

Wealth and Children in Bertolt Brecht
Mother Courage and Her Children

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Abstract

This paper examines Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* as a foundational model of epic theatre that challenges the audience's emotional engagement to promote critical thinking. The paper argues that the play represents a scathing critique of the destructive influence of the capitalist mindset, the futility of war, and the moral concessions people make to survive, exploring Mother Courage's relentless quest for profit amid the cruel background of the Thirty Years' War. This analysis illustrates how Brecht's dramatic techniques, such as alienation effects, songs, and direct address to the audience, preclude catharsis and force a rational rather than an emotional response. The main conflict is not only between a courageous mother and her circumstances, but also between humanitarian principles and economic self-interest, personal survival and collective responsibility, heroism and pragmatism. Ultimately, this paper concludes that *Mother Courage and Her Children* remains an influential and perennial work because it forces a critical examination of the myth of heroism in wartime, the economic incentives that support conflict, and the collusion of individuals in their own oppression.

Key words: epic theatre; war profiteering; tragedy; capitalism

1. Introduction

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) was born in Augsburg, Bavaria. He was a famous playwright, poet, novelist, and director in Germany. He was anti-war and capitalism, and he wrote numerous plays that critically analyzed these events and the influence of war on people's relationships, such as *Mother Courage and Her Children*, which was written in 1939 and is considered Bertolt Brecht's magnum opus (al. Hamo-alshareef, 2024, p. 646). This paper is a study of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* to shed light on the negative aspects of the heroine's character. The protagonist of this play is a resourceful woman called Anna Fierling; she lives as a parasitic organism. She roams a continent where a massive religious war is raging, buying and

selling, deceiving and lying to others, and using her magic to attract and manipulate soldiers. Those wonderful capitalist qualities will not be able to save Mother Courage and her children from the fate that awaits them. Because of the Misfortunes that befall Mother Courage are afoot. She is a mother of three who is blinded by capitalism. Love and care are tasks Mother Courage presents for her children; this is called maternal instincts, but she drives a wedge between her duty as a mother and her work as a businesswoman. Theoretically, Mother Courage's love for her children drives her to enter the field of war profiteering to provide a living for her children, practically, this work requires her to make moral concessions that make it impossible for her to care of her children, and this is seen as a dramatic irony and tragedy of the play and this considered as the source of author's inspiration. The work she has begun must be completed, but not in her own way, but according to the method of the war-makers. These calculations were not taken into account when she set to work in the midst of a battlefield war. This is called persistence, and the result is constant doses of pain. These are the introductions and consequences that will crush the aspirations of Mother Courage and her children. Her insatiable appetite for wealth and her miserliness towards her children cast doubt on her courage and legitimacy as a mother.

Literature review

Peter Thomson, in *Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children*. Cambridge University Press, 1997, emphasizes the renewed topicality of the play's themes in light of current conflicts, alluding in particular to the wars in the former Yugoslavia. This illustrates his view that the play's critique of war as a business and its human cost remains an important and relevant one.

Andrea O'Reilly, in the *Encyclopedia of Motherhood*, Sage publication (2010), mentions that mothers can be agents of change and political resistance. Mother Courage embodies a form of maternal power in her tireless endeavors to protect her family, even if her activities are ultimately self-destructive. A notable gap that exists in other studies of the play is analyzed in this work. Considering that Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* is not only an endless cycle of consumption-oriented, with the commodities being her children's lives, it is explained that Brecht's critique does not refer to a woman who profits from war, but to a character and system in which war is the ultimate form of capitalism.

The study focuses firstly on Bertolt Brecht's life and his masterpiece *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Secondly, it shows the thematic study. The play

highlights themes of the horror of war, ethics, and capitalism. There are sub-themes such as greed and indifference. The disease of self-deception is buried in the heart of the heroine of the play, but it breathes in the moments of war through the smell of gunpowder and the hum of bullets that have killed her three children. The play presents the image of a miserable life in which the world is upside down. It also depicts the desire to live amidst blood, and the groans of the wounded are obvious. Brecht portrays a character called Mother Courage; this name is a verbally sarcastic nickname for the heroine of the play. She is a merciless woman who is willing to sacrifice the most beautiful and dearest thing she has to achieve irreconcilable goals, and in the end, she feels that she is the one who burned in the coldness of her greed and indifference. In the end, she finds herself a lonely, abandoned woman (Hotti and Esmaeel, 2011, p. 137). The main idea and core of this play is war and capitalism, and the bound relationship between them and their effects on individuals, especially on Mother Courage and her children. Some people live off these wars and ignore their results and their consequences:

