the level of translation from the world stage. As a result, the Iraqi theater sought to expand its effectiveness by acquiring other groups of audiences outside the cities (Habah, 2022). It turned to the countryside with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and by relying on young graduates of theatrical institutes who also contributed to revitalizing workers' theatrical groups in the cities.

The Iraqi theater was affected by the Iran-Iraq war, which lasted for eight years, fluctuated between positive and negative, and went through a period of contradictions between supporters of this war and opponents. For example, the playwright Aziz Khayoun had his point of view against the war, contrary to the direction of the state, so his plays faced a ban.

During the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the accompanying destruction, invasion, and complex conditions that the Iraqi society went through, the Iraqi theater continued to resist the occupation during and after the invasion. What might be called the theater of resistance appeared, and this was evident when a group of young people presented an impromptu show at the Al-Rasheed Theater, calling

themselves the band of survivors. As for the themes of post-invasion theater, they were painful and harsh and revolved around the previous regime, prisons, mass graves, freedom, and independence. Director Falah Ibrahim, in his play *I left the war inadvertently*, is the best evidence of this, as the play talks about a young man who was not allowed by war conditions to meet a girl. The only woman he meets in a public park he discovers is booby-trapped, symbolically indicating that even the dreams aspired to achieve are rigged and liable to explode (Habab, 2022). In this play, Falah Ibrahim tried to disentangle the feelings of the hateful and loving person, to discover that deprivation and loss of love are the reason behind hatred and thinking of killing. Likewise, his play *The Heart of the Event* talks about three people from ordinary people who die in an explosion in the street in Baghdad, so they talk to each other now of death and ask significant questions about these events.

The Iraqi theater after 2003 is considered bold and clear because true creativity is born from the womb of suffering. Despite all this, the Iraqi theater remains a significant, great theater with its artists and men. It achieves attendance and awards wherever it is found, with the will, intelligence, and courage of its makers, including directors, writers, and artists who can pass on their message and discourse. Intellectuals in bad times are responsible for their silence in front of future generations.

4.2. ACTORS OF THE IRAQI THEATER IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The play *Fath Amouriya* (1921) by Abdul Majeed Shawqi and the play *Fath Misr* (1924) by Yahya Abdul Wahid can be referred to as the first two Iraqi historical plays represented in Mosul (Al-Talib, 1971, p. 69). The writer, Bishop Suleiman Al-Sayegh, also emerged in the thirties, as he was able through his plays to depict aspects of Iraq's political and social reality in his time and to reveal the issues of that reality and its concerns. He supplied the Iraqi theater with several plays, including the scenes of virtue (1931), *al-Zabaa* (1933), the play of Prince al-Hamdani (1937), and others. In his play *Prince al-Hamdani* is when he depicts for us the aspects of life in Mosul during the era of the Hamdani state and depicts the intrigues and conspiracies being hatched in the palaces of the princes and the hidden hatred between members of the ruling family.

Instead, it depicts the reality of political life in Iraq when the play was released, as the conflict was most intense between King Ghazi and the men of Bakr Sidqi (Harf, 1988, p. 53). In the forties and fifties, the Iraqi theater witnessed many plays, which were a dry transfer of the reality of history, as they were devoid of technical elements and conditions. Then the writers who came after the Second World War and what followed changed the path that the first writers walked.

4.2.1. Khaled Al-Shawaf (1924-2012)

The fifties were characterized by the emergence of the playwright Khaled Al-Shawaf, who completed the two plays *Shamsu* (1952) and *Al-Aswar* (1956), which provided many technical elements and conditions. These elements were represented by the mature dramatic portrayal of the characters, the robustness of language and style, and the creation of the apparent conflict that arises from the dramatic act despite their lyrical character. Al-Shawaf remained a prisoner of vertical poetry and its classical structure linked to meter and rhyme. However, he combined the subject's innovation, the strength of the poetic style, and the quality of dramatic composition (Al-Zubaidi, 1967, p. 172). In the play *The Walls*, he highlights, with a conscious critical, analytical vision, that conspiracies, internal weakness, and the ambitions of neighboring countries led to the fall of Babylon.

4.2.2. Youssef Al-Ani (1927-2016)

Youssef Al-Ani was one of the Iraqi writers who dealt with history with its events and characters, influenced by the epic method of Brecht. Al-Ani, in the play *Al-Kharaba* (1970), reviews historical events through the ages and in different countries. He shows the human struggle with the forces of tyranny and his aspiration for a better life. The events of the play are transmitted from Iraq, as Gilgamesh turns from a mighty tyrant to a contemplator seeking immortality to the revolution of the twentieth against British colonialism, and then to Palestine and the struggle of its people to recover their stolen land, and from there to Vietnam and the people's struggle against the occupiers. Three narrators link the events in the play and comment on them (Abdul Hamid, 2010, p. 90).

4.2.3. Qassim Mohammed (1936-2009)

Qassim is a late Iraqi theatrical artist born in 1936 in a shop in Baghdad. His father owned a bakery. At first, his father refused his son's admission to the Institute of Fine Arts because he was not convinced of the usefulness of art in practical life. Qassim Mohammed did not despair but instead hurried to apply to the institute in 1955, where he studied at the hands of great pioneers such as Haqqi Al-Shibli, Ibrahim Jalal, and Jassim Al-Aboudi. During his academic studies, Qassim Mohammed acted in some works directed by Jassim Al-Aboudi, who personally adopted him and bet on his abilities. In 1960, Qassim Mohammed joined the Modern Art Theater troupe in one of the defining moments in his life and the troupe's life (See figure 4.6).



Figure 4.6. *Qassim Mohammed* (Leibi, 2009).

Qassim Mohammed presented several works of an unusual experimental nature, as they disturbed the Iraqi theater and shook it from the depths. Among those plays: *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors* 1969, *Baghdad forever between seriousness and humor* (1974), *Al-Kharaba*, which he co-directed with Sami Abdel-Hamid; lights on daily life, *Najma*, *Once Upon a Time* (1978), *A father for sale or rent*. Qassim Mohammed traveled to Moscow to complete his studies in theatrical arts and graduated from the State Institute there in 1967, after which he returned to Iraq.

After his return, he contributed to pushing the Iraqi theater forward, establishing his well-known school based on inspiration from the living heritage of the collective memory, focusing on experimentation, inspired by rituals, and above all, detonating the actor's energies and preparing him through exercise, then exercise, then exercise.

He settled in the Emirate of Sharjah in 1997 after receiving an offer to work in its national theatre. Qassim Mohammed has published many books on theater in addition to theatrical texts, the last of which was published in 2008 by the Department of Culture and Information in Sharjah within the studies of the theatrical series entitled *Shakespearean Visual Engagements*. He died in the United Arab Emirates at seventy-five after a struggle with an incurable disease that did not give him long. In 2009, his body was transferred to Baghdad and buried there. Some of his most essential plays will be dealt with in the next chapter, as they will be analyzed according to his vision of adopting Brecht's method in directing his plays.

4.3. SIMULATION OF THE BRECHT THEATER IN THE IRAQI THEATER

Although Brecht is a European phenomenon, and the intellectual concepts and social problems he tackled are related to the exploitative society and class struggle, the Iraqi artist finds himself intellectually close to the concept of Westernization, the historical vision, and the dialectical awareness of these concepts. Furthermore, this rapprochement is due to the social, economic, and political conditions that deprive the Iraqi individual of his freedom and living in a democratic society. Moreover, since art arises to meet social needs, it is easy to discover the intimate relationship between the performer and the audience in traditional artistic and cultural events. From this angle, contemporary Iraqi theater tends to achieve its social and aesthetic impact, build human intellectual awareness, and create the popular theatrical show based on the richness and diversity of oriental heritage forms and in connection with the discoveries of the contemporary European theater, including the epic Brecht (Tamara, 1985).

