CHAPTER 4

EPIC THEATRE: THEORY IN PRACTICE

The chapter focuses on the fact that how successfully Brecht has imparted his theory of epic theatre in his plays. The theory has a unique blend of features, which are tried to be analyzed through their practical implementation in six of Brecht's major plays: *In the Jungle of Cities*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *The Good Person of Szechwan*, and *The Life of Galileo*. The analysis is based on chief theatrical techniques like Plot, Characterization, Dialogues & Language, Acting, and Stagecraft & Presentation of these plays.

4.1 PLOT

Brecht's concern for socio-political issues of modern times always plays a vigorous role in selecting plots for his plays. His plots don't merely have romantic intention of entertaining the people, but they have specifically assigned task of making the audience understand and analyze the issues performed on the stage. And to attain the task, Brecht deals with diversified issues in his plots. His prime aim is to criticize capitalist ideology and bourgeois mentality of contemporary society, of which he talks about three types of corruptions capitalism transacts with in the modern world- corruption of life, corruption of virtues, and corruption of emotions. Even the historical episodes are structured in precise manner to contemporize the issues. This hidden agenda of social awareness in plot facilitates Brecht's strategy of epic theatre.
In the Jungle of Cities is a brilliant expressionist creation of Brecht written during his Bavarian phase. Though written before Brecht had embraced Communism or fully formulated his theories of epic theater and alienation, the play conceives some notable effect of distancing audience from the emotional outburst. Even in the prologue Brecht writes,

“You are in Chicago in 1912. You are about to witness an inexplicable wrestling match between two men and observe the downfall of a family that has moved from the prairies to the jungle of the big city. Don’t worry your heads about the motives for the fight, concentrate on the stakes. Judge impartially the technique of the contenders, and keep your eyes fixed on the finish.” (Brecht: 1979,118).

The alienation is thus suggested by Brecht at the beginning of the play. Hence the play is to be credited of being the opening stanza of Brecht’s epic tradition. Brecht fashioned the play in 10 rounds, located at city of Chicago, like a boxing match. The eleventh round should be viewed as the winner's speech, not as a part of the duel itself. It is important that the outcome in this Chicago fight ring really has no winners. One combatant is vanquished, but his ultimate desire is to be defeated. The victor, a younger man whose sacrifices of family and freedom allow him to win, survives but realizes he misses the emotional high of the duel. Discussing the plot in his notes, Brecht summarizes in the following way:

The timber dealer Shlink, a Malay (Wegener’s type), fights a war of annihilation with the younger George Garga (Granach’s type), during the course of which both reveal their most extreme human
characteristics. By means of an appearance of passivity the man Shlink slashes through the ties binding young George Garga to the world round him and makes him fight a desperate war of liberation against him... In the final conflict, which is fought with utter dedication, George Garga regains solid ground; he breaks off the fight and takes over his timber business in the great city of Chicago. (Brecht: 1979, 431).

Like In the Jungle of Cities, The Threepenny Opera also satirizes the capitalist structure of contemporary world. It is a Brechtian version of John Gay's The Beggar's Opera, which was written for a very specific purpose to criticize the bourgeois structures of the contemporary society. As Brecht himself says,

"The Threepenny Opera is concerned with bourgeois conceptions not only as content, by representing them, but also through the manner in which it does so. It is a kind of report on life as any member of the audience would like to see it."(Brecht: 2007, 92).

Hence his motif was purely scientific: to avail much known atmosphere to his audience, which erases the element of suspense and makes them think over the situation in which they are living.

Though the whole play is designed in an operatic manner, there is little emotional, or sometimes logical, connection between the scenes. The play is divided into nine scenes, which make the audience journey through the events in Macheath's life. With the introduction, Mac the Knife (Macheath) is immediately set up in contradictory terms. He is
represented as a shark with bloody fins and hidden teeth, but at the same
time he is described in terms of ‘white kid gloves’. These white gloves,
symbols of pure hands, serve as a mark of bourgeois society. Therewith
Brecht suggests that Macheath covers his crimes by pretending to be
bourgeois. Alternatively, this can also be interpreted as implying that
bourgeois society commits the crimes and then pretends that nothing ever
happened. Note that Macheath does not deny his crimes; instead, he acts
as if nothing is wrong. Brecht continues to make fun of bourgeois society
throughout the play, especially in the fifth scene where he attacks on
bourgeois liking for nostalgia. One of the main attributes of the middle
class is a preference for an idealized past. This is reflected in a great deal
of literature, with concepts such as the ‘golden ages’ or the ‘golden years’
playing a key role. Brecht attacks this naive view of the past by having
Mac sing about his life with Jenny. Mac makes the couple seem idyllic
even though they live in a whorehouse. Jenny also wishes for the past
again even while telling us how Mac used to knock her down the stairs.
Thus Brecht uses the two of them to combine elements of bourgeois
nostalgia with lower class crudity.

The background of *Mother Courage* is the Swedish historical event which
is known as “The Thirty Years’ War” (1618-1648). Historically “The
Thirty Years’ War” was a part of the political upheaval that followed the
Reformation which had divided Christian Europe into Protestant and
Catholic States. In the play, the Swedish stands for Protestantism, and the
Imperial forces represent Catholicism. The story talks about a canteen
woman Mother Courage’s struggle for survival during war time. Brecht
believes that the performance of *Mother Courage* is meant to show “that
in wartime the big profits are not made by little people; that war, which is a continuation of business by other means, makes the human virtues fatal even to their possessors; that no sacrifice is too great for the struggle against war.” (Brecht: 1983, xvii).

Thus The greatest concern of Brecht, here, is to show the naked realities of the war. He believes that war never gives anything to people; everybody is a looser- soldiers, business persons, common people, etc- only war is profited. The beginning of the play is very heavily ironic. That is, Brecht expects his audience to be alienated from the sergeant's hyperbolic stories about the villagers who forgot their names due to the absence of war, thus viewing the opening scene with a suitable degree of ironic detachment. The point is not that war really creates order, but that it is a system by which people and civilizations seem to survive--like capitalism with its markets, war is a system that most people not only accept but depend upon. These nameless soldiers are universal, part of the trope of war's perpetuity, which runs throughout the play. War gets back to its feet again, it continues, and Brecht is not interested in the specific historic details of the war he depicts. What he underlines is war's omnipresence in capitalist civilization. The whole plot is divided into twelve scenes, and the locations of the scenes constantly keep changing, which shows that practically Mother Courage doesn’t have a sense of attachment with anything. Even at the time of losing her children, she is never broken up, but always comes up with a strong feeling to survive. Thus Courage's non-attachment with her surroundings forms a prominent feature of epic theatre in the play.
The Caucasian Chalk Circle is based on a Chinese play written in 1300 A.D. with the same name. It is written with purpose to highlight the situation of Europe. It is a parable on European politics, rather an aestheticisation of politics. A parable is a very short narrative about human beings presented so as to stress the tacit analogy, or parallel, with a general thesis or moral lesson that the narrator is trying to bring home to his audience. It is also defined as a basic cognitive principle that comes into play in interpreting every level of our experience. The Caucasian Chalk Circle was written during Brecht’s exile in America. This short parable that opens the play also sets up the structure of the play. There are two disputing parties, the goat-herders and the fruit farmers. Each group wants to claim the valley. However, the goat-herders have the claim that they were there first and should therefore keep the land, whereas the fruit farmers argue that they could put the land to better use. The Delegate moderating the debate chooses the fruit farmers because it is more logical for the person who can put the land to better use to get it. This entire prologue is extremely Communist in its message. Any capitalist society would argue that whoever originally owned the land should get it. Brecht instead argues that whoever can best use the land should get it. It is because of the Communist overtones in the prologue that Brecht originally did not allow the prologue to be printed while he was living in the United States. The prologue serves yet a third function of allowing Brecht to present his ideas before the play even starts. This is extremely clever of him because the audience receives the moral of the play without even having to watch it. Thus, he gets his Communist message across immediately and only after he has presented the message does he actually allow the play to begin.
The play is made up of two stories, Grusha’s story which starts earlier in the play, and Azdak’s which begins towards the end. The two stories converge in the last scene where the problems that had been posed at the outset and highlighted throughout the sequence involving Grusha are revolved, thus bringing the whole action to more or less happy end.

“Since happy endings are not characteristic of Brecht’s drama, this particular example of harmonious conclusion to anything but harmonious events (and to anything but a transparent argument) has prompted a number of commentators to draw special attention to the ‘liberating, life enhancing quality’ of the play or its ‘unified understanding’.” (Shevtsova: 1994, 153).

The Good Person of Szechwan is one of the masterpieces of Brecht’s epic theatre, which was written between 1939 and 1941, but completed in 1943 while the author was living in temporary political exile in The United States, and was first performed in 1943 at the Schauspielhaus Zürich in Switzerland with a musical score and songs by Swiss composer Huldreich Georg Früh. The play focuses on the corruption of virtues, a conflict between the goodness and illusion of goodness in human nature. “The Good Person of Szechwan describes the deep contradictions of human nature and the natural dilemma of being in a wicked world” (Esslin: 1961, 219). The play doesn’t have that much complexity of In the Jungle of Cities, but it certainly displays the issue immensely complex for modern man. The man in modern times is in predicament of living: either to live with emotions or with reasons. The struggle is presented through Shen Teh’s efforts of maintaining goodness under any circumstances, the task allotted to her by the Gods. She fights a lot to
preserve goodness while living a life with emotions to help the people around her, and at the end of all her efforts to do so, she chooses to live with her reasonability in the form of Shui Ta, her disguise in male, and manages the adversities of her life. Thus, the play confirms that Shen Teh would not have been able to finish the task of being good unless supported by Shui Ta, her role-play as male, which also approves the co-existence of emotions and reasons.

One more historical play, *The Life of Galileo* is a dedicated endeavor to dramatize the life of a great scientist and a crucial episode in the biography of science. It depicts the last 33 years of Galileo’s life; it doesn’t merely present a historical account of his life, but also forewords an analytical picture of the circumstances and contemporary society against which he struggled to establish prominence of scientific discoveries. The plot is set in renaissance, when everything new was entering the world at its highest aesthetics. The era stirred the fresh discipline called ‘science’ give its ‘good morning’ gesture to the ages old patron of the society named ‘religion’. This awakening call for religion immediately alarmed the church authority to sustain the credibility of the people and crush anything against them in the name of God. Such new age conflict makes the core idea of the plot. In the notes on the play, Brecht writes,

“*My intention was, among others, to give an unvarnished picture of a new age- a strenuous undertaking since all those around me were convinced that our own era lacked every attribute of a new age.*” (Brecht: 1968, 8).
Even Galileo is possessed with the idea of new age. His conversation with Andrea, in the first scene, presents a great deal of love for new age, he says, "A new era has dawned, a great age in which it is joy to be alive." (Brecht: 1968, 23). This enthusiasm makes him believe in the freedom of research that proves to be illusive for him, as the new age cannot displace the realm of the authority for the new sciences, and that humiliation is not only of Galileo but of all the individuals fight to validate their beliefs. The disillusion of truth marks the core of this conflict, as Brecht says,

"Terrible is the disappointment when men discover, or think they discover, that they have fallen victims to an illusion, that the old is stronger than the new, that the 'facts' are against them and not for them, that their age- the new age- has not yet come." (Brecht: 1968,6).

Brecht's plot doesn't ever carry a unified whole structure, it rather favours episodic scheme displaying the montage of separate episodes. As an essential measure of epic theatre, the episodic structure is used to restrain the emotions journeying through various scenes with the same capacity, and hence enables the audience perceive the play more analytically. Such a kind of structure needs be treated like different rounds in any sport event, which are parts of the same game but are dealt with separately. The structure of In the Jungle of Cities moves like boxing match rounds, every round has a unique combat. Thus the plot doesn't have a graphical movement, but a very lenient one of an episodic construction. This design properly supports the concept of distancing effect, because it doesn't allow any zigzag journey of emotions through
the performance since no emotional chain is created between the two scenes. Brecht has also not sanctioned the element of surprise in the structure. The abrupt visit of Shlink in the first scene to announce fight all of a sudden is already made clear by Brecht in the prologue by telling the audience not to worry about the motive of the fight. Even when, in scene eight the man tells Shlink, “I’ve got three minutes to give you information. You have got two minutes to understand your situation. Half an hour ago The Examiner received a letter from one of the state penitentiaries, signed by one Garga, showing you’ve committed a number of crimes. In five minutes reporters will be here.” (Brecht: 1979, 162), the audience is not surprised because they have already been informed about the probable arrest of Shlink in the previous scene by Garga. This very element can successfully support the spectators for being untouched to any emotional flow.

One of the striking features of an episodic structure is the rejection of growth, since it eyes on the process contrary to traditional play’s eyeing on end. The making of In the Jungle of Cities proves the concept. The boxing match like construction of the play and display of strange human characteristics make the audience think consciously of the process rather than the end where Garga leaves Chicago for New York in search of new fight, because it symbolizes mere continuation and not an end. Thus, structurally there is no emotional growth in the play. Unlike other plays of epic theatre, In the Jungle of Cities doesn’t contain any song. Brecht might not have included songs because of its boxing match design; he might not want combine sports and music. Moreover, the songs in his plays are intended to interrupt the action of the play, and that intension is
easily carried out here at the end of every round, and that weakens the possibility of inclusion of songs. On the whole, with the play like *In the Jungle of Cities*, Brecht began to explore new kind of theatre. About its newness he remarks,

"An idealized fight such as can be seen in the play *In the Jungle of Cities* is at present only to be found in the theatre. For the real thing you will have to wait fifty years." (Brecht: 1979, 436).

Another play with prominent episodic structure is *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, which is built up in such a manner that the spectators are interrupted periodically in the process of their emotional attachment with the play. Brecht doesn’t like the spectator who is illusioned and constantly worried to find out the answer of ‘what next’, he needs the spectator who is much aware about the events performed on the stage, and searches the answer of ‘why this’. So, Brecht doesn’t like the element of suspense in his plays. “In the epic theatre the author can tell the audience in advance how the play will end, thus freeing their minds from the distraction of suspense.” (Esslin: 1959, 111). In a way Brecht's techniques of projecting messages of what will happen in proceeding scenes can often make his complicated plots less confusing. In *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, before the assassination of the Governor, the storyteller says the following lines:

Then the Governor returned to his palace

Then the fortress was a trap

Then the goose was plucked and roasted
Then the goose was no longer eaten
Then noon was no longer the hour to eat
Then the noon was the hour to die. (Brecht: 1979, 154).

Thus the spectators are informed well in advance about the forthcoming action of the play in order to cast off the element of suspense from their minds. And thereby they are detached from the aesthetic tension.