WAR is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only international one in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives. (qtd in Hemnani, 2015, p. 397)

This paper argues that *Mother Courage and Her Children* criticize matriarchal structures through their confrontation with war, greed, and indifference. The play shows that ordinary people cannot profit from this war without sacrificing their loved ones or their honor and dignity. The truth is that Mother Courage has not learned that this war is not easy, and can also cost her the lives of her children. That is what will happen at the end of the play. This is the problem of the play (Betti, 2015, p. 3).

The impossibility of sustaining this dual role. One after another, Courage loses her children to the war, which is also the source of her livelihood ... Mother Courage presents the audience with an opportunity to learn a lesson that its protagonist never learns. A lesson summed up... at the end of the first scene of this play, when war gives you all you earn, one day it claims something in return. (Madlul, 2018, p.719)

The play highlights a family torn apart by gun battles, and the difficult decisions Mother Courage had to make during the hardest time, leading to the destruction and deterioration of the status of an individual in the happiest family (Low, Mousa, and Talib, 2022, p.2825). The central question of the

play is: How does a man's pursuit of profit within a capitalist system lead to his complicity in the brutality and devastation that harm him?

The answer depends on the people themselves, but from Mother Courage's point of view, war is not a tragedy for her; it can provide an opportunity for her and her children to make a living. As she said, "I won't let you spoil my war for me. Destroys the weak, does it? Well, what does peace do for 'em, huh? War feeds its people better" (Farmer, 2010, p.393). The play is a biting criticism of war as a project for individuals who try to profit from it:

War is good for something, or someone, or it would not have persisted for millennia as a major staple of human interaction. War pays, goes the old saw. But what are the wages of war? Whom does it pay, and who pays for it? How does it pay? Most importantly, what are the real costs of war and conflict? (2010, p. 393)

Brecht emphasizes in his play Mother Courage. War is not an ethical tragedy, but a business opportunity. So, she introduces herself to the recruiting officer and says, I am Anna Fierling, but I am known as Mother Courage because I am afraid of going broke. She places herself in the context of her participation in the war in economic terms. She is not a victim of the war, but a willing participant who sees an opportunity to profit. Her fear of poverty and bankruptcy is her main motivation, so she has no ethical objections to the violence around her. Mother Courage, in this scene, behaves like a tragicomic figure.

The fact that should be emphasized at the beginning of this study is that Mother Courage is primarily concerned only with her own affairs; others are only consumers and facilitators of her business. Mother Courage, heartless, has three children: Eilif, the elder sibling, has been shown to engage in aggressive activities; Swiss Cheese, the younger; and Katrin, a compassionate daughter. Mother Courage and her children find themselves struggling in the midst of a fierce war for survival. Mother Courage is a peddler and formidable huckster, pulling her canteen cart of goods from one place to another behind the fighting armies. Thus, she struggles to improve her fledgling career and considers the war her breadwinner. Mother Courage confirms that "War is a business proposition". She can bargain for everything the soldiers need on the battlefield. Her main concern is to make a profit from the war; she does not care about the reasons behind it. The only thing that interests her is prolonging the war so that she can make a living from trading stolen and recovered merchandise to the soldiers. Mother Courage believes that the longer and more brutal the war, the greater the gain. During the

Thirty Years' War that shook Germany (1618 - 48), most of the cities were destroyed, and more than half of the German population was killed during the Protestant Reformation (from 1624 to 36). Mother Courage sells supplies to military factions. She follows the fighting armies. Her subsistence depends on the sale of liquor, clothing, boots, and food (Jamil, 2018, p.508). Mother Courage is just a hustler.

Mother Courage sings for the soldiers. The song depicts her provision of wine and beer to soldiers, which serves to bolster their courage to move on: "so, fill the hole up in your belly. Before you fill one underground" (Ghadyalji, 2016, p.105). She represents the gasoline that is poured on the firewood to accelerate its ignition so that it burns quickly to sustain the war and thus profit from it.