It can be said that the ancient Islamic society knew some of the forms and practices that contained many pre-dramatic elements, which were practiced as rituals and cultural events, such as rituals, various religious songs, individual and collective Sufi dances, and then the primitive pre-theatrical forms. So, preparations prepared the Iraqi public to absorb the theater phenomenon and then accept the concepts of Brecht's theatrical. By studying these theatrical roots, the epic as well as features of westernization at the same time, which can create a dynamic dialectical relationship

between the performer and the viewer and lead him to turn into a participant in the event or ritual (Tamara, 1985).

Theater in Iraq did not know Brecht until late. In the early fifties, the prominent playwright Jassem Al-Aboudi and his virtuous American wife Margaret Al-Aboudi, after their return from the United States, bore the features of Impressionist theater and the Stanislavsky school, and they did not introduce Brecht's theater to the Iraqi audience (Habah, 2022). Jassem Al-Aboudi has laid the Iraqi theater on modern scientific foundations, and the virtuous Mrs. Margaret taught the basics of scientific theatrical makeup. Many Institutes of Fine Arts students studied under her, including the playwright Abdullah Habah.

However, in the mid-fifties, those interested in theater began to read what was written about Brecht in Arab and Iraqi newspapers. In the mid-fifties of the last century, painter, playwright, and journalist Abdullah Habbeh wrote the first article about Brecht in the Cinema magazine, published by film director Kamran Hosni. He is the same director of the famous Iraqi movie *Saeed Effendi*, which starred the artists Youssef Al-Ani, Abdul Wahid Taha, and Nahida Al-Rammah. After the late artist Ibrahim Jalal returned from the United States in the early sixties of the last century, he worked on including Brecht's theater in the directing course at the Institute of Fine Arts and the Academy. Ibrahim Jalal adopted the Brecht School in the technical style. He adopted epic realism with a philosophical view, adding elements and formations of dance and music in directing (Habah, 2022).

However, the political repression did not allow the artist Ibrahim Jalal to achieve his project under the Marxist pretext of this approach. Ibrahim Jalal worked on this approach when he directed the play *The Death of Cleopatra* by Ahmed Shawky, *Macbeth* by Shakespeare, *Caligula* by Camus, and *Lanterns* by Taha Salem. Ibrahim Jalal's efforts were crowned with success when he directed the play *The Pick and the Driver*, which was adapted from Brecht's play *Puntella and Followed by Matti*, which was introduced by the poet and screenwriter Sadiq Al-Sayegh (Al-Mafarji, 2006).

The role of Puntella was represented by the actor Youssef Al-Ani, and the role of Matti was represented by the actor Qassim Mohammed. This play was the master's

thesis presented by Ibrahim Jalal at the Goodman Theater Institute in the United States during his studies. In 1964, the *International Series of Plays* published for the first time the text of Brecht's play *The Rule and the Exception*. The young playwright Ali Rafiq, a student at the Institute of Fine Arts, wrote a study of this unfamiliar style in Iraq at the institute (Al-Mafarji, 2006).

The young playwright received encouragement from the artist Jaafar Al-Saadi, and Ali Rafiq began preparing to direct this play. Preparation for this play required agreement with the poet Tariq Yassin to prepare the poetic text and prepare it musically. The late artist Kamal Al-Sayed took charge of composing, as he composed 11 songs, and it was his first musical work. After strenuous training on this new method, it was shown in 1965 within the fourth student theatrical season at Haqqi Al-Shibli Hall, and it is considered the first show of Brecht's works in Iraq. The play was shown for two days, but the Dean of the Institute intervened on the third day, prevented the performance, and emptied the hall of chairs under the pretext that the play was Marxist (Habab, 2022).

However, the performance director entered the hall forcefully and invited the audience to watch the play standing. The audience responded to the two-hour show. Artists Sami Al-Sarraj, Kazem Fares, Sahira Ahmed, Abdul Hussein Kamel, Hikmat Al-Kulw, Tahseen Shaaban, Awni Karumi, Qusai Al-Basri, Qassim Al-Malak, Faisal Saleh, and the decoration was designed by Faiq Hussein. Then, successively, plays by Brecht were shown in Iraq. Director Salah Al-Kasab directed the play *The Trial of Lucullus*. Martyr Kazem Al-Khalidi re-directed the play *The Rule and the Exception*. The director, Faisal Al-Muqdadi, directed the play *The One Who Says Yes, The One Who Says No*. Ibrahim Jalal directed the play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* after it was rewritten by the author, Adel Kazem, and called it *The Bagdad Coal Circle*. Just as Brecht's work was banned by Goebbels and the Nazi authorities five decades ago, the artist Awni Karumi also directed the play *The Life of Galileo*. Brecht's influence on contemporary theater was vast and controversial at the same time (Habab, 2022).

The director, the actor, the designer, and the composer maintain an equal position in the production, an innovation in theatrical art. Also, Brecht's Marxist point of view was a stumbling block in front of his integration with the Western theater. At the same time, his formal techniques in the service of aesthetic pleasure posed severe

difficulties in theatrical performance in socialist countries. Nevertheless, without a doubt, the scenes and clothes that Brecht used in his theatrical performances have become the most influential in contemporary theatre.

Perhaps it is clear that the influence of Brecht was not limited to some authors or to breaking the illusion and trying to cause shock, but all of this has become a recognized technique, and most playwrights do it. Brecht cast a shadow over directing, acting, and all the contents of the theatrical performance. The actor who convinces the audience that he is acting is one of Brecht's theatrical techniques. Furthermore, the viewer who does not dwell on the presentation or is under the illusion that what is presented is natural - because there is a distance to reconsider and think about the text, which is what Brecht intended.

Influenced by Brecht's concepts of epic theater aimed at pleasure and knowledge, these epic means can be discovered with their primitive roots in traditional Iraqi forms. Thus, Brecht gave the Iraqi artist how to research his traditional forms to create the specificity of his contemporary theater; where through these concepts, two trends can be identified in contemporary Iraqi theater:

1. Iraqi Traditional Theatre:

The Iraqi artist set the task of discovering and defining theatrical concepts and forms that serve his artistic ideas to address his society's problems. This necessitated a return to the ancient heritage with the importance of benefiting from all the developments of European theatrical art, especially the Brecht Theater, to reach theatrical forms far from the Western European concept. It also necessitated a change in presentation, i.e., the use of the open theatrical performance form. Indeed, this requires a change in the concepts of theatrical authorship based on the concepts of Aristotle.

Indeed, changing the author's relationship with the text's space, structure, and the topics it deals with. It imposed a change in the theater's relationship with the audience. Since the theater assumes the collective spirit of achieving knowledge and discovering beauty, the artist deliberately returns to the theater as a widespread festive phenomenon and ritual that can be held everywhere, just as Brecht believes in his theater. Despite the importance of rejecting the closed box theater according to

the concept of the European theater, the necessity imposes benefits from European theater forms, especially the epic Brecht theater.

2. Writing and Theater Space:

The art of theatrical directing had its importance in the twentieth century, so the director was called the creator and innovator of theatrical show laws and the conscious of the development of nature and society. Moreover, the director now imposes his presence on all the other artistic elements that fall within the show's creative process, including the text. Each era has its conscious author, and it can also be said that the director can be a second author of the text through his use of other artistic means in the presentation. It necessitated the importance of Brecht's epic theater, and in particular the principle of Westernization in the theater, to express the problems of the contemporary Iraqi man.