The Good Person of Szechwan follows the same construction pattern of self-contained units, which provide looseness to the plot. The arrangement of ten scenes with prologue, interludes and epilogue is skillful in a way that it supports the Brechtian concept of breaking the illusion of reality by restricting any emotional flow journeying consistently through different episodes. The prologue consists of thoughtful discourse on Gods’ search for existence of goodness in capitalist society. The search is over with Shen Teh, and the selected one’s struggle to maintain goodness is portrayed in following ten scenes. The continuity of the scenes is constantly interrupted by the interludes, which are rather a continuation of prologue: either the Gods moving on with the same discourse on goodness or Shen Teh expressing her views on capitalism. And thus the scenes, as they are loosely connected, don’t get a chance of having graphical emotional movements. The epilogue, which was added after the Viennese premiere of the play, implores the audience to write their own ending. It acknowledges that the current ending of the play is not quite satisfactory, since nothing is fixed. The gods are unable to accept that their rulebook must be changed in order to make it possible to be good in the world, and they leave in denial of Shen Teh's situation. This technique of addressing the audience directly is an
example of alienation, which forces the audience to see the play for what it represents rather than be caught up in it as an analogy for real life.

*The Life of Galileo* takes a credit of one of the marvels in episodic pattern. Brecht sets out the play as fifteen stages of Galileo's self-damnation, and each of the fifteen stages of the play is a separate little drama in itself. Brecht's method is 'epic' in which we are not to wonder 'what will happen next?' but 'what is happening now?' One scene does not lead to another, but exists as a separate entity, a demonstration in itself: to be looked at and analyzed consciously. The narrative structure of Galileo is built in a clearly dialectical manner that is designed to make evident the contradictory forces at work in Galileo's life, to pose positive qualities against negative, public images against private, cerebral ideas against physical passions. These co-existing polarities are organized in a web of complex symmetry. Brecht converts history into a Hegelian 'Myth of Reason' - choosing an exemplary moment in human history with a representative historical hero; a moment when history made a decisive turn. He utilizes it more didactically to teach and warn his present age of its own dangers. The story symbolizes the defeat not only of an individual but of all the individuals who have contributed to the progress of the society in every age; and the victory not only of the contemporary church authority but of all who rule the world from ages.

Variety in thematic concerns is another noteworthy constituent part of Brechtian plots. Multiplicity of human nature and socio-political structures are the dominant targets of Brecht when he decides the themes for his plays, and so he has diversified combinations of themes to employ in the plays, among which capitalism and its ill effects on society at wider
level and on individual at specific level are chief. Thus, the theme of his plays inspires the audience to be aware of the world in which they are living.

A fundamental concept in *In the Jungle of Cities* is the desire to pierce the ‘thick’ skin that people wear. This skin prevents people from being able to feel emotion for others. Brecht's belief is that only strong emotions, such as hatred and anger, are able to puncture through the skin and bring the individual to a state of intense emotional rapture. This is what Shlink is trying to accomplish in this first round of the duel. Garga has a thick skin for most of the first scene, but his inability to feel emotion is cracked by the end of the scene. At this outburst he takes off his cloths, which symbolize throwing out the skin, and runs away. Symbolically even Skinny says, “We finally drove him out of his skin. Let’s take it with us.” (Brecht: 1979, 126). The concept of thick skin is further elaborated by Brecht in scene four when Shlink says,

“Man’s skin in his natural state is too thin for this world, that’s why people do their best to make it thicker. The method would be satisfactory if the growth could be stopped. A piece of leather, for instance, stays the way it is, but a man’s skin grows, it gets thicker and thicker.” (Brecht: 1979, 142).

One of the themes that permeates Brecht's work is the concept that business is more important than family. His play *Mother Courage* epitomizes this concept, with *Mother Courage* losing her children while she conducts business with the soldiers. The conflict between motherhood and business is immediately brought into focus by the cart. It is both
Mother Courage is distracted by business as Eilif is led away, and we see how her trade and her family life are irresolvably at odds: her interests as a mother and her interests as a businesswoman damage each other. Her children, fathered by a string of military men, might be thought of as 'children of the war', and it is to the war that they will eventually succumb. The same theme appears in The Threepenny Opera, where almost all the characters pick profit over the relationship. The traditional values like family-bond, love and relationship don’t even make the audience feel their existence during the course of the play. In scene three, Peachum chooses to work with the beggars in spite of the crisis of Polly getting married. While discussing about Polly’s decision to marry Mac, she quickly becomes secondary to the financial prospect of arresting Macheath when Peachum says, "That'll earn us forty pounds" (Brecht: 2007, 31). As against the total exclusion of virtues in the capitalist society in both the previous plays, The Good Person of Szechwan discusses the issue in slightly different way by analyzing the importance of goodness in the society. The theme of goodness, which seems so simple in the title, is revealed as multifaceted right from the beginning of the play. Throughout the play the concepts of altruism and goodness are consistently challenged by economic needs and modern time material approaches of the people to run their livelihood at the cost of good people’s goodness. The challenges are made clear by Shen Teh even before the task begins, she says to Gods:

Wait, Illustrious Ones. I am by no means sure that I am good. I should certainly like to be, but how am I to pay the rent? Let me
admit: I sell myself in order to live, and even so I cannot manage, for there are so many forced to do this, I would take on anything, but who would not? Of course I should like to obey the commandments: to honour my parents and respect the truth. Not to covet my neighbour's house would be joy to me, and to love, honour and cherish a husband would be very pleasant. Nor do I wish to exploit other men or to rob the defenceless. But how can it be done? Even by breaking one or two of the commandments I can barely manage. (Brecht: 1962, 212).

The complexity of the issue is thus projected from the beginning. The confusion of Shen Teh is a product of capitalist system, where economic instability makes it very difficult to preserve goodness. Even towards the end of prologue, she directly questions, "How can I be good when everything is so expensive?"(Brecht: 1962, 213), and it is answered by some economical help by the Gods, which evidences that even Gods believe that it is hard to maintain goodness without money. Brecht refers the same complexity of life in Galileo's time, as there are many references to poverty and corruption of life by the rulers in the play. Galileo is shown as a poor person who doesn't have enough money to pay for his milk, so his main concern in the beginning is to earn more, so that he can have comfort and freedom to research- the capitalist ideology that economic strength leads to progress. And when this stability is not achieved, corruption of life begins. Galileo's dialogues with the Curator in the first scene focus on 'demand and supply' law of the era. In response to Galileo's proposal for raising his salary, the Curator argues,
“Scudi are worth what scudi will buy. If you want money, you must produce something else. For the knowledge which you sell, you can only demand as much as it profits whoever buys it from you. For example, the philosophy which Signor Colombe is selling in Florence brings the Prince at least ten thousand scudi a year. Your Laws of Falling Bodies have created stir, admittedly. Men applaud you in Paris and Prague. But the gentlemen who applaud there do not, unfortunately, pay the University of Padua what you cost it. Your misfortune is your subject, Signor Galilei.” (Brecht: 1968, 29).

The lines focus on the historical reality that the authority permits only those advances which are beneficial to it or befit its schemes, but if they fail to convince it of its profit, they are aborted radically. The spectators are made to be aware of the historical materialism through some important events from Galileo’s life. The play is not a romantic saga of individual’s sufferings, it rather presents a contemplative analysis of sufferings; the conflict is not of emotions but of reasons, not of sentiments but of ideology. Brecht’s theme, thus, enlightens those vicious realities of the world through which the human beings are governed in the capitalist world.

The songs in Brecht’s plays deserve more attention because they are as famous as the plays themselves. Often they serve to break up the action and cause the audience to remain unattached from the characters’ lives on the stage. Hence, the songs support the epic structure of the play, as they break the emotional flow of the performance on regular basis. Much of Brecht’s plays conceive the technique to achieve the alienation effect, most essential element of epic strategy, through which the audience’s
brain storming is expected. Besides breaking the action of the play, the songs also work to fulfill many other tasks like exposing the mood, analyzing the situations, and informing the audience about the author’s basic ideology.

The songs throughout *The Threepenny Opera* are important because they represent a new style of theater. There are around eighteen songs in the play. Operatic in presentation, they are nonetheless bawdy, cabaret style works that invert the common perception of opera. The songs serve as social statements by combining high culture with low; they also are an attack on traditional Wagnerian opera. In scene three Macheath and Low-Dive Jenny step before the curtain and sing ‘Second Threepenny Finale’ song, in which they try to titillate the audience by saying,

“You gentlemen who think you have a mission
To purge us of the seven deadly sins
Should first sort out the basic food position
Then start your preaching: that’s where it begins.
... Food is the first thing. Morals follow on.
... What keeps mankind alive?
... Mankind is kept alive by bestial acts.” (Brecht: 2007,57).

Thus, this song is an attack on the audience. Instead of morally judging what Macheath, the beggars, the whores and the thieves are doing, the song tells the audience to sympathize with them. By putting food before morals, Brecht is issuing a call to his audience to consider the actual circumstances of the characters instead of judging them abstractly. The ballads also compete with the plot for attention, causing the audience to
distance itself from the characters. This is Brecht's goal; he wants the audience to leave the theatre with a logical desire to change society. By forcing the audience to not empathize with the characters, Brecht is trying to make people think about the play rather than feel emotions.

In *Mother Courage*, songs are put at regular intervals, which weaken the action of the play. In the beginning of the play, Courage narrates the background of the scene and about her position. She says,

"Your Captains, tell the drums to slacken
And give your infanteers a break:
It’s Mother Courage with her wagon
Full of the finest boots they make." (Brecht: 1983, 4).

The song basically breaks the continuity of some informative dialogues between a Recruiter and a Sergeant. Likewise many other songs (‘Song of a girl and a soldier’, ‘Song of Fraternisation’, ‘Song of the Hours’, ‘Song of the Grand Capitulation’, etc.) during the course of the play work to break the continuity. Because of these regular intervals the spectators are not able to be attached emotionally with the performance, and they can successfully be alienated from stage activity, which is the most important element of the epic theatre.

Like *Mother Courage*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* also consists of excessive use of songs. There are many occasions in the play where songs jump into the scenes abruptly, and divert the attention of the audience
from the action. For instance, after the prologue, the scene starts with the Storyteller’s song:

Once upon a time

A time of blood shed

When this city was called

The city of the damned.

It had a Governor.

His name was Georgi Abashvili…

He was very rich

He had a beautiful wife

He had a healthy child… (Brecht: 1979, 154).

After the song, the beggars and other citizens shouting for their needs, entry of soldiers, behind them the Governor, his wife and his child enter. Before any dramatic scene happens the storyteller enters and starts singing again, thereafter there are dialogues between Governor, his wife, the doctor and some officers. Somebody comes with an important message, but the Governor doesn’t pay attention towards him. Meanwhile, once again, the storyteller enters and starts singing. Thus, within no time we have songs of various kinds without any development of the story. And that very thing keeps alienating the spectators from emotional attachment.

Throughout *The Good Person of Szechwan*, the characters burst into song whenever there is a need, sometimes the songs are recognized as such by the characters. The songs do also mark the anti-capitalist ideology of
Brecht with enormous capacity of satirizing the contemporary social realities. For instance, ‘The Water Seller's Song in the Rain’, in third scene, focuses on capitalist mentality of Wang, a water seller,

“O stop the leaky heaven
Hoard what stock I've got remaining:
Recently I dreamt that seven
Years went by without it raining.
How they’d all shout Give me Water!
And I’d make their further treatment
Go by how I liked their faces.
(Stay thirsty, you devils!)” (Brecht: 1962, 239).

The song tries to make the audience aware about the strong capitalist philosophy of humiliating the other beings. Wang is portrayed as poorest of the poor in the play; he always lives at the mercy of the people who buy water from him and hardly gets enough to run his livelihood, a man who doesn’t even own a shelter to live in. Such a fellow dreams of revenging his customers, when they will be short of water, by leaving them to die with thirst. This is what capitalism teaches: corrupt the lives with the powers you have. Sometimes, Brecht employs positive consciousness through the songs to support the basic theme. In ‘Song of the Defencelessness of the Good and the Gods’, Shen Teh sings,

“In order to win one's mid-day meal
One needs the toughness which elsewhere builds empires.
Except twelve others be trampled down
The unfortunate cannot be helped.
So why can't the Gods make a simple decision
That goodness must conquer in spite of its weakness?-
Then back up the good with an armoured division
Command it to: 'fire!' and not tolerate meekness?"

(Brecht: 1962, 250-251).

Analyzing the life of Shen Teh, the song here conveys that the Gods, with their divine power, must help the good persons overcome their adversities instead of just testing their goodness, because until and unless the goodness is not protected in this brutal world, it can’t be sustained more on the earth. Thus the satire is directed towards the powerlessness of the goodness in the contemporary corrupt and wicked world.

Brecht’s device of manipulating songs to break the action of the play is not considerably promoted in *The Life of Galileo*, except in few scenes in which some lines are sung as background support. The only scene which demonstrates the device effectively is scene ten where the ballad singers sing the triumph of new discoveries over the old customs,

“The lesser ones around the greater
And round the earlier the later,
As it is in Heaven so on earth.
And round the Pope revolve the cardinals
And round the cardinals revolve the bishops
And round the bishops revolve the secretaries
And round the secretaries revolve the magistrates
And round the magistrates revolve the craftsmen
And round the craftsmen revolve the servants

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And round the servents revolve the dogs, chickens and the beggars.

... Then up got Doctor Galilei
(Threw the Bible away, caught up his telescope,
   Took a look at the universe.)
   'Stand still!' to the sun he said,
   'For now the creation Dei
   Shall turn the opposite way.
   Now the mistress must obey
   And turn around her maid.'” (Brecht: 1968, 93).

The song focuses on how badly the people have been expecting the change in the society; it also highlights the capitalist social structure of the time and people’s desire for freedom. But the foremost aim of the song is to interrupt the emotion of the previous scene in which Virginia gets fainted after knowing Ludovico’s refusal of their probable marriage because of Galileo’s continuing with his discoveries, and thus assisting Brecht’s scheme of alienation. In a way, Brecht constitutes the plots of his plays with utmost possibility of conceiving prime features of epic theatre.

4.2 CHARACTERIZATION

The concept of epic theatre owes lot to Brecht’s desire of social reformation through the theatre. His plays, therefore, hold strong critical observations about the contemporary social crisis. The society, in modern times, has become a victim of high capitalist syndrome, a contaminated unit controlled by evils of capitalism, where human virtues have no place
to exist; they have to be either maligned or disappeared. Thus, to be virtuous and live peacefully is quite unworldly thought in the contemporary society. Brecht inherits the same ideology while deciding the characterization for his plays, which are aimed to analyze the struggle of modern man in capitalist structure. His characters, therefore, constantly brawl to survive, and in doing so they become a part of the bout running through ages and which has no end. Hence Brecht's characters always incite the element of sameness in the spectators, for they are also the parts of the same age old war. Though there is no difference in the struggle of major male-female characters in his plays, but the distinction lies in the way they struggle.