She has put her family's fate at the mercy of the war. She has chosen to profit from the war at the expense of her own safety and that of her children. Mother Courage wanted to take advantage of the war for her benefit, but the opposite thing is happened when the war took advantage of all her children (Jamil, 2018, p. 508). She always lives at the mercy of war and submits to the conduct of the warmongers. Therefore, the hardship and war created inside her a monster who goes behind the battle lines and tries to survive anyway. She is the only one who has paid the toll of war out of her own pocket. As Fyodor Dostoyevsky said in his book *The Brothers Karamazov*:

The world says: You have needs - satisfy them. You have as much right as the rich and the mighty. Do not hesitate to satisfy your needs; indeed, expand your needs and demand more. This is the worldly doctrine of today. And they believe that this is freedom. The result for the rich is isolation and suicide, for the poor, envy and murder. (As cited in Noori, 2021, p. 47)

The carriage serves as Mother Courage's accommodation and livelihood. It is also a means of transportation by which she moves from country to country across Europe, where the events of the play take place in Poland, Germany, and Sweden. It is also the cause of the death of her children. Mother Courage follows the battalions wherever they go (Low, Mousa, and Talib, 2022, p. 2824). Anna Feirling is a businesswoman who has paradoxical feelings; she loves and hates war. She believes that the profits are better in times of war, and she hates it because of the destructive consequences of war. Mother Courage does not wish for the war to end and for peace to reign. For her, peace is a lie that she uses to keep Kattrin with her, but for Kattrin, peace means the real chance of the beginning of the mating season. Mother Courage refuses the notion that she is the hyena of the battlefield, but the description

below applies to her. She is a gnarly scavenger and has a gambler's nature. Case in point, when the lions have finished with their prey, the hyena comes and eats what is left. The same applies to Mother Courage. After every battle that takes place in a city, the main merchants flee, and she comes and buys their goods at a low price. If anyone says anything, it is that she is an opportunistic person (Al.Hamo alshareef, 2024, p.115). Therefore, she knows that the inevitable fate that awaits them is death, for they are very commodities and products in war. They are fuel for the war, just like her children, whose deaths she foretells at the beginning of the play:

MOTHER COURAGE. So, they had deserted their old mother, would they, the rascals? They take to war like a cat to cream! Well, there's yours, Eilif, my boy! (As EILIF takes the slip, she snatches it and holds it up.) See? A cross!

RECRUITING OFFICER. (To EILIF) If you are going to wet your pants, I'll try your kid brother.

MOTHER COURAGE. Take yours, Swiss Cheese. You should be a better bet – you are my good boy

(SWISS CHEESE draws.) Do not tell me it is a cross? Is there no saving you either? Just look,

Sergeant – a black cross!

SERGEANT. What I do not see is why I got one: I always stay well in the rear.

(To the OFFICER) It cannot be a trick: it gets her own children.

MOTHER COURAGE. (To KATTRIN) Now all I have left is you.

You are a cross in yourself, but you have a kind heart. (She holds the helmet up but takes the slip herself.) Oh dear, there must be some mistake! Do not be too kind, Katrin, don't be too kind – there is a black cross in your path! So now you all know: be careful! Be very careful!

(MOTHER COURAGE climbs on her wagon, preparing to leave).

(qtd in Al Sadaay, 2021, p. 2256)

She tries to calculate a tiny detail of wartime so she can buy more merchandise to sell (Ranjbar and Faghfori, 2023, p.292). The dark side of reality in this play is that Mother Courage prioritizes her financial gain at the expense of her children, due to the harsh circumstances that surround Mother Courage and her children (Bhagat, 2018, p. Introduction). The cart is both the source of her livelihood and her misery. At the end of this conflict, whose bloodshed no one can calculate, hardly anyone knew for whom, against whom, for what purpose, or for what cause they were fighting, but Anna

Feirling knew; she was fighting for survival, and she worked for a living for her children (Bauland, 1968, P. 190). Her survival cost her dearly; the price was the lives of her three children, because she took their fate into her own hands, and she never learned anything from her ordeal. The play ends with her driving a dilapidated cart, an act she performs repeatedly after the war has devoured her children.