With the influence of political theater and Brecht's epic theater, the Iraqi director used many means that create a relationship between the spectator and the theatrical performance: such as theater within the theater or distributing the actors in the hall and making them part of the theatrical scenography where the audience sits around the stage, and the show becomes circular. The goal of westernization does not only mean preventing fusion between the personality and the public. It is an attitude of life. Westernization is an organic part of a dialectical view of the world, and it is this view that controls the entire process of artistic creation.

The significant influence of Brecht's Theater on the Iraqi artist and his audience also continued as a result of this theater's intellectual and political aspirations to work on changing human awareness and his relations with society. Brecht's ideas influenced many playwrights intending to write a play to reveal the nature of the social and political problems that their Arab and Iraqi societies suffer from, including Saadallah Wannous, Najeeb Sorour, Youssef Idris Youssef Al-Ani, Qassim Mohammed, Al-Tayeb Al-Siddiqi, Mahmoud Diab Jalal Khoury, Alfred Faraj, Ezzedine Al-Madani And Abd al-Karim Burshid, Abd al-Aziz al-Sari'i, Nour al-Din Faris, Adel Kazem, and others. It led to the formation of the features of an Arab-Brecht theatrical show, with the influence of Westernization. Many Arab and Iraqi performances still draw

from Brecht's theatrical concepts, whether in the epic writing style or the theatrical performance's directing thought.

4.4. BRECHT'S THEATRICAL CHARACTERISTICS AT QASSIM MOHAMMED THEATRE

Before analyzing the selected plays, this chapter will list some of the theatrical characteristics of the Iraqi director Qassim Mohammed. It is a detailed introduction to some of his most essential features in the theater, through which he simulates the Brecht Theater. These characteristics can also be found in his plays, including those that will be analyzed later.

Qassim dealt with various topics, which can call his theater al-Shaabi, which concerns the public's daily life. He relied in his play *Once Upon a Time* on the inspiration of the Iraqi heritage and folk songs, as the show is based mainly on an individual singer and a choir performing in exchange for some folk songs that are based on the diversity of singing voices, through the lyrical moments, characters and dramatic events explode. Although the play is political and educational, the fragrance of folk tales and Iraqi songs weave a poetic atmosphere that establishes a permanent balance between education and poetry (Ardash, 1979, p. 263).

Qassim deals with the audience as participants in the theatrical game so that they discuss and think, achieving a fundamental principle of the Brecht method. Qassim Mohammed started from a popular place and environment, which later left a clear impact on his theatrical experience. He started from the popular environment he lived in and felt, so he lived in the environment of *The Palm Tree and The Neighbors*, he interviewed the narrator and the Qaskhoon. There is a close relationship between the place and the environment in human life, as the place is the emergence of human beings. From that moment, the relationships, and activities of the being with the ocean are woven (Hussein, 2000, p. 152).

The human relationship with the place and the environment is characterized by adhesion and interdependence, as the place effectively influences the person. Qassim was influenced by the experience of Al-Tayyib Al-Siddiqi and the theater, whose influence extended throughout the Arab artistic scene until it reached Iraq. This theater took a lot of the time, visions, and aspirations of Qassim Mohammed. He

described the theater by saying, "Theater is a ceremony held by two artists and spectators, and this is a principle, and if one of them is absent, the ceremony will be ruined" (Kazim, 2010, p. 97).

Within this concept, the theater is understood as a ceremony held by the agreement of the artist and the viewer, and this ritual takes place to restore life with its various data, he also identifies a way for his audience to meet to achieve his project in rooting an intimate folk theater designed according to popular traditions. He considers the heritage more attached to the spectator's memory and more influential in himself and his environment. He even rebelled against the Italian theater because the celebration is an experience that derives its privacy from its absolute bias in the popular conscience and its choice of intellectual and ritual self (Al-Mafraji, 1991, p. 107). That this ground was a kind of foundational experimentation, that is, experimentation that tries to give Arab theater new aesthetic assets, it is possible to make the theater inside this place and this time similar to the human being, without which it is impossible to establish an authentic and original creative art. Qassim Mohammed is considered one of the few directors who relied on themselves in writing and preparing most of the theatrical texts they directed.

He does not prefer the ready-made text, so he says, "I do not go to the ready-made, I prepare the text" (Atiya, 2010, p. 209). Therefore, he is keen to write the plays he directs so that he does not adhere to the ready-made text to achieve harmony between action and the spoken word, as in the play *Baghdad forever between seriousness and humor*. It is a play of a heritage character that derived its themes from many sources as he synthesized and reconstructed them. It deals with the text as unstable moving energy because it comes from life and man, whether in the past or the present. When he reads the text, he proves his views as a director, proves the characters' movements in their initial form, and works to bring the text from the state of writing on paper to an anthropomorphic state on the stage (Amal, 2011, p. 28).

He found that the ceremonial theater stems from modern innovations that call for transcending the realistic theater so that the theatrical performance is the past that becomes conscious in certain moments. The great works are the product of the fusion of the past with the present (Spender, 1988, p. 76). Qassim used totalitarianism in directing many of his theatrical performances, especially the play *Kan Ya Makan*,

another of his attempts to root the popular theater show derived from heritage. It considers that the heritage of any nation is one of the main factors in the maturation and development of the experiences of those nations.

Qassim's presentation is also a synthetic process for several elements, including the sources of heritage texts, from which he derives his theatrical texts and reconstructs them based on the composition of the rest of the elements in a homogeneous format within the structure of the presentation (Mohammed, 2011, p. 8). The characters and events of Qassim in many of his plays are close to each other, and there are bonds through which the characters meet in reality and throughout history, even though they live in different times and put in an unspecified time frame for contemporary. As well as dealing with the actor and preparing him with particular exercises and giving him the freedom to perform in order to prepare him,

The goal is to define the actor himself first because the external form of the actor can be obtained quickly, but the difficulty lies in how to develop the inner world of the ideal and the character's inner world at the same time. It is done by adopting the method because it is part of persuasion's artistry (Habash, 1995, p. 5).

The method that distinguished Qassim Mohammed is that he was unique in the characteristics and characteristics of the acting performance, as he used to teach the actor as he teaches the child, a superior educational ability also characterizes the performance of the actor's voice and movement so that the performance of his actors is harmonious in style. It is a process of combining the auditory, visual and kinetic elements and canceling the dialogues between the actor and the character with honesty in feelings (Bentley, 1986, p. 221).

Qassim Mohammed was seeking the process of conveying the idea to the spectator simply, spontaneously, and without pretension because he wanted to communicate and reach ordinary people with dramatic material stemming from their memories and opinions. At the same time, he did not turn his back on the elite because they were not his fans, and he did not sever his connection with them completely. He relied on directing more than writing, and he knows this through the spaces that remain open in the text, so he fills them with directing, as he plays the role of an active directing

leader. He does not leave room for forgetfulness wherever he presents his works; he uses the traditions of famous theater everywhere (Al-Ra'i, 1999, p. 483).