*In the Jungle of Cities* has the most distinct characterization among his initial plays. The bunch of characters portrayed here possesses some entirely new dramatic traits which, in later years, constitute the brand value of Brecht's characterization. The newness of characters begins with their behavioural pattern. Generally the situations decide the characters' action in the play as the playwright has a definite plan of action for every situation, and thus the mood or the emotional link of performance is created traditionally. But here the characters don't act in tune with the situation since Brecht doesn't want them to build any sentimental channel with the audience. And this altered intension makes the characters behave differently than the audience expect. Brecht himself remarks,

"... it ought not to surprise you if the newer plays show certain types of person in certain situations behaving differently from what you expected, or if your guesses as to the motives for a particular piece of behavior turn out to be wrong. *This is a world, and kind of drama,*
where the philosopher can pick his way better than the psychologist.” (Brecht: 1979, 435).

The ideological duel in the play is between the two main characters Shlink and Garga. Shlink is a rich lumber dealer in Chicago, who suddenly starts the war against Garga by declaring suddenly. “I’m starting my fight with you. I’m going to start by rocking the ground you stand on.” (Brecht: 1979, 121). And before the audience gets any reason for this behavior, the fight begins; and surprisingly Shlink transfers whole of his business and every other possessions to Garga. His act is not even an outcome of impulsive behavior, because plenty a times, during the course of the play, he displays his shrewdness. For instance, look these lines from scene four when Shlink proposes John and Mae Garga to stay in their house:

Shlink: I have nothing. I’ll sleep on the stairs, ma’am. I won’t intrude. My hand will never touch you. I know the skin on it is yellow.

Mae coldly: I’ll give you mine.

Shlink: I don’t deserve it. I meant what I said. I know you didn’t mean your skin. Forgive me.

... John: She’s a good soul under that skin.

Shlink: God bless her. I’m a simple man, don’t expect words from my mouth. I’ve only teeth in it. (Brecht: 1979, 141).

The characters of epic theatre are never progressive, as the plot itself doesn’t develop considerably like the traditional plots. Such characters
are rather utilized to show diversified moods irrespective, sometimes, of the need. Towards the end, in the tenth scene, Shlink talks in a philosophical manner which is totally contrary to his character in the previous scenes. By periodically changing the character's nature, Brecht tries not to allow his audience flow with any single emotional trait of the character, and there by maintaining the distancing effect. Likewise, other characters deal with the same behavioural changes. Garga, at the initial stage, is a self-esteemed young boy, who runs the livelihood of his family through high efforts. He wants to earn but not at the cost of his self. He says Shlink, “I'll sell you the opinions of Mr. J. V. Jensen and Mr. Arthur Rimbaud, but I won't sell you my own opinion.” (Brecht: 1979, 120).

But in the following scenes, he eventually leaves his so called virtues and ethics, and finally stands as a counterpart of Shlink. He starts behaving loudly and cruelly, forgetting ethics, relationships and above all his own self. He asks Shlink to spit over the Preacher, tries to sell Mary as a commodity, endangers his family to accomplish his fight, indirectly allows his beloved to be a prostitute...series of such changes do the audience find through the play. These are not his emotional traits, but caculative behavioural masques he has put on his self as a part of his fight with Shlink. The design works here and the audience is cut off entirely from any emotional attachment with his act. In doing so, these characters also show their alienation with the society and social values. They are all jockeying for a secure position, but there is no security. Businesses change hands, people lose jobs, change partners, starve, get money, leave home or come home. Nothing stays the same, but change does not lead to
satisfaction, though people keep looking for it. In his last conversation with Garga says,

“I’ve observed the animals. Love, the warmth of bodies in contact, is the only mercy shown us in the darkness. But the only union is that of the organs, and it can’t bridge over the cleavage made by speech. Yet they unite in order to produce beings to stand by them in their hopeless isolation. And the generations look coldly into each other’s eyes. If you cram a ship full to bursting with human bodies, they’ll freeze with loneliness.” (Brecht: 1979, 172).

Alike Shlink-Garga duo of In the Jungle of Cities, The Threepenny Opera presents the pair of Mac and Peachum. The most striking element of Brecht’s satire-glorification of crime prevails here effectively when he manages the characters of Mac and Mr. Peachum. Macheath is always referred as Mac ‘the knife’, which helps the audience understand the cruelty the man possesses. He doesn’t merely represent the class, but exists as an ideology of that class. Brecht says,

“The bandit Macheath must be played as a bourgeois phenomenon. The bourgeoisie’s fascination with bandits rests on a misconception: that a bandit is not a bourgeois. This misconception is the child of another misconception: that a bourgeois is not a bandit. Does this mean that they are identical? ”(Brecht: 2007, 94).

His behaviour throughout the play is a good example of the fact that business transcends love in this amoral, capitalist world. In scene four,
when Polly comes to warn him about his probable arrest, he cares more for business than his wife:

Mac: All right, if I've got to go away, you'll have to run the business

Polly: Don't talk about the business now, Mac, I can't bear it. Kiss your poor Polly again and swear that you'll never never be...

(Mac interrupts her brusquely and leads her to the table where he pushes her down in a chair.)

Mac: Here are the ledgers...Don't sit on my lap, I'm not in the mood right now. (Brecht: 2007, 37).

Thus, In spite of Polly's tears, Mac describes business matters to her. This replacement of love with business is a direct attack on capitalist society in which emotions are subordinated to fiscal transactions. His sexual perverseness is another to key to understand his nature as his sexual engagements with numerous women (including whores) eradicate his claim of pure relationship. No reason is clearly mentioned for these women's attraction for him, but still the number is big. The importance of these women in his life is merely of a vehicle to reach to his carnal climaxes. They always remain substitutes to his business profit, which demonstrates one of the major components of capitalist structure. Following the same ideology, he believes that his profit is his own earning, whereas his loss is his misfortune, and therefore always tries to
justify his deeds; even the issue of corruption is purely social for him. And hence his encounters with certain problems are portrayed with great comforts. In scene nine when he is about to be executed he gives a short speech:

*We lower middle-class artisans who toil with our humble jemmies on small shopkeepers' cash registers are being swallowed up by big corporations backed by the banks...What's breaking into a bank compared with founding a bank? What's murdering a man compared with employing a man? Fellow citizens, I hereby take my leave of you...A concatenation of several unfortunate circumstances has brought about my fall. So be it-I fall.* (Brecht: 2007, 78-79).

In the speech he accuses big business of doing exactly what he does, namely being a thief. The only difference is that the big companies do it with more money and legally, and then finally blames his destiny for all his misfortunes.

Peachum is a counterpart of Mac, who introduces a common theme in Brecht's drama, the idea of deadened feelings. As Peachum indicates, humans are able to prevent themselves from feeling emotion towards other humans. This concept is prominent in Brecht's work *Jungle of Cities*, a play about a fight between two men who are desperate to pierce the 'thick skin' that society makes people wear. In typical Brecht style, this complaint is delivered by a hypocrite; Peachum himself shows no sympathy towards Filch. He even goes so far as to order Filch to stop feeling sorry for others. Throughout the play, he is presented as a true ambassador of the capitalist domain, even when he warns Brown to ruin
the coronation, he precipitates his belief that law and justice can be pushed back through the chaos in the society. His character, thus, efficiently embodies the vices necessary to ignite the audience about the contemporary systems. In Brecht’s view:

The character of Jonathan Peachum is not to be resumed in the stereotyped formula ‘miser’. He has no regard for money... he sees money as just one more wholly ineffective weapon of defense. Certainly he is a rascal, a theatrical rascal of the old school. His crime lies in his conception of the world. Though it is a conception worthy in its ghastliness of standing alongside the achievements of any other great criminals, in making a commodity of human misery he is merely following the trend of his times...(Brecht: 2007, 93).

The conflict between Mac the Knife and Peachum is one that requires explaining. It is not an emotional conflict where Peachum is upset about losing Polly. Rather, it is a social issue. Peachum is in charge of all of London's beggars whereas Macheath is in charge of London's thieves. Stealing Peachum's daughter is thus a social affront, an attack on Peachum's status in the London underworld. The theft of Polly will cause Peachum to openly declare war on Mac the Knife in an effort to regain his reputation. Thus Peachum takes on Macheath not because Polly got married but rather because he sees the marriage as an attack against him. He says,

"... Come to think of it, it shows that the fellow is really audacious. If I give away my daughter, the sole prop of my old age, why, my house will cave in and my last dog will run off. I’d think twice about giving
away the dirt under my fingernails, it would mean risking starvation...” (Brecht: 2007, 29).

Contrary to both previous plays, The Life of Galileo focuses the character who doesn’t conceive, rather doesn’t want to conceive, the capitalist instincts; his struggle is not for the self-existence, but for the survival of knowledge and new ideology. The play revolves around the figure of Galileo, over the span of his mature life which related to a crucial moment in intellectual history. He fights for the recognition and acceptance of this new knowledge- for a revolution in consciousness. The play’s narrative traces the contours of this struggle, thereby identifying the strengths and limitations of Galileo’s revolutionary endeavor. Galileo is a teacher of mathematics in the University of Padua, whose belief in new sciences sets the rhythm of his part in the play. Talking to Andrea in the first scene about the dawning of new age, he remarks,

“Soon mankind will know the truth about their home, about the heavenly body on which they dwell. What is written in the old books no longer satisfies them. For where belief has prevailed for a thousand years, doubt now prevails. All the world says: yes, that’s written in books but now let us see for ourselves.” (Brecht: 1968, 21).

His love for research enables him to work passionately on the mysteries of the world. He knows the circumstances he has to face as a result of his challenge to the Biblical references, but he continues with it on the path towards the truth to add a new chapter to the history of human race. His madness for research is presented considerably by Brecht in the play. Amidst worse economic condition, physical blindness and adverse
situations, he continues with his research. Even at the time of plague, when he is closed in his house and Andrea comes to meet him remaining outside, he talks to him about his research on Venus. It is this madness which constantly forces him to convince the authority against all odds. Brecht’s presentation of Galileo is in no sense an idealist one. Along with his heroism in research is revealed his cowardice in recantation, which suggests both that he betrays truth by recanting, while he preserves it in preserving his life to enable him to continue his research in secret, for benefit of later ages. One complex trait of his character is his relation with Virginia, his daughter. She works as a moral support for him throughout the play, but during the time of Ludovico’s rejection of her, he remains silent and behaves emotionlessly. The trait can be justified as a strategy of epic theatre- to restrain the audience from any emotional flow of the performance. On the whole, by dividing his self into positive-negative sides, Brecht minimizes his capacity to be a heroic character.

The woman characters, in Brecht’s plays, are presented as reactions against capitalist actions. In the world of emotional malignancy, women are always treated as commodity. For instance, In the jungle of Cities has strong female characterization, which highlights the issue of the suppressed status of women in the society. Being poor is always looked at as a crime in the capitalist world, and so is the case with being woman. The very idea is analytically observed in the play. The young women-Jane, George Garga’s girlfriend, and Marie, his sister-both become prostitutes because they do not want to starve. At first, Jane sews shirts, and Marie washes them, but this in itself is a form of prostitution. Everyone in a city is a prostitute of some kind, as Brecht shows. Marie
struggles with her role as a woman, learning that whatever she chooses, she will be a prostitute. At first her virginity is a burden when she says, “I want to sleep with a man and I don’t know how.” (Brecht: 2007, 143). She cannot use it as a bargaining chip with Shlink, who doesn’t want her. Then, she decides to live with Manky, after which she finds her romanticism about sex being broken:

I lay in bed with a man who was like an animal. My whole body was numb, but I gave myself to him, many times, and I couldn’t get warm. (Brecht: 2007, 153).

Compare to Mary, Jane comfortably settles her down in the capitalist structure, she accepts her fate as a prostitute to such an extent that she refuses, towards the end, to move back to the family life structure. Mae Garga doesn’t engage herself in physical prostitution, but she has been rapped mentally and ideologically number of times, and so she also leaves the family life structure at the end.

In total contradiction to the exploited life-structure of woman, Polly, in The Threepenny Opera, lives with equal strength and comfort of male characters. She has been nourished in a criminal atmosphere by purely capitalist parents. She is a girl with all the guts to understand the world in which she is living, a package of complex emotions. For instance, in scene two, she bursts into tears over the fact that people had to die in order to make her wedding pleasant, but very soon she performs ‘Pirate Jenny’ song; again in scene four, when Mac asks her to take over the business, she cries out of emotions, but then quickly accepts it. This complexity in nature makes her noticeable in the play among the crudest
of the creatures. In the last scene, Polly is the last hope for Mac, but as he has already rejected her in the previous scenes, she refuses to give him money, claiming that it has all been sent to a Manchester bank. This is Polly's revenge; she keeps his money. Through this revenge, she proves her fit enough to exist. The belief that love is worthless is held by all of the characters except for Polly who seems to the only character struggling to achieve worthwhile emotions. As the end of the chapter indicates, even she readily capitulates to the capitalist ideal and gives up on her love.

For Brecht, "The coherence of the character is in fact shown by the way in which its individual qualities contradict one another." (Willet: 1964, 196). In Mother Courage, the central character is a more refined and finished version of Polly. She basically selfish and uncaring but whose attitude occasionally, especially towards her daughter, is hopelessly sentimental. She is kind—she gives cloak to the Chaplin; allows Kattrin to have the red boots—, but also unkind—she refuses to give shirts for bandages. She is courageous when denying Swiss Cheese, cowardly in her scene of the Great Capitulation. Thus, her character is a bundle of paradoxes. From the final text of the play, it is easy to condemn her for, as she herself puts it, "bargaining too long" and thereby bringing about her son's shooting. The paradox here is that Mother Courage herself will starve if she retains no means by which to live—the sale of her cart represents financial ruin for her. Though it is easy to refute, in retrospect, Mother Courage's decision to bargain, Brecht emphasizes that often, for the peasant classes, the choice is often between social concerns. Mother Courage's bargaining highlights what Brecht said was the single most important lesson of the play as a whole: that little people cannot profit
from a war which runs only for the profit of the greater authorities. Mother Courage here fails to realize that she will never be able to save Swiss Cheese and keep her cart. There is an opportunity cost either way. According to Brecht, Mother Courage’s greatest failing is that although a capitalist, even at the end of the play she remains ignorant of this basic truth about capitalism

_The Good Person of Szechwan_ discusses a unique struggle of maintain goodness in materialistic world, and it conceives a female character who fights virtuously contradictory to Polly and Mother Courage. The center of the whole struggle in the play is Shen Teh, a prostitute who is always eager to support others at the expense of her own comforts. In the beginning when she is asked by Wang to accommodate the Gods, she is waiting for a customer as she is badly in need of money to help her stomach and to pay the rent, and she says,

“I’m afraid that rumbling stomach is no respecter of persons. But very well, I will take them in.” (Brecht: 1962, 210).