The only consolation for her is that she has become a bereaved woman without a husband. The sense of motherhood in Mother Courage makes her responsible for the survival of her family, but this notion becomes a tool for the demise of the children. (Bauland, 1968, P. 191).

Her three children, two sons and a daughter, had different qualities; they came from various fathers from various war regions around Europe. Bertolt Brecht gives each of the protagonists a tragic quality: the elder, Eilif, is intelligent and dashing, the second, Swiss Cheese, a well-meaning idiot, and the smallest, Kattrin, is unassuming and radiates compassion (Yazdani, Shahbazi, and Hedielloo, 2014, p. 402). The elder son is shot because he was brave, the Swiss Cheese is shot because he was honest, and the girl is killed because she was exuding pity. The protagonist, Anna, is considered “neither a brave woman, nor has any pity, nor is honest”. All her children were killed while she was bargaining somewhere else (Bauland, 1968, P.191). “The war will eventually take from Mother Courage and her children what it gives them in the flesh” (Salman, 2017, P. 391). The courageous woman loses more than she gains. She has lost her children and her dignity to earn some guilders. The heroine’s nickname, alluded to Mother Courage, comes from this incident:

They call me Mother Courage because I was afraid I would be ruined, so I drove through the bombardment of Riga like a madwoman with fifty loaves of bread in my cart: they were going moldy, what else could I do? (AL-Khazraji, 2018, p.207)

But the following excerpt shows the true character of Mother Courage. She states:

I am not courageous; only the poor have courage. Why? Because they are hopeless. To get up every morning, to plow a potato field in wartime, or to bring kids with no prospects into the world, to live poor, that takes courage. They stagger, starving, bearing the whole thundering weight of the.... Wealthy on their bread, stupid backs. Is that courage? It must be, it is perverted courage. Why? Cause what they carry on their back will cost them their lives (as cited in Noori, 2021, p.46)

Mother Courage's personality is a combination of two opposites: motherhood and greed. She seeks profits to provide a living for her children, but war has predetermined her future. She has to choose between two options: the first is to take care of her children by taking advantage of the war, which is also a threat to her children's safety; the second option is her greed, which can be seen on the surface as she tries to secure her future through her constant pursuit of wealth for her family. Actually, she fails to be, as the specter of war and angel of death looms over her dreams. Her decisions cause the death of her children, one by one, as she leaves her mute daughter alone during the blockade to make a deal with fleeing traders who are selling their goods cheaply (Coşkun, 2015, p. 26).

Swiss Chess was recruited as the battalion's paymaster because he was honest. When the catholic army suddenly attacked, the Swiss Chess tried to hide the paybox in a safe place. A few days after the attack, Swiss Chess is worried about the sergeant's reaction to him. He is afraid of being seen as a thief. Mother Courage has warned him of enemy spies who might capture him. Mother Courage's intuition was spot on when the Swiss Chess was captured. (Hemnani, 2015, P. 400). Mother Courage's most condemning scene in the play is her reluctance to pay the ransom and her haggling over the amount to release the Swiss Chess.

Mother Courage knows of her son's arrest by the enemy and is determined to bribe the spies. As she is an excellent negotiator when it comes to dealing with the merchants, the question here is whether she was successful in this negotiation.

Could the financial resources she had amassed through her trading activities have been enough to prevent his death?

To save her child, the Swiss Chess set, she first tries to collect the ransom money; she asks Yvette, who had an affair with the colonel, to help her pawn the carriage. Yvette persuades her lover, the colonel, to pay the amount for the mortgaged carriage. Mother Courage offers the spies one hundred twenty guilders, which is much less than the sum demanded. Mother Courage plans to get the battalion's money box back to pay the colonel's debts from the cash box. She convinces Yvette to approach the spies and claims she is Swiss Chess's mistress. To get the Swiss Chess release, she offers one hundred twenty guilders in exchange for his release. This deal hits a snag when Yvette tells Mother Courage that Swiss Chess has thrown the money box into the river. The second party did not accept the amount offered by Yvette, which Mother Courage insisted on paying. After the deal fell through, the soldiers

shot the Swiss Chess. Mother Courage regrets her hesitation in paying the ransom and says: “I think – I bargained too long” (Qassim and Aziz, 2023, p. 46). The spy camp and the soldiers who are with them do not believe the story of the murdered Swiss Chess, that he threw the money box into the river. They think that the money box was hidden in Mother Courage’s cart and decide to test Mother Courage’s reaction and her relationship with the murdered child by showing her the body of her son and asking her whether or not she knew him. In the meantime, Yvette has overheard the plan prepared by the spies and has advised Mother Courage to react normally when she sees her son’s body, as if nothing had happened:

YVETTE: Now you have done with your haggling. You can keep the wagon now. He got eleven bullets in him. I do not know why I still bother about you; you do not deserve it, but I just happened to learn they do not think you are connected with him. I think they are going to bring you here to see if you will give yourself away when you see him. You had better not know him, or we are in for it. (as cited in Coskun, 2015, p. 40)

Mother Courage was shocked to see the sight of her son’s dead body when the spies brought him. She could not utter a single word. She just shook her head to express that she did not know the body. Otherwise, it might have cost her life. After Mother Courage disowned her son's body, it was thrown in the trash heap. The main motive behind the death of her children is the capitalist drive of Mother Courage, because she bargains for the price to save her son, or engages in a business deal when her daughter Katrin dies, engrossed in the process of profit. Even though Katrin’s death is a heroic act, it still happens because her mother’s business takes her into the dangerous territory of war, making her the first and last victim of a conflict her mother did not want to leave:

SERGEANT: Here is a man we cannot identify, but he has to be registered to keep the records straight. He bought a meal from you. Look at him, see if you know him (He pulls back the sheet.) Do you know him? (MOTHER COURAGE shakes her head.) What? You never saw him before he took that meal? (MOTHER COURAGE shakes her head.) Lift him. Throw him in the carrion pit. He has no one who knows him. They carry him off. (as cited in 2015, p. 40)

Mother Courage refuses the proverb of George Steiner when he asserts that, “Those who live by selling the sword shall perish by the sword” (AL-Khazraji, 2018, p. 208).

This behavior illustrates how capitalism forces people to make moral compromises. Mother Courage is the one who dragged her children onto the battlefield. So, she had to protect them from the accidents that befallen them while she was negotiating somewhere. Especially what happened to the Swiss Chess and Kattrin. Her indifference to their deaths and her continuation of her work and the consequences of that work are made clear by the words of the priest when he said to her, “You love war”, and he reminded her of the proverb: “who sups with the devil must use long spoons” (Al-Moghales and Altobai, 2021, p. 16). She is an opportunistic and exploitive woman at the same time. While Mother Courage was negotiating the release of Swiss Chess, she was planning to pawn her cart. At the same time, she wanted the cashbox her son had thrown somewhere to pay the ransom and resume her business with the balance, even if it meant her son’s life, who is her flesh and blood, and she wants to exploit his plight for material gain:

YVETTE. They’ll do it for two hundred if you make it snappy.

He confessed he’d had the cash-box; they put the thumbscrews on him, but he threw it in the river when he saw them coming at him. Shall I go get the money from my Colonel?

MOTHER COURAGE. The cash-box in the river? How’ll I ever get my two hundred back?

YVETTE. You were expecting to get it from the cash-box? I would have been sunk. Mother Courage, if you want your Swiss Cheese, you’ll have to pay. Or shall I let the whole thing drop – so you can keep your wagon?

MOTHER COURAGE. Now I can’t pay two hundred. I must hold on to something. Go say I’ll pay one hundred twenty or the deal’s off. Even at that, I lose the wagon. (Al Sadaay, 2021, p. 2259)

Even the lowest-ranking soldier in the army criticizes and ridicules Mother Courage, accusing her of hypocrisy for living off the war while discouraging her children from joining. The soldier emphasizes her materialistic tendencies and the pursuit of her personal interests (Al. Hamo alshareef, 2024, p. 110). Greed is one of the main prevalent themes in this play that controls the main character. “It drains Mother Courage’s resources and freezes her thoughts. It robs her children, thus paralyzing their economy, who were its pillar, her three children” (Sabri and Aziz, 2015, p. 2). As Krasner said:

She drags her warjles from battle to battle, because that is where the market resides, she knows that when soldiers are wounded and dying, they will call for brandy to ease their pain, and she will be there to sell it to them for maximum profit; and when they need clean underwear because amidst

combat- evoking fear they pissed their pants- she will be there to sell that too. (AL- Kazeragi, 2018, p. 207)

Another theme is the selfishness that joins the negative qualities of Mother Courage. She clings to it in the most difficult times, but it does not prevent her from continuing her business with the soldiers. Case in point, when the sergeant asks her for a work permit, she goes along with him and tries to make a deal. “I bet you could use a good pistol, or a belt buckle”. The greed and selfishness of the Courage Mother become clear when she refuses to give her four precious shirts to bandage wounded Protestants when a town is attacked by catholic troops, revealing the truth of her inhuman feelings (Al-Moghales and Altobai, 2021, p. 16).

I cannot give now what with expenses, taxes, loan interest, and bribes, making guilts, noises, Kattrin raises a plank and threatens her mother with it. You gone plain crazy? Put that plank away, or I will paste you on, you cow- I am giving now, I do not wait to get to think of myself. (Madlul, 2018, p. 722) (The CHAPLAIN lifts her bodily off the wagon steps, then brings the shirts from the wagon, and tears them into strips.)

My shirts! My officers' shirts!

(From the house, the cry of a child in pain.

PEASANT. The child's still in the house.

(KATTRIN runs into the house.)

MOTHER COURAGE. Hey, grab Kattrin, the roof may fall in!

CHAPLAIN. I'm not going back in there.

MOTHER COURAGE. My officers' shirts, half a guilder apiece. I'm ruined!

(KATTRIN comes out with a baby in her arms. To her.)

Never happy till you're dragging babies around! Give it to its mother at once!

(KATTRIN is humming a lullaby to the child.)

CHAPLAIN. (bandaging) The blood comes through.

MOTHER COURAGE. And, in all this, she's happy as a lark! Stop that music! I don't need music to tell me what victory's like

(AL Sadaay, 2021, p. 2260).

Mother Courage also shows that her pursuit of profit knows no sympathy. The word love has no meaning in her dictionary; she does not care about it at all, and the children she has given birth to on a whim, she barely knows their fathers. “His father always claimed he was called Kojocki or Mojocki or something.” The word love for Anna (makes the world go around). She advises Kattrin about the consequences of being in love. She warns:

Do not start anything with them soldiers. even with fellows not in the army, it is no bed of roses. He says he would like to kiss the ground your feet walk on ... and after that, you are his skivvy. (Nain, 2020, p. 156)

The material side predominates in Mother Courage's personality; this is shown in her actions when she negotiates with the Cook to sell him a miserable chicken, and in her insistence on continuing her work despite the loss of all her children. She focuses primarily on the stock market, its rise and fall, which affects the prices of traded goods she sells to soldiers (Betti, 2021, p. 6). The analysis of Mother Courage through the lens of Brecht confirms that she is a complex character who lives with contradictions, the most important of which is that she does not give up easily, but at the same time acts cowardly. She believes that she is smart and owes everything she has to her constant struggle to survive in a time of brutal wars. However, it seems that she cannot assess the consequences of things, does not make a rational decision, and often hesitates. Because of these contradictions, she finds herself sometimes a caring mother and sometimes a war merchant. She lives a dream of prosperity in times of war, from which, as soon as she wakes up, she realizes that she has lost everything (Ranjbar and Faghfori, 2016, p. 293): With all its luck and all its danger, the war is dragging on a bit, another hundred years or longer. The common man won't benefit. Filthy his food, no soap to shave him, the regiment steals half his pay, but still, a miracle may save him: tomorrow is another day! The New Year comes. The watchmen shout. the thaw sets in. The dead remain. Wherever life has not died out, it staggers to its feet again. (Hanumani, 2015, p. 401)