Qassim Mohammed directed many theatrical works characterized by a festive nature, such as *The Bird's Message*, *Ras al-Mamluk Jaber*, *Wilayat Ba'ir*, and others. As for the theatrical spaces, he sees that each play has its own space, and there is no fixed space. He uses life a lot and sees a spiritual connection between the use of space and the use of material. Therefore, it depends on the spiritual aspect to understand the theatrical space more than the formal aspect, especially the local spirit. The play was seen as a general rendezvous between different and disparate groups of people in one place and time. It is a date that takes place based on a common denominator that unites people and brings them together within a unified space and time; moreover, all these meanings summarize that the theater in the positive perspective is a general popular demonstration (Othman, 1979, p. 30).

He relied on his design of the scenes himself or on some of the designers who worked with him because they were aware of what the horizons and visions of Qassim Mohammed were. His theatrical debates stemmed from reality and were based on the heritage, which he saw as the free vessel that everyone should sip from. He believes that the spectator receives the ideas and atmosphere of the play through the actors and the decor, lighting, sound, and light effects because behind all these elements lies the director's work and direction. The director is the mediator between the author and the spectator, and his tools work to convey the author's idea to the spectator (Fred & Sami, 1980, p. 31).

The director's effort consists in trying to discover the maximum potential of the actor through careful observation, which is reflected in the optimal performance. Qassim Mohammed's writing, directing, and acting capabilities have distinguished him from the rest of the experiences of Iraqi theater directors who witnessed him. His theater was a famous festive theatre, where the legacy is often used as a material for its texts. It relies on simplicity in directing to present a theater close to its spectators, stemming from their daily lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. THE INFLUENCE OF THE BRECHT THEATER ON THE IRAQI THEATER IN THE PLAYS OF QASSIM MOHAMMED

The aspects of the influence of the Brecht Theater on the Iraqi theater will be dealt with in the plays of Qassim Mohammed through a set of characteristics that characterize the Brecht Theater and as discussed in the previous sections. Among these characteristics that will be relied upon in the analysis are: Westernization, lighting, decoration, costumes, music, awareness, urging the viewer to think, and presenting a picture of the world to the viewer; the hero does not have a status in his capacity but is a symbol of collective destiny, and an attempt to revolutionize the viewer, and simplicity. Considering these characteristics, the plays of Qassim Mohammed will be analyzed.

It may seem very difficult to grasp the geographical area of diverse theatrical creativity on which the Iraqi playwright Qassim Mohammed moved, due to the abundance of his production, directing, preparing, authoring, and at other times acting and teaching different disciplines in the art of theater at the Institute of Fine Arts and its Academy in Baghdad. Qassim is unique among all his fellow Iraqi playwrights in this abundance of various theatrical productions, so it took much work to be acquainted with or follow up on all the plays or theatrical performances that he prepared, directed, or wrote their scripts. What will be analyzed are his most famous plays, which clearly show Brecht's style or were influenced by some of Brecht's theatrical characteristics, which are as follows:

5.1. *THE PALM AND THE NEIGHBORS*, 1969

This play occupies a leading position among the Iraqi and Arab plays dealing with awareness. It is a living testimony of its time, between yesterday and today, the testimony of the author who lived the tragedy of awareness in his country and carried the concerns of his citizens to the long exile until his death. It is a play directed by Qassim Mohammed in 1969, and it's written by Ghaaib Toama Farman. It is a play that talks about Iraq during the Second World War, a time of poverty, famine, and

the ugliness of the English, a time of sufficiency from the eternal and genuine love of the land for the sake of dinars (see figure 5.7).



Figure 5.7. *Salima's character in the play The Palm Tree and the Neighbors* (Kamil, 2015)

The play talks about a woman named Salima, who leaves bread for morning sleep and easy livelihood. The second woman is called Tamader. She is begging Hussein for what he does not have. The other character, Absent, attempts to brandish the only glimmer of hope from within this misery with murder. The darkness of misery envelops the characters and events. The play draws the destinies of a miserable human group that lives on the margins of history, so its opinion parallels the history and does not interrupt it, nor intersect with it, just as it lives in it and does not live with it, so consciousness is formed in history, and its fate is tragic. Tragedy takes on a double face in the fates of the people of *The Palm and the Neighbors*. The misery of consciousness comes from every right action and confrontation that reformulates consciousness and history.

The play opens with Salima, the baker, a woman suffering from fatigue, sadness, and deprivation, and captures her oppressed details. The play confirms the features of the coarse woman through the thick eyelid that part of it was burned by the fire of the stove, the thick black dress filled with the dust of days, the walls of the room, in addition to a barren palm tree, where the palm tree is a mirror to whoever stands next to it, as well as an intact woman, is a mirror of the barren palm tree. So it is the story of a woman and a palm tree who bid farewell to time and accept emptiness or bid farewell to a time that only opens to emptiness. A woman and a palm tree share a

common sterility and a time in which there is nothing new, in which there is a tragedy that does not need proof.

She saw in front of her a palm tree near a wall in the middle of a black circle, a deserted, barren palm tree like her those lives with her in this large house, mute and deaf. It bears all the dirty water thrown into its basin, and summer and winter pass without bearing dates or greening its palm trees (Farman, 2009, p. 8).

From the first scenes, the play leads to an atmosphere of tragedy, as the palm tree is abandoned and lives outside of time, and whoever stands outside of time dies or walks towards death without realizing it. The house surrounding it is like the tomb of the palm tree, an old house surrounded by death and oblivion. The play proceeds, and the characters multiply with it. It is possible to observe a poor man who dreams of owning a horse, a poor loser who steals from another poor person, a miserable woman who is valued at an orange, and a boy who enters the world of men through the door of crime. Baghdad's various places, streets, and seasons surround all these characters (see figure 5.8).



Figure 5.8. *Some scenes of the play The Palm and the Neighbors (Kamil, 2015)*

The characters multiply in the play, and the viewer may think that the characters are individuals and that the individual can be distinguished. However, the viewer discovers later that he never left the palm tree and the woman and that the individuals, despite their personalities, were not individuals because they are all many faces of a miserable being that cannot bear reproduction. Just as the palm tree is a mirror for the baker, the baker woman is an image of all the miserable creatures surrounding her, as a person is distinguished only by his consciousness from others.

Despite the diversity of characters in the play, they are all mirrors of each other in poverty, misery, and suffering. All the characters are governed by one structure; it gives the match of the beginning, the path, and the fate, as each character tries to seduce the other with simple things that arouse pity in the viewer. The characters in the play are defeated creatures; even if they support and unite, they will defeat each other. The characters move to the scene of extreme poverty, as it is represented by the character of Tamader, who is searching for her lost joy with Hussein, who does not know the meaning of joy at all. As for Mustafa's personality, he reveals the poverty of the body, intellect, spirit, and standards when he says, "Oh, Salima, do not become cruel like the English!" (Farman, 2009, p. 10). In this sentence, it is noted that the consciousness is dim, and the insight is worn out (see figure 5.9).



Figure 5.9. *Some of the main characters in the play Palm Trees and Neighbors* (Kamil, 2015)

The characters in the play have a minor role in the place. Furthermore, because these personalities are immersed in the place and do not rise above it, they cannot understand the meaning of the social place and collapse with it without being able to control it and rebuild it. In these scenes, Qassim tries to give an initial hint of awareness, precisely the same awareness that Brecht calls for, that it is the meaning of realizing ignorance in which a person resides without realizing it.

In other quotes of Brecht's theatrical style, Qassim Mohammed tries to make the spectator use his imagination to interpret what is happening and try to make consciousness the master of the situation. When the viewer concludes that the characters in the play if they try to break the boundaries of consciousness through openness to the historical experience and liberation from the limited time that surrounds the characters, that is if everyone in the play establishes a correct

relationship between social time and universal cosmic time when this is achieved, it will not see these personalities in their behavior and simple things that they used to be a refuge and an escape.