Her goodness lies in her transparent and helpful nature. While talking to the Gods in the prologue, she transparently talks of her inability to be a role model for goodness, even though she knows that she has already been chosen by the Gods. Her economic status is very poor, she has rarely enough money for herself but she is always eager to help others. The striking element of her character is her constant support to the people around her irrespective of her awareness towards their fraudulent attitudes. Thus she knows the fact but can’t restrict herself from doing
good deeds. But being a Brechtian character, she satirically justifies them while talking to the audience. She says,

“They are bad.
They are no man’s friend.
They grudge even a bowl of rice.
They need it all themselves.
How can they be blamed?” (Brecht: 1962, 217).

She understands her weaknesses but is not able to overcome them being Shen Teh, so she creates her alter ego in the form of Shui Ta, her male disguise. Shui Ta seems to be the audience choice, his sense of behaving with the people and reasonable goodness are the fresh aspects people like to appreciate against Shen Teh’s over innocent gestures. Nonetheless it is not Shui Ta but Shen Teh, who is the ‘good person’ of the title. Her altruism may seem burdened and out of place in the modern times, but is very necessary for Brecht’s design of satirizing the capitalist mentality. The capitalist never helps without being appreciated; it is the base of capitalism to exploit others, and Shen Teh is portrayed perfectly in contradiction to this. Her following lines sketch the whole of her character,

“I would go with the man whom I love.
I would not reckon what it costs me.
I would not consider what is wiser.
I would not know whether he loves me.
I would go with the man whom I love.”
(Brecht: 1962, 261).
In order to support the main characters in their struggle, Brecht masterly employs various sort of supportive characters, who not only back up the major characters but also propagate to achieve Brecht's strategy. Brecht conceives a style of rotating the controller of various scenes, and to compensate the need, he sometimes creates some characters who are worthy of the play's design. These characters follow the same instincts through which main characters are guided and can better be judged in their social contexts. For example, in *The Three Penny Opera*, Mrs. Peachum, Brown, Jenny, Lucy, Jack are some of those characters who sometimes have more importance in the scene than the major one; more often these characters are the mouthpieces of Brechtian ideology. Thus, by balancing the characters in such manner, Brecht intends to weaken the heroic effect of the characters. The technique is well observed in *Mother Courage*. At the end of the play, Mother Courage remains alone to fight the diversities of life. But there are many characters that are presented alone from the beginning of the play; even there is no single reference given about their family- for instance, the cook, the sergeant, the general, the armourer, etc.-, they are merely individuals representing various classes of the society. They appear on the stage with a definite mission, and at the completion of it they move out. Thus they don't make a permanent relation with the audience, rather Brecht has made his characters not to create an emotional atmosphere which can affect the audience and make them only passive spectators. Following the prominent feature of alienation, the play doesn't contain any single character who is permanently 'scene stealer'. Therefore, it never creates an illusion in the spectators, and always stops them to be drawn with the characters.
The Good Person of Szechwan combines rare mixture of supportive characters showing various traits of human nature. The play displays the ideological conflict between the good and the bad, the conflict running through the centuries far from the pre-historic times. So, Brecht has carefully selected his army of characters properly befitted to justify the need of this historical struggle. Among the characters promoting goodness in the society are the Gods, who come on to the earth in search of a good person. By weaving this metaphysical relationship of goodness, Brecht satirically focuses on the fact that goodness is rarely an earthly element; it is so uncommon that the Gods have to undertake a journey from heaven to search it out. To contradict the goodness of Shen Teh, Brecht has created numerous other characters with materialistic nature. These characters personify various human needs of modern world; they also symbolize the evil instincts growing out of poverty. In the very first dialogue of the play, Wang, a water seller, explains the realm of poverty in his society:

My job is tedious. When water is short I have to go far for it. And when it is plentiful I earn nothing. But utter poverty is the rule in our province. (Brecht: 1962, 205).

Thus he constitutes the background for the whole lot of characters living the same life of poverty. They are presented as victims of adverse circumstances whose constant failure to earn has made them incapable to work further, and hence a slight wealthy person is always a target for them. The same works here: the family of eight needs shelter from Shen Teh, Lin To (a carpenter), Yang Sun and his mother expect economical help, Shu Fu (a barber) seeks her love, Mrs. Shin (a widow) and the
unemployed man want to fulfill their necessities without paying anything to her. Every character has its own intension of having relation with Shen Teh. These characters, while chasing personal benefits, dislike others. Thus, the suspicion of others is a character trait common in the play, and it is contrary to the quality of "goodness" for which the gods are searching. For instance, when Shen Teh gives cigarette to the unemployed man without money, Mrs. Shin, who herself begs rice from her, says, “If that’s how you open up you’ll be closing down before three days are out.” (Brecht: 1962, 216). Further in the same scene when Shen Teh gives rice to Mrs. Shin, the Woman, who is an unwanted guest herself, asks her, “Does she come regularly? Has she got some claim on you?” (Brecht: 1962, 217). This shows typical materialistic mentality with which modern world is governed.

Like The Good Person of Szechwan, The Life of Galileo also has contradictory set of supportive characters. The play manifests intellectual history of renaissance Italy—a tale comprising a conflict between the established authority of Church and the forthcoming supremacy of science. Brecht arranges exclusive range of characters to justify his purpose of showing brutal reality of the time. These characters divisionally participate from either of the sides in this struggle between the new and the old, and their parts help to rationalize the action. There are many characters portrayed to support Galileo’s deeds, they represent one or the other moral value in his life. They represent the human figures of Galileo’s own ideology, who live his passion and care for him. For instance, Sagredo, Galileo’s friend, is well aware of passion for science,
but he also knows the dangers on the path. While stopping Galileo from going to Florence, he says,

"Galileo, I see you setting out on a fearful road. It is a night of disaster when a man sees the truth. And an hour of delusion when he believes in the commonsense of the human race... I love science, but I love you more, my friend. Don’t go to Florence, Galileo." (Brecht: 1968, 45).

Besides Virginia, Andrea is another character who provides moral force to Galileo. He also possesses the quality of emotional outburst seldom found in Brechtian characters. He has an immense faith in Galileo’s heroism, and hence his recantation tortures him badly which is resulted into emotional explosion. This is once again Brecht’s strategy to mutilate Galileo’s heroism by exploring his betrayal to mankind.

The characters associating the Church authority are divided by Brecht into two parts: some robust believers always think of crushing new challenges to the Church, while others are more flexible who want to accept them until the religious interests are not harmed. Bellarmin, the member of later group, says, “Let us move with the times, Barberini. If star-charts based on a new hypothesis simplify navigation for our sailors, then let them use these charts. We only dislike teachings which contradict the Bible.” (Brecht: 1968, 69). The Church stands for an ideology ruling unchallenged over the people for ages, and the groups symbolize human weapons it uses to sustain the power. The mechanism allegorizes the Church for the capitalist structure, which also manipulates human lives to sustain. The characters in epic theatre are evaluated by
their social relevance, as they are the representatives of various social clusters. And *The Life of Galileo* includes the characters from different social classes of renaissance Italy, which is helpful to bring out the larger image of contemporary world. They work as per the ideology and need of their respective classes. For instance, contrary to the Church authority’s oppose to scientific advancements, the neo-working class promotes it:

The navigators who want better charts and instruments, the linen-merchants who want better looms, Federzoni the lens-maker, Vanni the iron-founder who offers to help Galileo, and the glass-gutter whose help he tries to take in scene 9. Everyone who understands instruments and machines, and can make use of his inventions, knows it is nonsense that truth in Physics cannot make truth in fact. (Brecht: 2011, 110).

The play, hence, projects diversified range of characters which enable the audience conceive rationalized picture of the contemporary society Brecht intends to illustrate.

The epic theatre needs to project the characters as representatives of different human traits rather than individuals. Thus, the individuality of the character is never an important thing, as it is always identified through its symbolic importance. Brecht’s intension in doing so is to make his characters more generalized than to restrict them to any individualistic trait. For example, there is no individualistic character in *The Threepenny opera*. The characters, here, can be judged as representatives of different social structures: Garga, John, Shlink and his gang are symbols of capitalist society, Mae, Mary and Jane symbolize
suppressed and marginalized creatures of capitalism, and Chicago, as a vital character, represents the capital of brutal capitalism itself. Thus, Brecht tries to personify his anti-capitalist instinct through these characters. Likewise in *Mother Courage*, the character of courage is the symbolization of such a woman who loses her everything to war in order to survive, her three children represent three virtues- Elif represents chivalry and bravery, Swiss Cheese nobility, and Kattrin sympathy and kindness – and with their deaths, Courage chronologically loses the virtues of bravery, sympathy and nobility. Even *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* contains characters like Grusha, Azdak, Natella, Abashvili, Michael, Simon, etc. who have individual names, but basically they are not individuals as far as the social context of the play is concerned. Simon represents those soldiers who are always ready to protect the lives of their officers and their relatives even at cost of their own lives. Azdak symbolizes that person who seems to be strange, wavering minded, and irresponsible, but still protects one beggar like unknown person like Duke. Grusha, like Mother Courage, fights for the existence of her virtue as a woman. She personifies motherly feelings- even though she has not given birth to the child, she cares for him. Brecht has a tendency to make one character the "good" character. This character represents the type of person that we should all strive to be. However, because of the cruelty of the world, the good character is often abused or taken advantage of. In *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Grusha represents this good character. She places value on human life unlike the other people who advise her to give up Michael. Her own song, together with those of the singer and the musicians, explain how she has bonded with Michael through their shared hardships.
Moreover, the plays, sometimes, contain the characters with no individual names, rather they are referred with the common nouns. For instance, the characters like Recruiting Officer, Sergeant, Cook, General, Chaplin, Armourer, Colonel, and Peasant in *Mother Courage*; the Man, the Woman, the Policeman, the Old Woman, Nephew, Niece, Sister-in-Law, and the Unemployed Man in *The Good Person of Szechwan*; and the peasant woman, the doctor, the nurse, the cook, the duke, three farmers, the soldier and three architects in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. These characters don’t contain the individual names and symbolize some unique social groups. In the structure of the play, they don’t have an individual importance.

Brecht’s idea, behind detaching these characters with their individual identity, is to portray more generalized picture of the society for the audience, and thus to fulfill his scheme of social awareness. This strategy also marks one of the most striking features of his characterization- to manipulate the characters in their social context. And so, there are no fixed or individualized characters in epic theatre, the character gets birth out of social action and with the change in it the character also changes.

As a sarcastic statement on the bourgeois mentality of the people, *The Threepenny Opera* contains a strong army of characters. They are powerful, ambitious, representatives of various classes, vivacious, selfish, scoundrels and emotionless. They dislike truth, purity and loyalty- the prime social virtues, and at the same time they expect the same from other characters. This contradiction is a key to justify Brecht’s design. These characters are bold and fluent even in bringing out the untruth. The struggle is between Macheath and Mr. Peachum, and rests are aiding
creatures. All these characters are not individuals, though they are prompted like that; they are representatives of different socio-political vices. Hence Brecht has selected very common names from the bourgeois society.

In epic theatre, the characters are also assigned the task of making the audience aware of the realities of the world, so as to justify their roles in the world they are living. Through the variety of characters in *Mother Courage*, the dramatist shows the extreme realities prevailing in the religion, army, business, and other parts of the society, and, in a way, a definite social concern of the characters is tried to be brought out. Here the characters are not only concerned with the war, but they are also presented to deal with their social tribulations. One of the major of them is the conflict of family versus business. It is an irresolvable conflict which is to cost Swiss Cheese his life at the end of the scene 3, expresses tensions from the start: Mother Courage's washing line is strung from a cannon, a visual symbol of the way Mother Courage's domestic and professional lives are always inextricably linked. Brecht's message is neatly underlined too in the way that Mother Courage attempts to mortgage, not sell, her cart to Yvette. But like her own involvement in the war, this bargain too must be an all-or-nothing deal. Even the cart itself, home and business, is caught somewhere between these two poles.

Ensuring the pattern of *Mother Courage*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* also deals with the characters constantly occupied to analyze the social structures. The play seeks to emphasize that within the class justice the poor can only gain justice under exceptional circumstances. Azdak as the judge and arbiter of justice has come to this position only through a
matter of chances and mistakes. Firstly he harbours the Grand Duke from Shauva, and then he confesses to the Ironshirts only to be made judge because the Duke escaped. Then through sheer chance just before his execution the Duke redeems him and makes him judge, finally making him the arbiter of justice between Natasha Abashvilli and Grusha. This shows that the poor class can only get justice under a system of whims and extraordinary circumstances and that justice is intrinsically linked to a series of chances and not linked to the law as it should be in a feudal regime. Azdak finally decides in Grusha's favour on the spur of the moment, the chalk circle is a real test, and it is through this test that Azdak decides the child's fate. In order to entertain the audience, Brecht sought to keep the verdict in flux, keeping the audience in suspense as to the final outcome. Azdak although seen as the arbiter of justice between Natasha Abashvilli and Grusha is shown throughout the play as greedy and corrupt when dealing with the upper classes. The humour that Azdak displays toward the upper class is entertaining, he constantly refers to them as arse-holes, sows, well-born stinkers. This anal imagery is continued right through the play. Such kind of symbolic representations of life enable the audience to be rational while watching the play. Like Kafka, Brecht is also concerned with the question of law and justice. Since the time of Dickens, the perception was this that delayed justice was no justice. In our time Derrida says justice is 'always already done'. Kafka, like Brecht, makes demand both for law and justice as the victim. Before we come to the question of individual, we have to find out what sort of freedom, right he has as an individual. An attempt to answer these questions will tell us whether or not there is a just world order. There is something of this concern in Brecht. In the play we come across chancy
happenings which finally make Azdak judge in the court. Another European writer and a victim of Soviet rule, Kundera says that chance alone is important in life. Our fate speaks to us only through chance or chancy happenings. In response to this insight it could be said justice, after taking a zigzag course, is done and so the play has a happy end because Brecht must have found out that there is still justice in the world.

Thus, the rare policy of characterization and erratic traits in characters enable Brecht to succeed with more proficiency in the practical implications of his epic theatre.

4.3 DIALOGUES AND LANGUAGE

Brecht is among those literary artists who have a mastery of constructing language befitting to the atmosphere of their plays. His taste of selection is uniquely symbolic and convincingly operative for the purpose of alienation effect. He never allows his characters romanticize with their thoughts in their dialogues, the element which enables them to be the narrator and observer of the character they are playing. Accordingly, they always analyze their moves and wish their audience do the same thing. In the Jungle of Cities boldly expresses anger towards the bourgeois mentality and capitalist structure of the society. The atmosphere throughout the play is full of despair, as every character is dissatisfied with the situations in which they have to live. Hence Brecht deploys such note of despair in the language of the play, but at the same time he also secures the rejection of any emotional outburst on the stage. And thus the despair is conveyed as an objective observation and not as a personal anguish. This fact is delicately projected in scene three where Garga is
talking about his indulgence in unwanted fight with Mae, his despair is obvious but he dilutes the emotion by generalizing it.

