

# The Historical Context of the Emergence of Conditional Theatre in Meyerhold's Work and Its Impacts on Bertold Brecht's Epic Theater

(A new reading in the comparison between the creations of Meyerhold and Brecht)

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## Abstract

This study examines Meyerhold's innovative endeavours in designing theatrical settings to align with his conditional approach to theatre, known as the Conditional Theatre, which diverges from the realistic style of theatre. The objective of this theatre is to stimulate the audience's imagination and engagement in the theatrical performance presented before them rather than replicating nature, whether in the visual scene design or acting performance. Despite Meyerhold's pioneering contributions to developing innovative scenic ideas that transformed the theatre's form, Bertolt Brecht's theatre gained international recognition, which needed to be more attainable for Meyerhold due to unavoidable circumstances explored in this study. The study emphasises the need to investigate the relationship between these two pioneers, including the possibility of direct influence and any presumed links between them. Although available documents have been reviewed, evidence has not been found to establish a recorded or communicated relationship between them.

"Исторический контекст возникновения условного театра в творчестве Мейерхольда и его влияние на эпический театр Бертольда Брехта." (Новое прочтение в сравнении творений Мейерхольда и Брехта) Это исследование посвящено новаторским усилиям Мейерхольда в области проектирования театральной обстановки, соответствующей требованиям его нового подхода к театру, противоположного реалистическому театру, который он называл условным театром. Театр стремится активизировать воображение зрителя и вовлечь его в театральную ИГРУ, которая предстает перед ним, вдали от симуляции природы, будь то в дизайне визуальной сцены или в актерском исполнении. Хотя Мейерхольд был первооткрывателем многих сценических идей, изменивших форму театра, театр Бертольда Брехта добился международной известности, что было невозможно для Мейерхольда - в силу обстоятельств, которые будут освещены в этом исследовании. Это указывало на необходимость данного исследования, чтобы пролить свет на отношения между этими двумя первооткрывателями и на возможность прямого влияния в дополнение к предполагаемым связям между ними. Хотя не было доказано, что между ними были зафиксированы или сообщены отношения при просмотре документов, доступных нам на сегодняшний день.

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## Keywords

Stage Design; Alienation Effect; Meyerhold; Brecht; Biomechanic; Sergei Tretyakov.

слова: сценография; Эффект отчуждения; Мейерхольд; Брехт; биомеханика; Сергей Третьяков.

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Although there are many similarities in the creative work and the theory of both theatrical pioneers, and on the personal level, biography, and even Meyerhold's German origin, there is no meeting has ever been recorded between the two artists; here are some of these similarities:

- Both belong to the middle class. Both were sons of a merchant, well-educated at the time, and known for their political activism.
- Acknowledged in one way or another their influence on the evolution of form and content in the theatre of the twentieth century.
- Both were put on trial, and their creativity was observed. The first is executed after he faces the closure of his theatre, while the other's books are burnt.
- Both rejected Realism in Theatre and sought a theory of alternative art.
- Each of them gave particular importance to the study of the role that the actor should play in the theatre.
- They invested the spectator's imagination and employed it to engage the spectator in the theatrical PLAY and perception.
- Their work included political and social characteristics, which were more evident in Brecht's creations, whereas emigration allowed Brecht to move away from the oppression of the Nazis and then return after the end of the Nazi era to express his ideas more clearly without falling into the direct speech.

The creative biography of Brecht continued to move away after the elimination of the Nazis. At the same time, Meyerhold's career was obscured for decades. However, he acknowledged his artistic influence on many 20th-century theatre pioneers, including Brecht himself, but to what extent was this influence, and what is the nature of it? That is the issue that still needs to be finally resolved and needs more investigation.

Meyerhold left Moscow Art Theatre and moved on his path to search for a theatrical form that changed the basis of the theatre perception by the public, which influenced the theatrical scenic design and stage structure based on the author's text. In his turn, Brecht also stems precisely from the author's text towards the formation of a theatrical scenery that leads to change in the process of perception in theatre. Both Artists have been known to divide the theatrical text into sequential scenes without being restricted to division into chapters and scenes according to the traditional methods. Meyerhold performed this method during the text's adaptation, while Brecht performed it during the composition of the text.

## The Artistic Communications between Russian and German Theatre

It is worth noting that the Russian Theatre had long known its way to Germany. In his book "My Life in Art", Stanislavski talked about his artistic tour to Germany in 1906, where he presented a variety of plays and the way the German newspapers covered his tour and performances; he even mentioned the names of the critics and extracts from their articles. This tour began on January 24, 1906, directly after the Povarskaya Street Studio was dissolved, in which Stanislavski, Meyerhold and Pryusov worked together. Stanislavski moved with his group to Berlin with his experiences from the studio and all the impressions he got by working with the artists who participated in those experiments.