What makes Qassim's play realistic is its deep understanding of the true meaning of history that molds people's thoughts, will, and behavior. That is why the play begins and ends according to a rhythm governed by two or more times. The first time is the time of the social structure, which appears in the features of the narrow environment, the level of social awareness, and the form of human relations. A very ancient inherited time that the social movement does not shake except a little. This quiet time is the most eloquent and most eloquent statement in the lines of the play. The second time is the time of awareness of the daily experience, a time of simple minors dealing with their day and realizing its meaning—him.

Like every realistic play, *The Palm and the Neighbors* depict social reality from the point of view of the social structure. It takes the concept of social transformation and denies any immutable or ethical concept. It draws a struggle between what is old and what is new, which will take the place of the old. It is possible to see what is collapsing, but it is not possible to see what is being born, for the birth is from the conclusion of the spectator himself. It is a method of westernization based on replacing the idea of another place using awareness by the viewer himself.

The essential characteristic of the play *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors* is the ambiguity of its characters and objectives, or in other words, the use of Brecht's alienation style in its details. These details in the play try to attract the spectator's awareness and involve him in finding solutions to the problems and sufferings facing the characters in the play. Westernization in the play stems from an attempt to obliterate shabby ideas and replace them with conscious ideas that can save the character from his mental and realistic tragedy.

Thus, the spectator can reflect these thoughts on his reality or life. When the character clings firmly to ideas that he believes help him overcome suffering and tragedy but then finds himself wrong, or the spectator himself discovers this, and other opposite ideas strongly replace those sticking ideas. This is based on Westernization advocated by Brecht in his epic theater, which means replacing what

is old and known with new ideas that make the spectator's mind a starting point for the renewal and free thinking. On the other hand, decoration, lighting, and music were used in the play in proportion to the events. The director tries to make everything center around the idea he wants to convey to the spectator. Thus, he contributes to the formation of the endings of the theatrical show (see figure 5.10).



Figure 5.10. *Costumes and lighting in the play Palm and neighbors* (Kamil, 2015).

The director, Qassim Mohammed, relied on the simplicity of costumes and decorations to touch the spectator's feelings and enter the depth of his personal life. He also changed clothes directly in front of the audience, just as the Brecht Theater is distinguished. Qassim, at other times, in the play *The Palm and the Neighbors*, uses black comedy to express human suffering and the feelings of each of us. He also uses symbols and metaphors to express other matters. For example, Mustafa's character criticizes Salima's dilapidated house, to which the latter replies that he is still in poor condition due to a lack of funds. It indicates that the crumbling human consciousness cannot be changed only by matter but by awareness and awareness of what surrounds us, which is Brecht's attempt to use consciousness to discover the human self.

In another scene of the play, Qassim Mohammed criticizes the traditions and customs used in the way of life that most Iraqi people follow, starting from baking ovens, moving across regions, and so on. It is a symbolic metaphor to express the possibility of replacing what is traditional and familiar with more modern elements, but this is only at the expense of a person's awareness of himself and his awareness of what surrounds him. This feature is also one of the characteristics of the Brecht Theater, which is called alienation, present in the play of Qassim Mohammed. The tragedy

that befalls most of the characters of the Palm Tree and the neighbors occurs intentionally in order for the spectator to be involved directly in the events that each character goes through, just as it happens in the Brecht theatre, which makes the spectator the one who makes the conclusion and the analysis.

Despite the simplicity of the music used in the play *The Palm and the Neighbors*, it plays a role in illustrating some of the tragic scenes. Music interferes directly with some of the sad events that some characters go through. It is a method that helps in communicating the idea directly to the mind of the spectator, in addition to using simplicity in decoration and lighting, which all unite wonderfully and dramatically in embodying the events to reach a way that the viewer cannot forget or avoid analysis and conclusion. On the other hand, one of the essential characteristics of the play *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors*, derived from the Brecht Theater, is that the hero does not have a place in his capacity on the stage, but rather the hero represents a symbol of the collective destiny of each one of us.

Concerning the personality of the actor in this work, the actor was the first in terms of importance because the actor must possess all the kinetic, plastic, performance, and physical elements so that he can walk, run, dance, speak and be silent at the exact moment (see figure 5.11). Qassim Mohammed used his characters according to Brecht's epic performance system, moving away from the well-known Aristotelian performance. He enhanced the performance of his actors with freedom of movement and spontaneity, which helped them in that local dialect, which opened new horizons for them towards creativity and getting rid of affectation. He also wanted the actor not to let the spectator into a coma and not to be himself in a coma based on intellectual cooperation and harmony of aesthetic thinking among all members of the theatrical group to reach the integrated show.



Figure 5.11. *The characters in the play The Palm and the Neighbors (Kamil, 2015)*

Concerning make-up, in its epic theater role, it is functional, not aesthetic, or decorative, and does not seek to deceive the audience. Therefore, Qassim Mohammed did not use make-up except in simple and limited cases, such as the regular make-up of some characters, to highlight the tragic side.

So, in summary, the play *The Palm Tree and the Neighbors*, directed by Qassim Mohammed, is one of the plays that the Brecht Epic Theater most influenced. It simulates in its details everything related to awareness, perception, and emotion, relying on the spectator in analysis and conclusion, using music, lighting, decoration, and fashion to make the image integrated into the spectator's mind. So the play came to be a dramatic shift from the traditional theater to the modern European theater, especially the epic Brecht Theater, but with a pure Iraqi flavor.

5.2. BAGHDAD FOREVER BETWEEN SERIOUSNESS AND HUMOR (1974)

The play consists of separate scenes narrating the various ways of life and the conflict based on various social phenomena in the Baghdadi market. It is a play prepared and directed by Qassim Mohammed in 1974. Most of the play's events revolve around Ashab al-Tufaili and his adventures to get a living, especially his adventures with *The Canadian Scrooge*, in addition to the character of the tramp poet *Abu al-Shamq-maq* and *Al-Ayyar* whom merchants practiced. Therefore, the recipient of the play will not find a story that contains a beginning, a middle, an end, and a solution. Instead, he will find a variety of situations, each standing alone, as is the direction of Brecht's epic theater (see figure 5.12).



Figure 5.12. *The first scenes of the play Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*, Qassim Muhammad, 1974 (Qassim, 2018).

Qassim Mohammed took many people from social circles with divergent temporal and spatial extensions and far from each other, so Al-Hiqtan did not meet with Ahmed bin Abdul-Wahhab nor would Abi Al-Shamaq-maq meet with the Canadian Scrooge ever before, as in the stories The original. Nevertheless, Qassim was able to gather them and put them in one context outside of the time that each of them lived for the theatrical necessity and to give the social phenomenon a more substantial impact and a more comprehensive depth. Qassim brought together several faces and personalities filled with Baghdad in a selective transfer of heritage, making it a revolutionary material synonymous with the data of reality at that time and reflecting in its general comprehensiveness and psychological and economic characteristics some of the phenomena of society and the era.

The provocative revolutionary value in the text, which was embodied in the concepts of Al-Ayyar, the poems of Abi Al-Shamaq-maq and the confrontation with the wife of Jaber Al-Karkhi was a prominent feature in the selection, in addition to employing comedy in the service of the constructive, sharp social criticism of reality and the negatives of tradition. In his play, he created dramatic formations through dialogues and debates involving more than one topic and character but more than one issue and problem (see figure 5.13).