"Mae: Aren’t you free?
Garga: No. Pause. We’re none of us free. It starts in the morning with our coffee, and we’re beaten if we play the fool. A mother salts her children’s food with her tears and secure until the Ice Age, and the root sits in their heart. And when you grow up and want to do something, body and soul, they pay you, brainwash you, label you, and sell you at a high price, and you’re not even free to fail."

(Brecht: 1979, 136).

Many a times this despair is more generalized and of philosophical nature. For instance, when Shlink says, "Man’s infinite isolation makes enmity an unattainable goal. But even with the animals understanding is not possible" (Brecht: 1979, 172), he gives a universal touch to his personal opinion. And sometimes it is satirical, for example when the Preacher accepts Garga’s proposal of spitting on his face, Mary stops him and he says, "... There are better faces than mine. But none too good for this." (Brecht: 1979, 132).

Language of epic theatre needs to be unique and supplementary to the design of the play, as ultimately it’s the language part which assistances the core idea of alienating the audience effectively. Brecht’s dialogues, therefore, have a distinctive tone for every character. In The Threepenny Opera, the individualism of language is maintained properly. Language is
a socio-psychological phenomenon, and so different characters have different approaches and methods to use it. Mr. Peachum is one of the powerful culprits of the society talked in the play, who generates and manages crimes in the society. And hence his thoughts and language must always be crooked ones. Look at these lines he speaks to begin the day,

"You ramshackle Christian, awake!
Get on with your sinful employment
Show what a good crook you could make.
The Lord will cut short your enjoyment.

Betray your own brother, you rogue
And sell your old woman, you rat.
You think the Lord God's just a joke?
He'll give You His Judgement on that." (Brecht: 2007, 5).

One can easily sense the criminal mentality of the character from these lines. In this way, the language of Mr. Peachum clarifies everything about his character from the beginning. Likewise Mac is a leader of thieves, another crime lover of the society, whose confidence in managing crime is an obvious part of his language. His dialogues always try to justify his actions. For him, stealing is an art, of which not everybody is a master. While discussing about the stolen things with Polly, he says,

"What incompetence! That's the work of apprentices, not experienced men! Haven't you any sense of style? Fancy not knowing the difference between Chippendale and Louis Quatorze." (Brecht: 2007, 15).
Thematically Brecht’s plays need extreme boldness of expressions, which generally make a way through dialogues. And sometimes his concerns to justify his needs are so strong that he makes his characters discuss audaciously. That also shows his revelatory nature and disliking for bourgeois mentality. Such a fact is noticeable when Jenny is engaged in ‘Ballad of Immoral Earnings’ with Mac discussing about their past.

“Jenny: Once I was pregnant, so the doctor said.
Mac: So we reversed positions on the bed.
Jenny: He thought his weight would make it premature.
Mac: But in the end we flushed it down the sewer.
That could not last, but what would I not give
To see that whorehouse where we used to live?”
(Brecht: 2007, 45).

As reaction against contemporary social system, Brecht’s plays, sometimes, powerfully reflect naked anger towards the vices of the society. In The Caucasian Chalk Circle, the Ironshirt, while watching Azdak to be a judge, says, “The judge was always a rascal. Now the rascal shall be the judge.” (Brecht: 1979, 212). This anger presents Brecht’s concerns of purifying the society, and making the audience aware of the vicious surroundings. And that didacticism is also mirrored, many a times, in his dramas. At the end of the play, the storyteller teaches the moral lesson to the audience, which is basically a part of technique to make the audience think decide in their own way about the play. He says,
“Take note of the meaning of the ancient song:
That what there is shall belong to those who are good for
it, thus
The children to the maternal, that they thrive;
The carriages to good drivers, that they are driven well;
And the valley to the waterers, that it shall bear fruit.”

(Brecht: 1979, 237).

Brecht uses language as the best possible weapon to detach the audience from any emotional influence of his plays. Thus his epic plays don’t have Romantic or Aristotelian nature of language which generally emotionalizes the issue undertaken, it has rather Marxist pattern of analyzing it, as it is assigned a task of criticizing the capitalist evils of the society. And in order to achieve the target, Brecht manipulates his language methodically in his plays. The Good Person of Szechwan is an impressive example of typical Brechtian use of language. The range of characters in the play requires diversified language usages, so to rationalize the type of characters. The play comprises constant struggle between the good and the bad. Shen Teh is the only good human character who is always eager to support others, and the rests are utilitarian. Brecht has very tactfully differentiated their language. For instance, the conversation between Shen Teh and Mrs. Shin in scene two,

“Mrs. Shin: I was going to ask you if you could lend me some money.

Shen Teh, as she pours rice into her bowl: I can’t do that. I haven’t sold anything yet.
Mrs. Shin: But I need it. What am I to live on? You’ve taken everything I’ve got. Now you’re cutting my throat. I’ll leave my children on your doorstep, you bloodsucker!

She snatches the bowl from her hands.

Shen Teh: Don’t be bad-tempered. You’ll spill your rice.”

(Brecht: 1962, 215).

The truth can be traced out through reality that Shen Teh has purchased Mrs. Shin’s material for thousand silver dollars. Though the whole payment has already been made to Mrs. Shin, Shen Teh gives her rice without charging anything out of goodness. In spite of being grateful to her, Mrs. Shin blames her and calls her bloodsucker regardless of her sympathetic behavior. And thus the dialogues contradict the two characters. Another wicked person Yang Sun is a greedy fellow who has achieved nothing on his own throughout the life, but he has always very high opinion about himself, and that stamps his language. When Shui Ta asks him to join his business leaving the desire to be pilot, he answers,

“What, me? Have people see Yang Sun the pilot serving behind a character? ‘Good morning, sir; do you prefer Turkish or Virginia?’ That’s no career for Yang Sun, not in the twentieth century.”

(Brecht: 1962, 253).

In epic theatre, language has a specific purpose of offering rational help to the performance; it is the uniqueness of the language that decides the tone of the play and distinctiveness of the characters. Brecht has a rare linguistic quality to arrange exclusive language for each of his plays. The locale, set of characters and basic mood of the play are the elements he
keeps in mind while manipulating language for his dramas. *The Life of Galileo* is a periodical play set in a renaissance time which was an age of revolt and reformation; people, all of a sudden, started thinking intellectually on the established traditions of the society. The issue discussed in the play is about the conflict between the Church authority and the new sciences. So, Brecht has chosen the language which has a composed flavor of neo-intellectual and ecclesiastical classes. The characters speak to define themselves and their ideology. Knowledge of science constitutes the speech of many of the characters in the play, the device used to show the importance of the new discipline. Galileo is the central figure in doing so who has been given numerous dialogues with scientific information. For instance, while opening scene three he says,

"The edge of the crescent is quite uneven, jagged and irregular. In the dark half, near the luminous edge, are luminous spots. They appear one after the other. From these spots the light streams overwiden ing areas until it merges into greater, luminous part."

(Brecht: 1968, 35).

It is this typical scientific information which glorifies his character as a scientist. Not only him, but some members of the Church also show their acquaintance with scientific knowledge, which represents the hidden acceptance of science in religion. Defensing the concept established by Aristotle, in scene four, the Philosopher manages the complexity of scientific language by saying,

"The cosmos of the divine Aristotle, with its mystical, music-making spheres and crystal domes and the gyrations of its heavenly bodies
and the oblique angle of the sun’s orbit and the secrets of the satellite tables and the rich catalogue of constellations in the southern hemisphere and the inspired construction of the celestial globe, is a conception of such symmetry and beauty that we should do well to hesitate before disturbing that harmony.” (Brecht: 1968, 51).

Such a usage doesn’t have an emotional quality to move the spectators; they just greet the information provided and then consciously work to decode them. To balance the fight, Brecht has also given the same weightage to biblical references. The consistent use of the Bible and biblical language set the atmosphere in favour of the Church. Even Galileo declares at one stage “The Bible and Homer are my favourite reading.” (Brecht: 1968, 97). There are some direct references from the Bible which are read to be justified as unchallenged rules of the world, they also play a definite role to put the God straightly against the scientists. In scene six, while discussing the concept of astronomy as announced by Galileo and the one referred in the scriptures, a very thin Monk, by reading from the Bible, argues,

“What is said in the Holy Writ? ‘Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.’ How can the sun stand still if it never moves, as these heretics aver? Does Holy Writ lie?”

(Brecht: 1968, 64).

Plenty of proverbs from the Bible are also frequently used in the play as a part of the device to make dialogue more meaningful and symbolic. The device masterly works, in scene seven, in a symbolic conversation between Galileo and Barberini. Both refer various proverbs to establish
their opinions, and thereby make the audience think over to grasp the meaning. The very discourse seems to be a mental exercise for the audience from Brecht’s side.

“Galileo: The Bible. - ‘He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him.’ Proverbs.


Galileo: ‘Where no oxen are, the crib is clean; but much increase is by the strength of the ox.’

Barberini: ‘He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city.’

Galileo: ‘But a broken spirit drieth the house.’ Pause. ‘Doth not truth cry aloud?’

Barberini: ‘Can one go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned?’…” (Brecht: 1968, 69).

The play marks the conflict between individual ideologies, and Brecht has managed to show it through separate verbal approaches. For instance, shocked after Galileo’s recantation in scene thirteen, Andrea says, “Unhappy the land that has no heroes” (Brecht: 1968, 107), and in reply to it Galileo later says, “Unhappy the land that is in need of heroes.” (Brecht: 1968, 108). The contradiction in the statement is a contradiction in individual philosophy. Through this, Brecht also
shoulders the responsibility over the audience to select whichever is prerequisite in the play.

The concept of epic theatre is totally based on the originality of thoughts, and that very element is stamped upon its language too. Brecht is very sensible to maintain the proper language flavor of the locale in which his plays are set. While going through *Mother Courage*, one finds a definite mark of Bavarian language, which truly builds the local atmosphere of the play.

“The language of the German original is modern, earthy, popular speech, strongly coloured in *Mother Courage’s* case by the Bavarian dialect one would expect from someone born in Bamberg. The exchanges are hard-hitting and even vulgar, as befits life in an army camp, but they are never obscene.” (Brecht: 1983, xxxiv).

One implication of this is the distrust of grand narratives. There are no heroes and heroines, no grand action. As against this, there are local people from everyday life fending with the situations of everyday life. Because of this typical Bavarian accent, the characters, sometimes, look bold and truthful in their behavior, and thereby they can easily make the audience participate in their direct discourse. Such boldness and Bavarian style are seen in *Mother Courage’s* dialogue with the Sergeant, when she clarifies her business without license:
Sergeant: You pulling my leg? I’ll knock that sauce out of you. S’pose you know you got to have a license.

Mother Courage: Talk proper to me, do you mind, and don’t you dare say I’m pulling your leg in front of my unsullied children, ‘tain’t decent, I got no time for you. My honest face, that’s me license with the Second Regiment, and if it’s too difficult for you to read there’s now I can do about it. Nobody’s putting a stamp on that.” (Brecht: 1983, 5-6).

In the same manner, the locale of *The Good Person of Szechwan* is Chinese, and the characters portrayed are also from the same region. Therefore, Brecht has comprised Asiatic flavor many where in the play. Yang Sun’s repeated use of the word ‘sister’ for Shen in the third scene, and the Carpenter’s saying “I want my 100 silver dollars, or my name’s not Lin To” (Brecht: 1962, 217) are some of the good example of it. Using local tone in such way, Brecht intends to detach the language of his plays from being transformed into stereotype usage, which can surprise the spectators but can’t make them participate in the performance.

Narration is another technique Brecht often uses as a part of his epic style, as it is a useful tool to break the fourth wall. Through narration the characters get a chance of directly talking to the audience, and to allow them to participate in stage activities. The technique is convenient to inform the audience about the happening between the two scenes, or to announce any thematic concern. In *The Good Person of Szechwan*, the responsibility to narrate is shouldered on Shen Teh, Wang and Mrs. Yang. The technique is massively used in scene eight; almost half of the
whole scene is narrated by Mrs. Yang in such a way that it breaks the continuity of previous emotional attachment of the spectators and makes them consciously analyze the situation. In the opening dialogue of scene one, Shen Teh narrates the proceedings between prologue and scene one, and thus nothing remains suspense for the audience. She says to the spectators,

"It is now three days since the gods left. They told me they wanted to pay for their lodging. And when I looked at what they had given me I saw that it was more than a thousand silver dollars. I have used the money to buy a tobacconist’s business. I moved in here yesterday, and now I hope to be able to do a great deal of good…"

(Brecht: 1962, 214).

Brecht’s frequent use of satire aids lot to his concept of alienation, since it is the best weapon to make people realize the hidden intentions of the things displayed. In the Jungle of Cities considerably depicts the characters’ struggle for livelihood, which stamps nihilistic touch at various occasions. As per the scheme of epic theatre, though the concept of epic theatre was not finalized during time of writing In the Jungle of Cities, this struggle is not sentimentally analyzed, rather it is discussed with some high end satires, which shows Brecht’s preparation for the next phase of his career. Manky’s narration in scene five is a gem of it that makes satire on how starvation is overshadowed by carnal hunger in modern times:

Life is strange. I knew a man who was really tops, but he loved a woman. Her family was starving. He had two thousand dollars, but
he let them starve before his eyes. Because with those two thousand dollars he loved the woman, without them he couldn’t get her. That was infamous, but he can’t be held responsible. (Brecht: 1979, 144).

There are many good examples of effective satirical tones in *The Threepenny Opera*. The song ‘No They Can’t’ sung by Mr. & Mrs. Peachums is one of them. The parents are complaining that their children do not do what is good, but rather what is fun. Love is blamed as well. However, these are terrible parents, hypocrites because Peachum does not want his daughter to marry even though he got married. They are lamenting the fact that Polly does not know what is good for her, as if staying with them were any better than marrying the leader of London’s thieves. Even when Mr. Peachum talks to Filch about different outfits for the beggars, he intends to satirise the capitalist structure. He brings out five wax dummies from the showcase and says,

“*Those are the five basic types of misery, those most likely to touch the human heart. The sight of such types puts a man into the unnatural state where he is willing to part with money.*”

(Brecht: 2007, 8).

And then he describes five outfits with different professional qualities which can be proved beneficial at different places while begging. Thus, Brecht subtly criticizes the excesses of capitalism by showing a world where even begging is a profession.

In *Mother Courage*, Brecht employs the element of satire to make the materialistic ideology more intensified, and thereby tries to put the reality
at the center. In scene 3, Mother Courage verbally defends corruption, but the spectator, as he is non-illusioned, can grasp the meaning between the lines and have his own decision.

"Mother Courage: ...After all, they ain’t wolves, just human out for money. Corruption in humans is some as compassion in God. Corruption’s our only hope. Long as we have it there’ll be lenient sentences and even an innocent man’ll have a chance of being let off."