From the point of view of the writer of this article, Mother Courage is just a string-puller who sacrifices her children to gain economic independence, which is seen as a negative aspect, if the reader knows that in a world dominated by men, she challenges all inadequacies to achieve her goals, she proves to women that they are not passive or helpless, as the role of women has been portrayed in the traditional view of them as housewives. She prefers to free herself from societal norms, as she said her supreme word that this field as a canteen woman (businesswoman) is not just a monopoly for men.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Brecht brilliantly utilizes the mother's journey to show how a character's monomania in terms of economic viability leads to ethical and personal destruction. She is not a heroic figure, but a tragic one whose blindness to the facts of war is a direct result of her involvement. Mother Courage's pursuit of profit from the war leads her to make decisions that cost her everything, proving that for Brecht, the pursuit of personal gain is, ultimately, an act of collaboration with the forces of doom. The bottom line is that Mother Courage is not a survivor nor a profiteer, but she is a loser; she lost her children one by one. So, people who live in war must pay tribute to war. So, Mother Courage paid this tax, namely the lives of her children, to continue in her trade instinct. She not only pulled her cart, but she also dragged her children into constant conflict and ultimately to their deaths by negotiating for twelve years. She does not stop, even if her children die one after the other; she continues to negotiate. The exact description of Mother Courage's relationship with her children in this play is the same relationship that united Mother Courage and the consumers; it is the relationship of a seller and a buyer. The instinct of a war merchant has driven her to seek profit more than to pursue the permanence of the maternal instinct to preserve her family. The important point to focus on is the consequences of war, the inhumane effects of which must be resisted. Mother Courage has sold herself and her children completely to the war, but at a low price. She is the first and last loser, only at the cost of her dignity and her children. The author utilizes the play to criticize the endless cycles of conflict. He shows how war not only crushes people's souls, but also perpetuates a system in which people's sufferings become a commodity. Brecht's main message, that he wants to convey to the reader, is that the profit motive of capitalism corrupts social relations, and dooms conventional virtues such as courage, sincerity, and compassion, making them fatal liabilities. Ultimately, the play serves as a deep and perennial indictment of war, showing that when human life is reduced to a mere commodity, no one can truly escape the cruel and dehumanizing effects of war. The courage lies in the market that will persist in demanding its sacrificial fee.

Recommendations

Researchers could utilize a psychoanalytic or developmental psychology framework to examine the motivations of Elif, Swiss Chess, and Kattrin, their failed attempts to act for themselves, and their symbolic representation of innocence corrupted by war.

Future researchers could adopt a postcolonial perspective to study the relationship between Mother Courage's economic actions and the historical background of the play, and discuss how her mobile tavern functions as a micro-capitalist enterprise in a colonized landscape

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المال والبنون في بارتولت بريشت
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مستخلص:

تدرس هذه الورقة مسرحية الأم شجاعة وأطفالها لبرتولت بريشت كنموذج أساسي للمسرح الملحمي الذي يتحدى المشاركة العاطفية للجمهور لتعزيز التفكير النقدي. وتزعم الورقة البحثية أن المسرحية تمثل نقداً لاذعاً للتأثير المدمر للعقلية الرأسمالية، وعبثية الحرب، والتنازلات الأخلاقية التي يقدمها الناس من أجل البقاء وتستكشف سعي الأم شجاعة الدؤوب لتحقيق الربح وسط الخلفية القاسية لحرب الثلاثين عاماً. يوضح هذا التحليل كيف أن تقنيات بريشت الدرامية مثل تأثيرات الاغتراب والأغاني والخطاب المباشر للجمهور تمنع التنفيس وتفرض استجابة عقلانية وليست عاطفية. إن الصراع الرئيسي لا يكمن فقط بين الأم شجاعة وظروفها، بل أيضاً بين المبادئ الإنسانية والمصلحة الاقتصادية الذاتية، والبقاء الشخصي والمسؤولية الجماعية، والبطولة والبراغماتية. يتم فحص البنية العرضية للمسرحية والوفيات المأساوية لأطفالها كوسيلة لإظهار دورة الحرب المتكررة ذاتياً، والإفلاس الأخلاقي للترريح، وعدم إمكانية تحقيق البقاء على الحياد في الصراع. وفي نهاية المطاف، خلصت هذه الورقة إلى أن الأم شجاعة وأطفالها يظل عملاً مؤثراً ودائماً لأنه يفرض فحصاً نقدياً لأسطورة البطولة في زمن الحرب، والحوافز الاقتصادية التي تدعم الصراع، وتواطؤ الأفراد في قمعهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المسرح الملحمي; التريح من الحرب; مأساة; الرأسمالية.