Figure 5.13. *The character of Abi Al-Shamaq-maq in a play Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*, by Qassim Mohammed, 1974 (Qassim, 2018).

Through this context, the play became like what they call the montage process in cinema and theater, that is, linking different images and issues in one logical context to give an effect to the recipient. Brecht does not make the events of the play or the characters a primary goal, but rather the first and last goal he has is the viewer. This feature in the play can be called the feature of involving the viewers in deducing events, collecting ideas, and forming an integrated picture. It is the same picture that Brecht wants to convey to the viewers and involve them in the events. He wants to involve him in the details and events of the play to make him feel responsible for his reality.

Brecht wants to make the viewer bear responsibility for all the suffering, tragedies, and issues he witnesses in the play. That is why he wants to make a revolution against tyranny and capitalism through his theater and his audience. Qassim could emulate the Brecht theater by presenting class problems through stances, condemnations, and debates that attract the viewer and raise his mind and awareness to reach the truth behind his suffering and problems.

On the other hand, Qassim Mohammed presented a moving panorama full of many funny characters, each of which carries its flavor and distinctive features, giving us life to the world of dodgers, beggars, intelligent people, merchants, intruders, and misers. Brecht, through his play *The Good Man*, digs into the human spirit in search of purity and goodness as it can be manifested in human beings. Furthermore, if good and evil are ancient and controversial topics since time immemorial, Brecht reveals

the deception and cruelty of man in his various manifestations. He presents many personalities, events, and details to show the truth about man. Brecht, in his play, presents many characters, such as the bartender, the prostitute *Shen Te*, the thief, the deceiver, and the strong and domineering person. Brecht's play ends without a clear ending, leaving the viewer to deduce who and how a good person is, just as Qassim Mohammed does in his play *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*.

Qassim Mohammed was able to present these personalities with a new historical perspective that is close to the current era. Through these personalities and debates, he wants to save the heritage from the danger of decay and mix the lives of people from more than a thousand years with the lives of people in a tangible, living present. The director, Qassim Mohammed, presented this play using elements of cabaret art and distributing the roles of the narrators to more than one actor and voice. The actors could play their roles with high ascending skill and multiple beautiful accents, a challenging and complex role that senior actors often avoid. In addition, to directly break the illusion, which is characteristic of Brecht's theater (see figure 5.14).



Figure 5.14. *One of the historical characters in the play (Qassim, 2018).*

Qassim Mohammed deliberately made the theatrical dialogue follow the two lines of the classical Arabic language transmitted literally and the general dialect used in the street. Mixing these two lines is a serious attempt to mix two eras first and to make the theatrical work acceptable to the recipient. Secondly, it intends to break the stereotypical dialogue of the Maqamat and the Abbasid prose despite its cuteness

with colloquial dialogue. It is like awakening the recipient from his historical slumber in the depths of the Abbasid market.

The play's scenes show some of the tragic realities of every member of the middle or poor class in society. For example, in the scene in which the actor Youssef Al-Ani performs with high physical flexibility and dialogue that matches his movements, in addition to eating fast, these details indicate need and hunger, in contrast to the manner of the miser, who is characterized by slow movements that indicate miserliness. In another scene, Fadel Khalil, who represents the intruder, can act with the movements of an ancient human, which are like those of a monkey, where his back is bent, and he wears clothes made of wool and fur. He succeeds in presenting a formula of Brecht's theater, which is the art of reincarnation and breaking the merger.

In the scene of love between Ashab and the beautiful slave girl Rasha, whose character is assumed by the actress Mai Shawky, she presents a new role utterly different from the role she played at the beginning of the play. She excelled at the scene in a performance way that canceled the previous one, so she turned from the discontented and oppressed woman into a playful slave girl, as the first character required great intensity in movement and performance. In contrast, the second character had unrestricted movement and a spirited performance. It can be said that Qassim Mohammed used a new style with most of the characters, so the actor turns into a narrator and then returns to his character, a formula that approaches the alienation of the personality that Brecht sought, and this concept was applied, as noted, to most of the characters.

Mai Shawky appeared with an old Baghdadi personality and in a simple style. In contrast, Al-Ani style, which assumes the personality of Ashab, indicates ability and talent based on a desire that the recipient not be affected by it and stir his emotions. This is what Brecht's epic theater wants, as the two actors used multiple performance movements and gestures with hands, faces, and poses, which makes the recipient feel the depth of the idea. The serial scenes in the play depict the old Baghdadi market and the multiple characters in the market who are deceivers, intruders, and beggars.

There is also a section of the poor who are unsatisfied with the misery written for them, so they try to rebel and raise the idea of change and the impossibility of their

usurped rights from the merchants and the rich who manipulated the sustenance of the poor. The scenes of the play were distinguished by several details that simulate the details found in Brecht's epic theatre, namely:

- 1- Using one theatrical scene to include all Baghdad as a reference to generalizing to all its markets.
- 2- Introducing several personalities in the first chapter to show the situation of the people of Baghdad and the diversity of their personalities, and in return, the diversity of their economic, political, and social problems.
- 3- The speed of performing the presented act and the overlapping of some scenes with each other without a separator. The apparent link here is the narrators in all their forms and the diversity of characters. The lighting here played a role through isolation in separating scenes and chapters.
- 3- Qassim Mohammed used Westernization by developing modern ideas and visions commensurate with the era's modernity. These ideas can be observed through dialogues, debates, and events in the play.
- 4- The director, Qassim Mohammed, radically changed the roles of the characters, and the aim is not to make the viewer feel affected or sympathetic to a particular character, just as it happens with the Brecht Epic Theatre.
- 5- Brecht needs to give the results. He wants the viewer to collect ideas and conclude the end of the events. He tries to make the viewer a participant in the events within the play, which is precisely what Qassim did in that play.

In summary, it was found that Brecht's play *The Good Man* is like what is found in *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*, by the Iraqi director, Qassim Mohammed. The similarities are in several characteristics that were explained in the previous lines, including alienation, breaking the boredom of the viewer through the multiple roles of characters, trying to enlighten the mind of the viewer with renewed and modern ideas, not making the viewer feel affected or emotional towards a particular character, the art of impersonating characters, breaking the illusion.

5.3. *ONCE UPON A TIME OR KAN YAMA KAN* (1978)

Once Upon a Time is a play by director Qassim Mohammed in 1978 in Baghdad. It tells the story of a king who asks his three daughters about the difference between a woman and a man, and which is better, mind or money, frugality, or extravagance? Who manages the affairs of the house, the woman, or the man? The older sisters answer that the man is the one who manages the house, but the little girl, Bdur, has a different opinion. Unlike her sisters Shamus and Nujum, the answer was to avoid their hypocritical behavior for self-interest. So, the answer came with what the father does not like the King, and she answered him that there is no difference between them except the mind, as she sees that the basis of everything and the basis of management is the mind.

The answer came after she received lessons from the gardener who works in the King's garden and taught her to work in weaving. Because of his daughter's unexpected answer, he decides to judge her strangely, so he marries her to the lazy Hassan, and the girl is expelled from the palace without money. The King challenges his daughter Bdur to make this lazy mantle a sane, mature, and helpful person. She begins a new two-fold stage, the stage of working for a living and the stage of preparing and educating her husband, Hassan, the lazy, who lives in a state of loss, decay, and laziness.