(Brecht: 1983, 40).

In many dialogues, in *Mother Courage*, satire is accompanied by wit, which is a good exercise to titillate the brain of the audience. For instance:

Sergeant: ...And you’re from Bamberg in Bavaria; how d’you come to be here?

Mother Courage: Can’t wait for the war chooses to visit Bamberg, can I? (Brecht: 1983, 7).

Brecht’s use of satire in *The Good Person of Szechwan* is significantly admirable. The capitalist ideology is criticized satirically in countless number of dialogues. Satire makes emotional bond loose, and hence it can easily provoke the audience to think over the problem criticized on the stage. When the Gods are discussing, in the prologue, the justification of giving money to Shen Teh for her lodging, the third God says, “No, it is permissible. We can quite well pay for our lodging. There was
nothing against it in the resolution...” (Brecht: 1962, 213). Here Brecht satirizes the situation where even gods have to behave as per the resolutions, as if they are common employees who have to follow the handbook of behaviour published by their authority- a capitalist mentality. Brecht is a fine tuner of words, who possesses the strong capacity to stimulate the audience through proficient use of few words.

The Life of Galileo is noticeable for the use of Brecht’s satire, as it displays a combination of symbolism with satire. Brecht’s symbolism in dialogues is well maintained throughout the play. The symbols work to sharpen the audience’s awareness towards the behaviour and action of the characters. The scene twelve ends up with following dialogues between the Pope and the Inquisitor,

“The Pope: The very most that may be done is to show him the instruments.

The Inquisitor: That will suffice, your Holiness. Signor Galilei is an expert on instruments.” (Brecht: 1968, 103).

The term ‘instruments’ here doesn’t stand for any scientific instrument, but it symbolically mentions the torture instrument which is again referred in scene fourteen by Galileo himself, of which he has been threatened to be tortured by the authority if not recanting. Thus the conversation allegorically refers to the planning for the future torture of Galileo.

Brecht is a master of one liners, his capacity to express through few words is matchless. It is his pattern to make the people remember his
characters through their statements. They are not merely structures with emblematic arrangement of words, but are the flag-holders of Brecht’s philosophy. Some of the most significant are:

‘The men who conquer the world like to lie on their backs’ (Brecht: 1979, 147), “Bare life is better than any other kind of life” (Brecht: 1979, 173), ‘no one can be good for long if goodness is not demanded of him’ (Brecht: 1962, 224), ‘Those who have least to eat give most gladly’ (Brecht: 1962, 238), ‘It is the hungry dog who pulls the cart home quickest’ (Brecht: 1962, 252), ‘The worse the difficulties, the better the good man will prove to be’ (Brecht: 1962, 272), ‘Thinking is one of the greatest pleasures of the human race’ (Brecht: 1968, 42), ‘Truth is the child of time, not of authority’ (Brecht: 1968, 54), ‘He who does not know the truth is merely an idiot. But he who knows it calls it a lie, is a criminal’ (Brecht: 1968, 81), ‘Science knows only one commandment: contribute to science’ (Brecht: 1968, 116).

Brecht is a calculative user of language; he is methodical in writing not an impulsive one. His sole aim in doing so is to project alienation among the audience, through which he can make his audience feel the pain and need of the society and not of an individual character.

4.4 ACTING

Acting is a unique performance technique through which an actor creates desired atmosphere on the stage. In his theory, Brecht has given much importance to this technique, as he thinks that it is through specific kind of acting that the actors succeed in producing alienation effect necessary
to make the audience consciously think over the issues performed and not to be touched by the temporary emotional states generated by romanticizing those issues. Brecht himself is habituated with providing hints for the actors in the notes following his plays. Though his plays always deal with some serious socio political issues, his actors are never permitted to present them with the same sentiments as per the scheme of the epic theatre. *In the Jungle of Cities* focuses on the evil operations of capitalism prevailing in modern society, an issue very sensitive in nature. But the way Brecht has designed, his characters rarely have a chance to be impulsive. It's a fact that the actors are loud and angry but hardly sensitive. They work as the seers of their malignant situations and endless sufferings, because of which they just bring out their opinions and not the pains. The actors need to be emotionally cold, since none of the characters is able to make a warm connection with another. There is only buying, selling, negotiating, and fighting in terms of human relationships. So, even in the most brutal act, they have to be as calm as ice. In scene two, Garga proposes to give the property to Preacher if he allows spitting on his, the Preacher says, "I'm a man of God" (Brecht: 1979, 133), and Garga replies, "Then take the consequences." (Brecht: 1979, 133). This coldness controls the emotions in the performance. The actors must also be aware of the fact that the audience at no juncture should feel suspicion or suspense. So, whatever is intended by the actors has to be performed on the stage with greater calmness and as separate activity. This technique allows, occasionally, various activities going on at the same time. In *The Threepenny Opera*, scene five, before 'Ballad of Immoral earnings' begins, Jenny suspiciously exits, and to break that emotion immediately the author's note suggests:
While Mac sings, Jenny stands to the right outside the window and beckons to Constable Smith. Then Mrs. Peachum joins her. The three stand under the street lamp and watch the house. (Brecht: 2007, 44).

The whole activity besides the song comfortably proposes the plan of Mac’s future arrest, as the reference has already been made in previous dialogues. Thus no element of suspense can work for the audience, and they can detach themselves from any emotional flow.

In *Mother Courage*, the actors, on the stage, are given the equal opportunity to build up their viewpoint. For instance, the scene, in which Kattrin tries to awaken the city about to be attacked by the enemies by beating the drum, contains a very beautiful situation where all the actors on the stage are struggling for their cause. Here the actors are divided into three parts: Kattrin, the peasant family and the soldiers. The activities in the scene are much sentimental, Brecht has created such an anti-illusive atmosphere that the actors move through this emotional scene untouched, also stop the spectators from being drawn with the stream of emotions, and there by succeed in creating an alienation effect.

Demagnification of emotions is an essential virtue for Brechtian actors, for they are required to tickle the reason and not the emotion of the spectators. It is achieved through various practices of keeping the actor’s self away from the temporary emotional states. In *The Good Person of Szechwan*, Brecht has employed method of changing moods of the characters. The characters keep on changing emotions constantly; as soon as they start flowing with one emotion they abruptly change it to break the effect. And so the actors are obligatory to acquire such ability. For
instance, in scene four the Old Man hands over an envelope to Shen Teh containing 200 silver dollars. It's a great help to her and out of happiness she says, "This is six months' rent. Isn't that a miracle?" (Brecht: 1962, 246). But then immediately she controls her emotions and unnecessarily asks Wang, "what do you think of my new shawl?" (Brecht: 1962, 246). One more time, in scene seven, when she is illusively hijacked by her imaginative son, she moves hand in hand with the child on the stage, talking to him, playing with him passionately. The entire mono acting creates a very sentimental atmosphere for the audience, as it touches a delicate issue of mother's conversation with unborn child. But before the effect reaches to 'point of no return' level, Wang enters on the stage and she starts talking to him normally, as if nothing has happened with her. This can surprise the spectators, and they can also abruptly detach themselves from the flow. In this manner, Brecht has embodied hints for the actors to produce distancing effect in the performance.

As a significant epic module, there is no hint to any melodramatic act in The Life of Galileo, so the actors have to act by consciously keeping their nerves in control. They have to believe that they are on the stage to narrate the incidents from the past and not to generate any realistic effects. For example, Virginia and Andrea behave as a moralistic force for Galileo, constantly highlighting his virtues for the audience. They remain calm and composed thru the play, except in scene nine when Virginia dramatically faints, and in scene thirteen when Andrea outbursts in ager against Galileo's recantation. But these acts basically denote audience's reactions Galileo's deeds, and hence they no way create any
Brecht's concept of acting is to personify the logic behind the action on the stage, or to identify the reason behind character's certain behavior. His view is that actor should not impersonate, but narrate actions of another person, as if quoting facial gesture and movement. He believes that the audience must be made aware that the events are not present events, but they are the past events being represented as narrative, with commentary provided to encourage our own reflection. This is not unlike the experience of reading a book with critical notes in the margin, or as if a novelist supplied his own comment on a page facing that bearing the narrative. In *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, this idea of disintegrating past from present is achieved by the storyteller's character. He narrates the whole story as an eye witness, thus keeps a distance between past and present. He also gives many a times his own opinions about the action of the play which makes the audience think critically about the play. And thus Brecht fulfills the need of his epic theatre.

As a dramatist, Brecht believes in the realization of truth through performance, which also resembles Lyotard's idea of performativity.
Thus he has a great faith in the ability of actors, and so he has given many exercises for the actors through which he can maintain the aesthetic distance with the spectators. In his point of view the actor, first of all, has to create a distance with past, and then he must have to relate it to the present in such a way that the present looks different and relative to the past. It is true that the analysis of acting is possible only when one has seen the performance, but there are many hints provided by Brecht, in the script, that can give the glimpse of which kind of performance will be there on the stage. In *Mother Courage*, we have many references to the acting part of the play, through which an actor can create a proper distance between past and present on one hand, and with the spectators on the other. ‘The Song of Fraternisation’ is a good example of it:

When I was only sixteen
The foe came into our land.
He laid aside his sabre
And with a smile he look my hand.
After the May parade
The May light starts to fade.
The regiment dressed by the right
The drums were beaten, that’s the drill.
The foe took us behind the hill
And fraternized all night.

............... 
The love which came upon me
Was wished on me by fate.
My friends could never grasp why
I found it hard to share their hate.
The fields were wet with dew
When sorrow first I knew.
The regiment dressed by the right
The drums were beaten, that's the drill.
And then the foe, my lover still
Went marching out of sight
I followed him, fool that I was, but I never found him and that was five years back. (*she walks unsteadily behind the cart*).

(Brecht:1983, 23-24)

Here is presented such a beautiful situation where an actor can create a distance between the past and the present to stop the audience to be emotionally attached with Mother Courage's past, and thus, succeed in breaking their illusion. This kind of many beautiful opportunities are there in *Mother Courage* through which an actor can create an alienation effect.

Gesture plays vital role in Brechtian acting, as the actor is the narrator of the character he is playing. Hence, he has to be much flexible in acting restricting himself from being the stereotype character. An actor of Epic Theatre has to restrain himself from being monotonous. Brecht has therefore allocated many spaces in the text where actors can play with gestures in full swing, of course there is no obvious limitations put by him, but to make the act much easier he has also instructed the actors about the necessary gestures in the end notes. For instance, in scene nine Mac sings 'Call from the Grave', on which Brecht remarks:
As he paces round his cell the actor playing Macheath can at this point recapitulate all the ways of walking which he has so far shown to the audience. The seducer’s insolent way, the hunted man’s nervous way, the arrogant way, the experienced way and so on.

(Brecht: 2008, 97).

Sometimes the unique behavioural patterns of the actors represent the kind of persons they are. In *Mother Courage* Brecht has tried to give individual features to the characters. This individuality is maintained in such a way that, sometimes, even the audience can feel the presence of minor characters. Yvette is not a central figure in the play, but her carefree movements and utilitarian behavior always steal the attention of the audience. She is the only person who really earns from the war, and that very fact is defined through her fearless behavior. This is how the acting part of *Mother Courage* magnifies the basic intention of the dramatist to create A-effect.

*The Good Person of Szechwan* focuses on people’s manner of living in the capitalist system, and to maintain the tone Brecht has referred many gestures in his support notes for the actors. In scene four, Shen Teh is busy discussing Shu Fu- Wang issue with Mrs. Shin, and they are searching for an eye witness. Wang is also in pain for whatever has happened. During this conversation, the support note suggests, "*Unemployed man, grandfather, sister-in-law: all are sitting against the wall and eating. No one looks up.*" (Brecht: 1962, 246). The three of these characters are witness to that conflict, but they don’t have to pay the attention towards the discussion and continue with their eating in the street. This instruction focuses on people’s conscious carelessness about
the social issues in capitalist world. Their behaviour can certainly make the audience think of it critically. Sometimes these gestures disrupt the sentiment of the scene. The scene three begins with Yang Sun’s preparation for suicide, and in such a serious mood, he turns to the audience telling them about the two prostitutes clearing the stage. This act breaks whatever sympathetic sentiment they have at the beginning of the scene.

An actor is key person in the whole design of epic theatre, a constituent part of alienation technique. He must be sensible, aware and scientific in approach, as he has to demonstrate the character and not to be merged with it. Brecht says,

"At no moment must he go so far to be wholly transformed into the character played. The verdict: 'he didn’t act Lear, he was Lear’ would be an annihilating blow to him." (Willet: 1964, 193).

*The Life of Galileo* conceives background and characters deeply rooted in renaissance history. The central figure of Galileo is a known scientist from 17th century who has a credit of changing the whole notion of history through his revolutionary discoveries. The play presents an image of a scientist who feels, suffers, tells jokes, recognizes his own mistakes, enjoys eating, and talks comfortably and passionately with friends. The image stands in stark contrast to the socially inept ‘mad scientists’. Thus Brecht’s Galileo is entirely different from the people’s basic concept of the scientist, and so actor playing the role has a challenge to personify Brecht’s ideology of narrating Galileo’s behaviour and not to behave as
passionately as Galileo, the scientist, should have behaved. Brecht remarks,

"The characterization of Galileo should not aim at establishing the sympathetic identification and participation of the audience with him; rather, the audience should be helped to achieve a more considering, critical and appraising attitude. He should be presented as a phenomenon, rather like Richard III, whereby the audience’s emotional acceptance is gained through the vitality of this alien manifestation." (Brecht: 1968, 14).

In order to achieve his target, Brecht has given many clues to the actors in the play. Aiming to portray a scientist, an actor has to be demonstrative in behaviour, which is massively suggested in many scenes. For instance, in scene one, when Galileo teaches the movement of the Earth round the sun to Andrea, he fully demonstrates it in spite of merely sticking to the words.

"Galileo: ...He sets the iron wash-basin in the middle of the room. Well, that's the sun. Sit down. Andrea sits on the chair. Galileo stands behind him. Where is the sun, right or left?

Andrea: Left.

Galileo: And how can it get to your right?

Andrea: If you carry it to the right, of course.

Galileo: Is that the only way? He picks him up with the chair and rotates him through a semicircle. Now where is the sun?
Andrea: On the right.
Galileo: And did it move?
Andrea: No! it didn’t
Galileo: Well, what did move?
Andrea: I did.
Galileo shouts: Wrong, you idiot! The chair.”

(Brecht: 1968, 22-23).