However, the greedy merchant owner of the King imprisoned Bdur in an unknown location. Her husband was left alone after he sensed her absence and his love for her and began to search for her, raise questions and plead with her in waking and dreaming. When searching, he meets the mind teacher and learns wisdom and knowledge from him. Hassan the slothful began to teach people from his mind and wisdom, solve puzzles, teach passers-by, and help the needy, so he became another person after acquiring the mind with knowledge. After a suitable period, the father's imam stands, revealing the mystery of the strange carpet and the messages in its inscriptions and symbols that bear the name of the place where Bdur was kidnapped and imprisoned. Hence, the King arrests the merchant, and she returns with a role to her husband, who has become entirely different from what he was.

Concerning the show space, it bears in its contents the first characteristic of the epic theater, as the show begins without a lifting curtain or a specific beginning. Here, the director has adhered to the nature of the epic show since its inception. The space will be a popular Iraqi café, and the representatives successively enter the council, after which the narrator enters. It becomes clear from their session and popular clothes that they are in one of the Baghdad cafés in the seventies of the last century (see figure 5.15).



Figure 5.15. Pictures from the play *Once Upon a Time*, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad (Qassim, 2020).

The director achieved this in the space of folklore, which was present in all parts of the show, and it is a step towards the consolidation of folk theatre. The exhibition space was characterized by a system of pairing between the past and the present so that there were no places that were difficult to understand and respond to, the display space was also spacious enough to accommodate the actors' movements in all directions. The director, in conjunction with the interior designer and designers of other scenography elements, attempted to highlight the aesthetics of the space through the first space, the café represented by the narrator and his seat. The second space is the space of the paintings that change from time to time according to the play and the sequential events. Qassim Mohammed's style was distinguished by the fact that he was writing, preparing, or quoting to produce this play because he had a vision from the moment he started writing; that is, he was creating space before the characters and events of the play.

Concerning theater decor, Mohammed used the system of paintings in the show, and this is an epic feature that distinguishes the show, sometimes the café and the narrator who suggests to the viewer another painting after he paves the way for it in a tale on the stage. The simplicity of the decorative form contributed to the formulation of the representations of the place in the spectator's mind, and the parts of the scene were visible. These parts were distinguished by the epic decor features that depend on lightness, simplicity, and ease of movement, which are suitable for several scenes after making modifications. However, the decor of the show in the play remained constant throughout the show, with some minor changes.

The decorative pieces have participated in forming, presenting, and communicating ideas to the spectator clearly, using new vocabulary and materials that are easy to use. The movement also gives the same effect and specifications. It has provided the scene with its connotations, as well as the use of lighting and its shedding on the view from various directions, which made the showroom multiple angles of visions and functions. The scene is composed of two parts that are very contradictory in terms of vision and style: the first part is very realistic, expressed by the director in a Baghdad Cafe. He took place in the left corner for the narrator and seated him to perform this group of songs in a popular dialect with intermittent applause. As for the second part, another place is the whole stage. It has some touches borrowed from the pure Baghdadi architecture, represented by a group of windows and other symbolic forms of scenery such as the palm tree. The decorative blocks were small and medium, as for the wood material from which the seating areas and wood benches were used, which were used in more than one place (see Figure 5.16).

Sometimes in the King's Court and another in Hassan's house, the material of the iron shutters gave an aesthetic dimension by intersecting the light with it and the red color with which the bars were painted.



Figure 5.16. *Play Once Upon a Time*, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad, (Qassim, 2020).

Kazem Haider, the show decorator, designed the decor functions. He is the most prominent artist in the field of decor after he deeply understood the requirements of what the decor needs from many levels in time and place. It constitutes an essential point of contact between a spectator who finds himself very close to what is happening in front of him on stage.

Concerning lighting, it came to reveal and form with other elements of scenography-focused aesthetics in the visual component, creating shadow and light in varying degrees and according to situations and situations with direct light focus and transitions with a light spot in the cafe. Here the degree of illumination plays an essential role as an indicator of time, time, and place and as a clear sign that differentiates between indoor and outdoor spaces. The director did not use colors in lighting or light showcases and compensated for the excess lighting with parts of the decor and accessories and complementary accessories so that it worked towards framing and focusing on the general idea. The lighting contributed to isolation and concentration, creating the general atmosphere and breaking the floodlighting system used throughout the show, punctuated by some spots of light here and there, such as Abu Al-Aql and Hassan entering and Hassan sitting in front of the carpet to solve the mystery (see figure 5.17).



Figure 5.17. *Lighting in the play Once Upon a Time, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad, (Qassim, 2020).*

Concerning fashion, Qassim Mohammed and the fashion designer adhered to the historical period and the nature of the characters that the director did not overlook in this show. The costumes of the café-goers were somewhat equal in terms of material, shape, and color, especially the white color, and it gave a realistic impression of the outfit's simplicity at that time and that place. The narrator's costume was the Arab abaya, the headband, and the keffiyeh, which gave the character his presence and address from the first moment. The costumes came intertwined between the past and the present, speaking in its language to the show's audience. The language moved away from decorative exaggerations and decorative appendages, as most of the characters of the show were from the downtrodden poor, except for some personalities such as the king and his entourage and his daughters, and even these were their simple costumes (see figure 5.18).



Figure 5.18. *Costumes in the play Once Upon a Time, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad, (Qassim, 2020).*

Concerning music and sound effects in the play, the show relied on poetry, proverbs, singing, maqam, and chants instead of the music component of the human voice. The limited sound effects were satisfied with embodying the reality of events outside the theater by invoking imaginary external voices, such as the voice of Hassan Bdur's wife, as well as the voice of the narrator, who excelled in his incredible melodious voice, which instead of music, with some grunts and applause of the crowd, was part of the sound effects. Also, these sounds are interspersed with some musical beats that came as an influence to emphasize the event or increase the dramatic tension. The lack of use of music in this show came from the director's vision, which she wanted to compensate for with collective performances and Iraqi songs and chants.

About makeup, the role of the epic theater is functional, not aesthetic, or decorative. It does not seek to deceive the audience, so Qassim Mohammed did not resort in this show to the use of makeup except in simple and limited cases, such as the regular makeup for the king's daughters. The daughters of the king appear in a scene in front of the mirror, and they put on their makeup in front of the spectators; here, the director has adhered to what was brought by the epic theater, which did not emphasize makeup because it is a theater that does not decorate and does not wear makeup so as not to hide the truth or delude its audience, on the other hand, he committed to the fact that the actor wears makeup, would put it in front of his audience. As for the complementary makeup of mustaches, beards, and hairstyles, it was clear from the beginning. The narrator put on his natural beard, which expressed its connotations and gave the full and clear picture of this character. As for the gardener and Abu Al-Aql with false beards, it suited the character's appearance.

Regarding accessories in general, they have an effective and influential role in most theatrical performances, and in this show, there were many accessories and accessories with different connotations. Despite the simplicity of these accessories, they were expressive and suggestive, as the first use came on the basis that they were folklore pieces such as the pail, the bowl, and the rope. The effect of some of them was superficial because they were everyday accessories or accessories. The other section, such as the rug and the stick, played a significant role and had a direct and practical effect, such as Abu Al-Aql's stick in teaching Hassan (see figure 5.19).



Figure 5.19. *Some of the accessories used in the play *Once Upon a Time*, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad (Qassim, 2020).*

The rug, for example, was one of the essential accessories where Bdur was able, through weaving it, to put signs and symbols in it. Her husband Hassan could decipher these symbols, which became the guide that brought them to where Bdur was imprisoned. Concerning the character of the actor in this work, the actor was the first in terms of importance because the actor must possess all the kinetic, plastic, performance, and physical elements, so that he can walk, run, dance, speak and be silent at the exact moment. Qassim Mohammed used his characters according to Brecht's epic performance system, moving away from the well-known Aristotelian performance. He enhanced the performance of his representatives with freedom of movement and spontaneity, which helped them in the local dialect and opened new horizons for them towards creativity and getting rid of pretentiousness.

He also wanted the actor not to let the spectator in a coma and not to be himself in a coma based on intellectual cooperation and the harmony of aesthetic thinking among all members of the theatrical group to reach the integrated show; as for the other characters, such as the king's daughters, the king's gardener, the minister, Abu al-Aql, and others, were distinguished by their spirited performance (see figure 5.20).



Figure 5.20. *The characters in the play Once Upon a Time, 1978, Qassim Mohammed, Baghdad, (Qassim, 2020).*

Qassim dealt with a separate topic called *Al-Shaabi*, which concerns the public's daily life. He deals with the audience as participants in the theatrical game so that they discuss and think, in this, he achieves a fundamental principle of Brecht's method. He relied in his play *Once Upon a Time* on the inspiration of Iraqi folk songs and heritage, as the show is based mainly on a solo singer and a chorus that alternately performs some popular songs that are based on the diversity of singing voices, through lyrical moments, characters and dramatic events explode. Although the play is political and educational, the fragrant folk tales and Iraqi songs weave a poetic climate that establishes a permanent balance between education and poetry.

CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSION

Brecht's epic theater relied heavily on the role of the audience and on breaking the illusion. Brecht also invented what is called Westernization, an attempt to renew traditional ideas or replace them with more modern ideas than what is known to society. Westernization was explicitly adopted in the Iraqi theater, especially in the plays of Qassim Mohammed. Brecht's approach has yet to exhaust its capabilities and latent potential in the Iraqi theater, despite its national influence on the new generations of writers and playwrights in Iraq, especially with director Qassim Mohammed. He tries to build a conscious and open-minded society that can deduce and analyze the presented errors or discover solutions through his awareness. Brecht's imprint was and still is very clear on the Iraqi stage, not only from the point of view of writing but also from the point of view of performance, direction, and decoration. For example, Brecht called for comprehensive illumination not to suggest that what he was doing was confirmed and called on the spectator to play a positive role and not as an opposing receiver.

The stage of theatrical preparation of the narrative and linguistic heritage in the experience of Qassim Mohammed was considered one of the significant stages of transformation in the Iraqi theater, which derives its roots from the Brecht epic theatre. It opened new horizons for directing, acting, and decorating. The show departs from old contexts related to actual events to new contexts related to culture, thought, philosophy, and modernity. This enabled the workers in the theater to renew their expressive and artistic tools, to open themselves to global experimentation currents, and to establish their Iraqi artistic current in it. Qassim Mohammed was at the forefront of investing in this trend and adopting it in talking about the dramatic depth in oral and anecdotal texts.

In the analyzed plays prepared and directed by Qassim Mohammad, a group of characteristics related to the Brecht Epic Theater has been noted, including in the play Baghdad, the Eternal between Seriousness and Humor; Qassim Mohammed used a group of Brecht's theatrical characteristics, such as the method of Westernization, by developing modern visions and ideas commensurate with the

modernity of the era while preserving the ancient heritage. It is also noted that the method of breaking the illusion and boredom of the viewer is used through the multiplicity of roles for one character.

Qassim, in his play, did not give the results of the events but made the viewer the one who deduces and analyzes the ideas and events that the characters dealt with on the stage. Qassem used Brecht's method in theatre, where he made the viewer not be affected or sympathize with the characters because the goal is to make the viewer's awareness analyze, conclude, and participate in the event away from the emotion that obscures the viewer's mind.

The main advantage of investing in heritage was to change the course of the artistic structure of the text. Here the scenes and paintings are the structure of the text, and the juxtaposition between them eliminates an old context adopted by the structure of the traditional play, which is the sequential chapters or scenes. Here, the drama began to follow the method of overlap and composition, nullifying the temporal and historical and emphasizing the movement of society in action and determining its paths. From the preceding, some points can be concluded as follows:

1. Qassim Mohammed worked on achieving Brecht's theatrical approach by using the Westernization approach and songs essential to Brecht's Theater mechanisms.
2. Brecht's approach relied on shedding light on the suffering of society. He tried to revolutionize society by focusing on the individual's suffering, just as Qassim Mohammed did in his plays *The Palm and the Neighbors* and *Once Upon a Time*, in which he focused on the misery of the Iraqi individual.
3. Contemporary Iraqi theater, especially in the plays of Qassim Mohammed, used preaching and awareness to analyze and deduce the tragic events surrounding the Iraqi person.
4. Awareness is one of the essential characteristics of Brecht's theatre. It is the key to understanding human suffering and trying to renew old concepts.
5. In the play *The Palm and the Neighbors and Once Upon a Time*, some characteristics contributed to the formation of the general idea, such as costumes, music, light, and decoration.

6. In the Brecht Theatre, as in the Qassim Mohammed Theatre, the actor is a tool for communicating ideas to the viewer's mind and making him a participant in the events. In other words, the actor cannot blend into his persona on stage.

7. The decoration, with its uncomplicated formations, achieved duality with the meaning and events of the formal connotations of the design, as Qassim wanted to reach to convince the recipient that what was happening in front of him was a purely representative performance, far from an illusion and accurate diagnosis.

8. The play *Once Upon a Time*, and *The Palm and the Neighbors* is a step towards establishing a popular theatrical show. The director here has moved away from the written heritage towards the Baghdadi heritage and folk tales that began to be written in the popular heritage magazine. In other words, the director Qassim Mohammed changed the angle of the intellectual vision to a noticeable degree and in a dramatic structure that is almost traditional as well, according to what the logic of narrating the famous story assumes.

9. Qassim Mohammed borrowed a narrative framework that was preceded by others, and it is the poetic café, so the narrator occupies the stretch of the theater, addresses the audience as a vocabulary and comments on the events, and he explains to them the pipelines and the work of the person. Here he follows Brecht's epic theater in its detail.

10. Concerning the performance space in the Qassim Muhammad Theater, it bears in its contents the first characteristic of Brecht's epic theater, as the performance begins without a curtain being raised or a specific beginning, and here the director has committed himself to the character of the epic performance since its inception.

11. Concerning the personality of the actor in this work, the actor, was the first in terms of importance because the actor must possess all the motor, plastic, performance, and physical elements so that he can walk, run, dance, speak and be silent at the exact moment. Qassim Mohammed used his characters according to Brecht's epic performance system, moving away from the well-known Aristotelian performance. He enhanced the performance of his actors with freedom of movement and spontaneity, which helped them in that local dialect, which opened new horizons for them towards creativity and getting rid of affectation.

12. The direction in the Iraqi theater was influenced by the techniques of Brecht's epic theater, the recording theatre, daily incidents, and personal biography, as in the plays *Once Upon a Time*, *Baghdad Forever Between Seriousness and Humor*, and *The Palm and the Neighbors*.

6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1- Organizing a workshop for young directors to get acquainted with European theatrical performances to know the essential features of these performances.
- 2- Studying the modern phenomena adopted by foreign and Arab theatrical works and developing them.
- 3- Studying the elements of scenography in the European shows individually because of their direct impact on these shows.

6.2. SUGGESTIONS

There is some suggestion for the purpose of conducting other proposed studies:

- 1- The aesthetics of the Arab epic theatrical performance.
- 2- A comparative study of the twentieth century's Arabic and European theatrical texts.
- 3- Making a study on the aesthetics of the Iraqi festive theatrical performances.

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