The suggested type of demonstrative behaviour can easily justify the character and also makes the audience consciously participate in understanding the scientific theory than merely to listen it. Throughout the play, Galileo possesses sporty gestures: playing with different models of planets, harmonizing analytically with telescope, carelessly puffing the body with towel in front of audience, artistically using various props to justify his theories, passionately carrying a stone in the pocket. Only in scene thirteen Brecht gives him transformed gestures, so to make the audience think how the authority can deteriorate an individual by attacking his morals. The support notes remark:

Enter Galileo- completely altered by his trial, almost to the point of being unrecognizable. He has heard Andrea’s last sentence. For a moment he pauses at the door for someone to greet him. As no one does, for his pupils shrink back from him, he goes, slowly and unsteadily because of his failing eyesight, to the front where he finds a stool and sits down. (Brecht: 1968, 107).

Almost all the characters are expected to convey unique gestures to justify Brecht’s design. The actors have to show analytically what is not
spoken to the audience. The entire sixth scene holds suspense whether the Church will confirm Galileo’s discovery, and the task is assigned to Father Clavius, an astronomer, who remains throughout in a cabin assessing the issue. And towards the end of the scene ‘the door at the back opens and the great Clavius enters at the head of his astronomers. He walks through the hall hurriedly and in silence, not looking to right or left.’ (Brecht: 1968, 66). His very behaviour symbolizes something unexpected has been decided back in the room, and breaking the suspense he says to Monk ‘He is right’ (Brecht: 1968, 66). This gesture puts an end to emotional link of the action by breaking the suspense, and teases the audience to think.

Art of narration is another valued constituent part of epic method of acting, because it supports the actor step out of his role and narrates the actions of another person at a definite time in the past; it also breaks the emotional mannerism of the play. As per the scheme of In the Jungle of Cities, the actor needs calmness of narrator, a catalyst which witnesses the chemical process but is not affected at all. The characters here are designed to act in the same manner; they inform the audience about how their lives are being corrupted, but do not cry passionately for their personal miseries. In scene three, Garga talks to his mother of his situation,

“... One man insults another. That’s disagreeable for the man who gets insulted. But under certain circumstances the first man is willing to give up a whole lumber business for the pleasure of insulting the other. That’s even more disagreeable for the second man. Maybe when he’s been insulted like that, he’d better leave town. But since
that might be too pleasant for him, even that may no longer be possible. In any case, he’s got to be free.” (Brecht: 1979, 136).

This is no way a presentation of self-suffering. Garga uses here third person narration which makes himself distinctive to the person who is talked about, and that constitutes distancing effect. The art of directly talking to the audience, as a narrator, instantly allows the audience participate in stage activity. This special treatment is much necessary to convince them that they are in theatre not only to watch but to contribute also. In scene nine, Worm suddenly starts talking to the audience:

Worm steps up to the table: You’ve probably noticed: there’s a family here in our midst, or what’s left of it. Moth-eaten as it is, this family would gladly give its last cent to find out where the mother, the mainstay of the household, is keeping herself. The fact is, I saw her one morning at about seven o’clock, a woman of forty, scrubbing a fruit cellar...She’d aged but she was looking alright.

(Brecht: 1979, 166).

This narration not only creates the report with the audience but also informs about the lost character. Thus, the actors have an ample possibility to act justifying the scheme of epic theatre.

In The Caucasian Chalk Circle also, the actors are assigned to use narration to attain distancing effect. For instance, after the assassination of the Governor, his wife escapes leaving behind the child. When other employees are escaping too, Grusha watches the child crying alone in the
corner of the room. At that time the storyteller narrates the event as if it has been a matter of past:

As she was standing between courtyard and gate, she heard
Or thought she heard, a low voice. The child
Called her, not whining but calling quite sensibly
At least so it seemed to her: ‘woman’, it said, ‘Help me’ ........

(Grusha walks a few steps towards the child and bends overt it)

She went back to the child
Just for one more look, just to sit with it
For a moment or two ..............

(She sits down opposite the child, and leans against a trunk.)

Just for a moment before she left, for now the danger was too great
The city full of flame and grief.

(The light grows dimmer...Grusha has gone into the palace and fetched a lamp and some milk which she gives the child to drink).

(Brecht: 1979, 162-3).

In the real sense, while watching the left child struggling to survive between violence and fire, the actor and the spectator both must start drawing in the stream of emotions, but, here, Brecht narrates the whole situation through the storyteller as if it’s a matter of past. Because of such technique the distance is created and there by the playwright castoffs the emotional attachment. Thus by transforming action into narration, Brecht
has successfully provided the possibilities to alienate the audience from the emotional attachment.

*The Good Person of Szechwan* involves many examples for this, but the whole of scene eight is remarkable among them. The scene talks of how in mean time Shui Ta's Tobacco Factory has started working successfully, and Mrs. Yang narrates the entire sequence of three months' time. Her behaviour is not impulsive, as looked in previous scenes, but has a neutral touch of a narrator. She says to the audience,

"I must describe to you how the wisdom and discipline of our universally respected Mr. Shui Ta turned my son Sun from a broken wreck into a useful citizen. Near the cattle yard, as the whole neighbourhood quickly came to hear, Mr. Shui Ta started a small but rapidly prospering tobacco factory. Three months ago I found it advisable to call on him there with my son. He received me after a brief wait." (Brecht: 1962, 285).

Towards the end of her narration she concludes by saying, "He (Shui Ta) made no fantastic promises like his much overrated cousin, but forced him (Sun) to do good honest work. Today Sun is a different person from what he was three months ago." (Brecht: 1962, 290). And thus the spectators are informed about the activity of three months, an account of past from the historian's mouth and not an emotional burst of a character.

Brecht structures his plays in such a performable manner that the actors can have necessary hints to perform. As a promoter of epic theatre, he
keenly takes care of employing dramaturgical textual references which have to be sensed and utilized by the actors for epic style acting. Following Brechtian strategy of performance, *The Good Person of Szechwan* also conceives many of such textual references which are put in to help the actors restrict their acting from creating any illusive web of sentiments on the stage. The play is set in China, and Brecht seems to have adapted some of the Asian folk styles in the making of the play. One of the major is the use of ‘word picture technique’, in which the actor, by directly communicating to the spectators, analyzes the setup, persons or activity on the stage without accessing them. The technique is much effective for alienation, as it is, for the audience, merely an actor’s commentary and not an emotional act; it is also useful to encourage audience’s conscious participation in the theatre. Brecht gives this responsibility of creating report with the audience to the character of Wang, who, while searching for Gods, gives verbal analytical picture of the stage in the prologue:

Wang: ...It cannot be those men- *he studies some workmen passing by* they are coming away from work. Their shoulders are bent by the burdens they have to carry. That fellow is no good either, he has inky fingers. At most he may be some kind of clerk in a cement works. I would not take those gentlemen- *two gentlemen walk past* for gods even: they have the brutal faces of men who beat people, and the gods find that unnecessary. But look at these three! They seem very different. They are well nourished, show no evidence of any kind of employment,
and have dust on their shoes, so they must have travelled far. It is them! (Brecht: 1962, 205).

At the initial stage of the play, Wang describes the miseries of his province where the play is set, informs the audience about the probable visit of the Gods to help them, and then gives this word picture of various persons, who are analyzed as victims of capitalism. Thus, the spectators are made to evaluate the social realities depicted in the play.

Brecht’s plays are consistently full of support notes to direct the actors; they also help the actors stick to his scheme of alienation. For instance, when Garga is struggling with Shlink and company, Brecht plans a dialogue supported by gestures to restrict the melodramatic effect:

    Garga: This is freedom! Here take my coat! Takes it off. Give it away! Takes a book from the shelf and reads... ‘I’m unversed in metaphysics. I understand no laws. I have no moral sense, I’m a brute; you are mistaken!’

Shlink, Skinny, Worm, and Baboon have gathered round Garga and applaud as at a theatrical performance. (Brecht: 1979, 126).

This gesture immediately breaks the tension created by previous dialogues and ensures the audience's conscious thinking. At one more occasion, in scene five, Brecht devices Shlink symbolic movement:
Shlink *pleased*: I'm Doing my best to give you all the light you need. I show myself in every possible light, Mr. Garga. *Goes under the lamp.* (Brecht: 1979, 148).

The movement justifies the statement he gives before going under the lamp. It is specifically useful for the spectators, as, for them, the performance means a lot than the dialogues. Through helping the actors, by providing such notes, Brecht tries to employ his theory practically in his plays. He is very keen for the overall effect of the performance, because of which he always takes care of every single element attached to his plays. Even he has a definite theory for singing the songs in the play, as to sing is also a part of acting. The necessary balance between their tone and gesture must be observed to have proper alienation effect. About the singing of songs of *The Threepenny Opera*, he says,

“*When an actor sings he undergoes a change of function. Nothing is more revolting than when the actor pretends not to notice that he has left the level of plain speech and started to sing... In no case therefore should singing take place where words are prevented by excess of feeling. The actor must not only sing but show a man singing. His aim is not so much to bring out the emotional content of his song... but to show gesture that are so to speak the habits and usage of the body.*”

(Brecht: 2007, 98).

Brecht's main consideration of alienating the audience from any emotional attachment with the performance greatly depends on the unique acting style. It is the actor who creates aesthetic distance in the performance by separating himself from the character, and thereby makes
the audience feel the separation from the character’s temporary emotional states. Hence, Brecht carefully suggests his actors to behave consciously, and transform his theory into performance.

4.5 STAGECRAFT AND PRESENTATION

Drama is a special branch of literature which gets birth twice: first out of the mind of a writer and secondly from the director’s mind, which, therefore, makes the performing part equally important to the writing part. Belonging to the theatre of scientific era, the plays of epic tradition contain stage craft, music, and lights of a symbolic value. Like writing, Brecht is also very experimental with his stage designs.

*In the Jungle of Cities* has a complex theatrical pattern that needs highly symbolic style of setting and presentation to justify Brecht’s intension of showing exemplary corrupt structure of life in capitalist society. Brecht has given bitter speed of modern urban life to the scenes; the locale quickly changes from one to another: lending library, C. Shlink’s office, living room of Garga family, Chinese Hotel, Lake Michigan and the street. From performance point of view it’s very difficult to switch over to one after another setting so quickly, and hence the best way out is multiple and multilevel stage setting. Managing multilevel setting also symbolizes complexity of structure. The locations are to be differentiated by props and light effects. Rejection of flat setting and use of semi-circle outline is necessary to bring out the atmosphere of boxing ring. The ‘Introduction’ to the collection says,
"In the Jungle, however, was written at the turning point, the watershed between the two movements. The Rimbaud allusions...the attic cum undergrowth setting, the use of spotlights...all this is expressionistic..." (p.xiv jungle), "...the colour references at the start of each scene gave way to mock precise (objective) data of time and place, the whole flavor of the play was changed." (Brecht: 1979, xv).

The background of story is America, so it is essential to add that American flavour in the set. Even Brecht remarks,

"In practical terms I would be satisfied if theatres projected America photographically on the backcloth and were content to imply Shlink's Asiatic origin by means of a yellow make-up, generally allowing him to behave like an Asiatic, in other words like European. That would keep at least one major mystery out of the play."

(Brecht: 1979, 437).

*The Threepenny Opera* deals with the same complexity of performance. For the décor of the play, he suggested putting two big satin screens down stage with Casper Neher's drawings on them, and whenever any song was performed the title was projected directly on to them through projectors. How experimental and technological usage is this ahead of his time! Such a filmography is designed to make the audience aware that the performance is merely a mechanical process not at all an emotional blast. In the Paris production, he supplemented the craft with two life size figures of beggars painted on curtain to justify the title. For the play's stage design, he further says,
“For the Berlin production a great fairground organ was placed at
the back of the stage, with steps on which the jazz band was lodged,
together with coloured lamps that lit up when the orchestra was
playing.” (Brecht: 2007, 98).

Such a design is much useful to carry out his intension of detaching the
audience, since nothing is hidden. In epic tradition every theatrical
element has to be in full view of the audience, so that to break the
‘illusion of reality’ and to ensure the audience that they are in the same
world as the actors.

“It helps the actor if the musicians are visible during his performance
and also if he is allowed to make visible preparation for it (by
straightening a chair perhaps or making himself up, etc.).
Particularly in the songs it is important that ‘he who is showing
should himself be shown’.” (Brecht: 2007, 98).

In Aristotelian theatre, a play is supported by excessive use of many
dramatic techniques like lights, sound, settings, etc., whereas epic theatre
doesn’t badly need such ‘masking’ because it doesn’t want to create an
illusion of reality. While discussing the performance of Mother Courage,
the introductory notes to the play remarks,

“Brecht’s Berlin production of the play opened with the recruiters
standing on a bare grey stage, on to which Courage’s wagon was
hauled. The wagon then remained the most prominent element on the
stage throughout the play, and its equipment and state of repair
varied with the prosperity of her business. The stage was framed with
huge screens made of tenting stretched between wooden poles which were lashed together with ropes, all materials that would have been available on a 17th century military encampment. Brecht always insisted on the texture of reality, which meant that the materials used for the costumes and set not only had to be authentic, they also had to show signs of the wear and tear of daily use. Where buildings such as the personage and the peasant’s house were required, only the part that the action required was built, but here too the materials were authentic. The peasant’s house in scene 11, for example, consisted only of a front door and a porch with a slopping roof, supported by two rough square pillars, so that Katrin could climb on this with her drum. Again, this approach to scenery has become commonplace in the theatre today but was innovative in Brecht’s time.

At the end Courage’s battered wagon stood on the same bare stage as at the beginning, only now the bareness symbolized the measureless devastation into which the war had led her, and not the wide horizons open to her. She trudges off, the stage revolving slowly against her. Brecht set the revolve in motion repeatedly throughout the play to enable Courage to trudge forward without making much real headway.” (Brecht: 1983, xxxiv-xxxv).

As said earlier, no effort is put forward in the epic theatre to create an illusion of reality; the author of epic drama never needs Aristotelian ‘masking’. Brecht identifies his theatre as a stage for assembly, so, obviously, it doesn’t need opaque or gaudy treatment. About the setting of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* Brecht writes,
“The play’s setting needs to be very simple. The varying backgrounds can be indicated by some form of projection; at the same time the projections must be artistically valid. The bit players can in some cases play several parts at once. The five musicians sit on stage with singer and join in the action.” (Brecht: 1979, 301).

Nothing is in disguise or hidden in epic theatre, the audience can look every single property on the stage clearly. This simplicity and clarity of setting is maintained in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, whereas the set design of *The Good Person of Szechwan* has a high potential of allegorical pattern. The scenes are performed at various places: the Tobacconist’s shop, Street, the Barber’s shop, Wang’s sleeping place at sewer pipe, a hotel room, Tobacco Factory etc., which necessitates the use of compound stage setting like *In the Jungle of Cities*.

The stage craft of Brecht’s plays is always metaphoric in nature, as, for him it is not merely non-living object but it also conveys the meaning with the same intensity of the actors. The set has definite purpose of mitigating epic strategy of breaking the illusion of reality. For the stagecraft of *The Life of Galileo*, Brecht says, “The stage décor must not be such that the public believes itself to be in mediaeval Italy or in the Vatican. The public must remain always clearly aware that it is in a theatre.” (Brecht: 1968, 13). Even the support notes suggest that the backdrop has to be decorated with star-charts, maps and other artistic figures much befitted to the mood of the play. Even the outdoor scenes need a masterly touch of stage design. In scene 5b, the characters talk to one another through their street side windows, the street referred here
must be presented in such a manner that the action should be looked more composed and meaningful.

Brecht's love for symbolic setting is obvious because of his play's symbolic construction, and so his plays don't contain realistic décor and design, which merely arise illusion of reality in the audience's mind. Brecht envisaged the Epic Stage as a place for discussion. The audience is presented with a topic of social or political relevance and an opinion or message on said topic. The epic stage provides its audience with questions, possible solutions and actively encourages them to think, determine and act. Brecht also wished to change the scale of the properties used, and then also use them out of context:

It's more important nowadays for the set to tell the spectator he's in a theatre than to tell him he's in, say, Aulis... The best thing is to show the machinery, the ropes and the flies... If the set represents a town it must look like a town that has been built to last precisely two hours. One must conjure up the reality of time... The set needs to spring from the rehearsal of groupings, so in effect it must be a fellow-actor. The materials of the set must be visible. A play can be performed in pasteboard, or in pasteboard and wood, or in canvas, and so on; but there mustn't be any faking. (Willett: 1964, 233).

The explanation discloses his belief in transparency and disliking for illusiveness in setting; this discards realistic treatment of the play. Any realistic realization on the part of the audience is harmful to epic strategy, because it draws them emotionally towards nothing, whereas Brecht wants them to watch, think and evaluate the play without any emotional
diversion. Therefore, by promoting non-realistic setting, he intends to remind the audience they are watching something that is being manufactured, and not real life. The text of *The Good Person of Szechwan* suggests the same symbolic stage design. Poverty is the central phenomenon of the play, so the set must have symbolic dullness to depict the characters’ scarcity of life. Like many other Brecht’s plays, *The Good Person of Szechwan* also contains rapid change in locales, which multilevel stage design. Such multilevel design can help the scenes easily jump from one to another place without moving the props, and thus can be maintained the pace of the play. Moreover it also symbolizes the complex and hasty life structure in modern times. The capitalist ideology is satirically focused in the making of the play; the fact is suggested somewhere in the set too. Shui Ta’s Tobacco Factory is an example of it; the support notes remark, “Shui Ta has set up a small factory in Mr. Shu Fu’s huts. Horribly constricted, a number of families huddle behind the bars.” (Brecht: 1962, 285). The bars here represent capitalist standards which are responsible to make the poor people (the families referred) slaves to its ideology.

Brecht is genius in applying symbolism in the treatment to his plays. For instance, for the production of *The Life of Galileo*, He suggests to show play cards to the audience before beginning every scene, having information about the forthcoming action. So that the element of suspense should disappear from the audience’s thoughts, and they can understand and interpret what is happening. In the same manner, the technique of bringing Galileo’s letter, in scene three, and a part of Galileo’s *Discorsi*, in scene thirteen, in front of the curtain breaks the consistency of the
action for the audience. Many a times symbolism in treatment reaches to its pinnacle, comprising Brecht’s supreme power of allegorizing. The fact is illustrated in scene ten; after the completion of a song, there is shown a procession. Brecht explains it in following words,

“Enter two men in rags, pulling a little cart. On a ridiculous throne sits ‘The Grand Duke of Florence’, a figure in a pasteboard crown and clothed in sacking and peering through a telescope. Above the throne is a signboard: ‘Looking out for Trouble’. The four masked men...toss into the air a dummy representing a cardinal. A dwarf has established himself at one side with a board bearing the words ‘The New Age’...Enter an over life-size dummy, Galileo Galilei, who bows to the public. In front of it a child carries a gigantic Bible, open, with the pages crossed out.” (Brecht: 1968, 95).

The treatment symbolizes the victory of Galileo’s discoveries over the Church authority, and its everlasting impact on the public. Thus, the stage craft and presentational style of the play robustly support Brechtian scheme of epic theatre.

Brecht’s sole aim to create an alienation effect through his plays is to break the fourth wall of illusion of Aristotelian theatre, and thereby to make the spectators conscious about the activities on the stage, and in doing so, the presentation of a drama plays a vital role. He wants his audience not to believe in things they are watching on the stage, in spite of themselves they have to relate their own logic to justify the action of the play. For instance, In The Caucasian Chalk Circle , scene two appears to end with Grusha's act of charity when she picks up Michael and takes
him with her. Instead, Brecht points out to the audience that they should not be seduced by how good Grusha appears to be. In reality, she is a thief who has stolen a child.

"Like booty she took it for herself
Like a thief she sneaked away." (Brecht: 1979, 165).

Brecht destroys the audience's image of Grusha for a particular reason: he does not want the audience to be seduced by her the way she is seduced by the child. Instead, he wants the audience to use logic much the way logic is used in the prologue. The audience must decide for itself whether Grusha is a thief and should be punished or whether she is a hero who should be allowed to be the custodian of the child as a reward. In this way the spectators have always been alarmed to be conscious while watching Brecht's play.

Eradicating the suspense is another salient feature of epic style of presentation. If the spectators are well known to facts, they won't be bothered by illusion of suspense, and that will give them extra time to think over the performance analytically. In the last scene of The Good Person of Szechwan, When Shui Ta is brought before the judges blamed for murdering Shen Teh, the spectators don't have to hold their chairs to know what will happen to him, because they already know the truth of Shui Ta and Shen Teh being the same persons, and thus they can watch the whole act without any emotional burden. Even in the 'Song of Defencelessness of the Good and the Gods', Shen Teh sings carrying Shui Ta’s Mask and costume in front of the curtain. It has two fold purposes: one, to allow the audience know of her double role playing, and
the other, by coming before the curtain, to make them aware about the fact that it is merely a drama performance and not the reality, and thus help them being alienated from the performance. In this way the presentational style and stage craft of the play defend Brecht’s enterprise.

Accurate use of property is also another dimension of a stagecraft, which helps to make the stagecraft more meaningful. In The Threepenny Opera, last scene, the coronation ceremony is juxtaposed with Mac’s hanging. Mac is made stand at the top of the gallows (about to be hung) remaining up the level from every other characters on the stage that is to heighten his importance in the scene. And literally the reward comes to him from the queen very soon, which really puts him above all. Thus, the gallows works here as a symbol of vertical distance.

In Mother Courage, the cart is one of the most symbolic properties. It is introduced with the first entry of Mother Courage and through the play it remains on the stage as it is a symbol of Courage’s home as well as a place for business. It is also identified with Courage’s own existence as a war profiteer. From the photograph of the play’s performance, we can notice that, throughout the play, the director has maintained the continuity of putting the cart at the centre of the stage. It may arouse the sense of monotony in the audience, but simultaneously it also makes the spectators feel the symbolic central position of cart. The very presence of cart on the stage represents Mother Courage’s own existence in the play. It works as ‘elan vital’ (life force) for her, and she has been shown strongly possessive about it; doesn’t want to lose it at any cost, which again symbolizes one’s love for life and fear of death. Thus the cart, here, becomes Brecht’s existential metaphor for life.
One more interpretation of the presence of cart represents the playwright's love for using paradoxes. The cart is meant for transportation, thus it identifies motion or speed. Where as in this play, Brecht has never shown a scene where the cart is in the motion. It is only in the first scene where Courage enters on the stage pulling the cart that the audience sees it in motion, otherwise, throughout the play; it remains still on the stage. It is through the information provided by the actors that we know the change in a place. Thus, Brecht tries to fix the traditional concept of motion related to the cart. He also symbolizes that, during the war time, the life has come to stand still (or never allowed to move forward). The final image of the play reiterates the words of the song that accompanies it and which began the play. As the Chaplain suggested, war does not die, but rests; what is not yet dead gets back onto its feet for the next round. The cart's rolling around the stage (which symbolizes the life in motion, or rejuvenating the life) represents the perpetuity of war. From the play's setting in the Thirty Years' War to its composition during the Second World War (and to our own time), we remain war-torn and in need of Brecht's timeless lessons. This is how the on stage setting of cart works in bringing out Brecht's philosophy of life.

For symbolic presentation of a play, costumes also play a chief role along with appropriate use of stagecraft and props. And Brecht has also given suggestions for costumes of many of his characters. For the major characters' costumes in In the Jungle of Cities, he suggests,

"Shlink wears a long dirty yellow costume down to his ankles, picturesquely blackened hair, and a black tuft on his chin. George
Garga is like A. Rimbaud in appearance. He is essentially a German translation into American from French.” (Brecht: 1979, 431).

By giving Arthur Rimbaud touch to Garga, Brecht wants to show him as a careless and poor chap who likes to experience life at his conditions. And thus is the character of Garga presented in the play: a poor careless boy who wishes to feel and recreate the world around him as per his own speculations.

Brecht is always aware of analyzing socio-political issues of modern times, and through The Life of Galileo, he wants to contemporize the political suppression of 17th century. Therefore, his curiosity to maintain the social-historical charm of the play is understandable. A man of symbol that he is, he has even remarked on the colours used for the costumes in detail:

Each scene had to have its basic tone ... the entire sequence had to have its development in terms of color. In the first scene a deep and distinguished blue made its entrance with Ludovico Marsili, and this deep blue remained, set apart, in the second scene with the upper bourgeoisie in their grey green coats made of felt and leather. Galileo’s social ascent could be followed by means of color. The silver and pearl-grey of the fourth (court) scene led into a nocturne in brown and black (where Galileo is jeered at by the monks of the Collegium Romanum), then on to the eighth, the cardinal’s ball, with delicate and fantastic individual masks (ladies and gentlemen) moving among the cardinals’ crimson figures. That was a burst of color, but it still had to be fully unleashed, and this occurred in the
ninth scene, the carnival. Then came the descent into dull and somber colours.... (Willet: 1964, 167).

Music and lights are also an inevitable part of Brecht’s design, as the proper use of music and light is always suggestive in the performance. For the use of music in the production of *The Threepenny Opera*, he says, “The main prop here was music, which kept on destroying the illusion; the latter, however, had first to be created, since an atmosphere could never be destroyed until it had been built up.” (Brecht: 2007, 107). The whole task was given to Kurt Weil, a composer, who himself writes, “I had before me a realistic plot, and this forced me to make the music against it if I was to prevent it from making a realistic impact. Accordingly the plot was either interrupted, making way for music, or else deliberately brought to a point where there was no alternative but to sing.” (Brecht: 2007, 102). And the idea was executed in such an experimental way that it became the trendsetter music in epic tradition.

The technique is brilliantly used in *The Good Person of Szechwan*. In the play whenever the Gods enter or exit, it is presented through this combo. When the Gods come to meet Wang for the first time at his place, Brecht remarks, "He (Wang) has leant back and gone to sleep. Music. The slope becomes transparent and the gods appear" (Brecht: 1962, 223), the same thing happens when they come for second time, "The water seller is asleep. Music. The culvert becomes transparent, and the gods appear to him as he dreams." (Brecht: 1962, 240). This repetition of action is specially arranged to alarm the audience, hence whenever the same music is played and certain lighting is done at the same place, the
audience can understand the next action and the suspense is over. Contrary to this, sometimes, Brecht forces to differentiate the music flavor of each scene. For the music of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Brecht says,

“Aside from certain songs which can take personal expression, the storyteller’s music need only display of a cold beauty, but it should not be unduly difficult. Though I think it is possible to make particularly effective use of a certain kind of monotony, the musical basis of the five acts needs to be clearly varied.” (Brecht: 1979, 301).

Brecht’s liking for support notes in his plays is quite appreciative, as it makes the pre-production exercise easier for the director. His sole aim in doing this is to allow his theory of alienation working in the performance. Nothing is realistic, nothing is secret, nothing is emotional, and nothing is without reference when it comes to present his plays. His notes look after such elements. For instance, in scene two of *In the Jungle of Cities*, the sound of guitar and drum accompanied by girls’ singing is heard, which announces the entry of Salvation Army girls before they really enter. This whole background scheme is clearly noted in the text. Further, in the same scene, the practice is well observed in the spitting act,

“Shlink steps coolly up to the Preacher and spits on his face. Worm bleats like a goat. The reformed sinner plays a drum roll. Preacher shaking his fists, in tears: Excuse me. Garga throws the paper at him: Here is the deed of gift. For the Salvation Army. And this is for you. Gives him his gun. Now get out, you swine!”
Preacher: I thank you in the name of my mission. He leaves, bowing awkwardly. The hymn singing fades with stinking speed.” (Brecht: 1979, 133).

The entire act symbolizes the deadened emotions in utilitarian urban life, the music is put to make it more chaotic, and the gun referred here is the same gun with which Preacher tries to kill himself later on in the play. There is no reference to emotional explosion of any character in this brutal deed. Thus, the presentational style is so symbolic, alienating and interactive that the audience can’t resist thinking, rethinking and analyzing the play rather than experiencing catharsis.

The Life of Galileo owns more finished Brechtian touch of historical play, which requires exceptional stage craft and presentational style for effective production. Understanding the need, Brecht has given plenty of useful information in his notes on the play that includes notes on casting to performance style. Such a play, in which historical figures and episodes have to be depicted, needs proper casting for characters. Brecht notes,

“The casting of the church dignitaries must be done particularly realistic. No kind of caricature of the Church is intended...In this play the Church represents chiefly authority; as types the dignitaries of the Church should resemble our present day bankers and senators.” (Brecht: 1968, 14).

Brecht is very careful about composing the scenes, because as a dramaturge he knows the importance of managing the actors to make a
scene more significant. And so his plays are full of notes suggesting how the actors should be managed on the stage to make the act meaningful. Viewing the need for proper composition in *The Life of Galileo*, he remarks,

"The producer must not for a moment forget that many of the actions and speeches are hard to understand, so that it is necessary to express the basic meaning of the action through the positions taken up by the characters. The audience must be sure that someone walking, someone standing up, a gesture, all have meaning and deserve attention." (Brecht: 1968, 14).

A good example of Brecht’s substantial compositional style is in scene two of the play, where the people are gathered to have a first look at Galileo’s discovery, a telescope. Brecht has suggested the senators, Galileo’s friend Sagredo standing one side with Virginia, Galileo’s daughter, carrying a velvet cushion on which lies two foot long telescope covered with crimson leather, on the dais is Galileo and behind him is the stand for the telescope. The composition significantly focuses on the telescope and Galileo, the one by putting it on the velvet cushion and the other by placing him on the dais.

Thus, the stagecraft and presentation of Brecht’s plays carry more symbolic and eloquent weightage in the theory of epic theatre. Brecht utilizes them not as aesthetic supplements, but with a unique purpose to intensify his strategy of alienation.
Works Cited


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