It should be noted that despite the weak communication at the time, all major newspapers in Europe were eager to cover cultural life in European countries through correspondents who were often engaged in art and culture.

Many Russian theatrical groups toured in Germany during Brecht's activity as a playwright. In 1923, Alexander Tairov toured there and made a series of performances. More importantly, Meyerhold was there in 1930, before Brecht went into exile, and presented a play entitled "Roar China" by the Russian writer Sergei Tretyakov. Thus, it is not logical to believe that Brecht was unfamiliar with Meyerhold's works. Especially because Tretyakov himself was a friend of Brecht, and he (Tretyakov) invited Brecht to present in Moscow the play "The Threepenny Opera" later in 1930; the friendship and cooperation continued between them, leading Brecht to repeat his visits to Moscow in 1932 and 1935. How can we assume that Meyerhold and Brecht did not meet?

However, why did they not mention each other, at least according to what we have of documents so far, even though all evidence indicates that Meyerhold was present in Moscow during those visits of Brecht? "Although no such meeting is recorded, it is documented that both were in Moscow at the time and were equally moved by the extraordinary performance of the visiting Chinese actor Mei Lan-Fang" (Eaton, 1980, pp. 23-24). Therefore, they were aware of each other's creations, especially as they shared the knowledge of the same surrounding medium and friends.

## The assumed link: Sergei Tretyakov (20/7/1892 – 10/9/1937)

To illustrate this artistic environment, we will review the essential link between the two Theatre

pioneers with Sergey Tretyakov, according to the information we have to date.

Tretyakov was born in the district of Goldingen in Latvia, now called Kuldiga. He was known as one of the Russian structuralism pioneers and worked as a correspondent for the Russian newspaper Pravda. He graduated from Moscow University in 1916 and specialised in law; he was later associated with the futurism movement and considered one of the most important Russian futurists in the field of theatre. He participated as an editor in many of the most famous cultural magazines of his time, expressing the futurism movement.

One of his most famous works in drama is "Roar China", in which he, as a Dramaturg, condemns Western imperialism. Before writing this text, he visited China and lived there for many years, where he began teaching Russian. During his stay there, he prepared a collection of writings and collected many materials for his later writings.

In the early 1930s, Tretyakov toured Western Europe, where he became acquainted with leading writers, poets, and dramaturgs; he introduced them to the cultural and artistic milieu of Russia through his work in "Pravda" newspaper and his relations with all workers in the Russian culture milieu, Brecht was one of the most prominent German and European writers presented by Tretyakov to the Russian. He organised Brecht's visits to Moscow in the thirties of the twentieth century.

On October 27, 1937, Tretyakov was arrested by the Soviet security services and, as always, was accused of espionage. He was admitted, of course, to his crime and subsequently executed. He remained in disgrace until his name was acquitted under Khrushchev Thaw, among other names of Stalinist victims.

Through this quick review of Tretyakov's biography, the character of Tretyakov is the main link between Meyerhold and Brecht and their creativity.

Meyerhold and Brecht were known for resisting the Theatre institutions of their time of bourgeois character. Moscow Art Theatre was at the top of those theatrical institutions for Meyerhold. They sought an alternative to the Realistic and Naturalistic Theatre that prevailed in the Theatres of Europe during that period.

Meyerhold did important research in the Conditional theatre after leaving the Moscow Art Theatre. His research was admired and respected in the Russian Theatre and artistic circles, including Stanislavski himself, who established with him Povarskaya Street Studio and said: "There was a difference between us, as I was only trying to renew my means, but I did not know the ways yet and tools to achieve this. While Meyerhold seemed to

have found new ways and methods but could not achieve them fully, sometimes because of physical conditions, sometimes it was the weak group of actors. In this way, I found who was necessary to me at the time. At the research stage, I decided to help Meyerhold in his new works, which seemed consistent with my dream" (Stanislavski, 1954, p. 293). The studio lasted only one hectic year, but it greatly impacted the development of the artistic vision of both Meyerhold and Stanislavski, as explained.

After the closure of the Povarskaya Street Studio in 1906, Stanislavski travelled to Berlin with the group and their family members on a long artistic tour, while Meyerhold moved to St. Petersburg (Petrograd) and stayed there for two years as the prominent director of the Komissarzhevskaya Theatre. Meyerhold experienced the revolutionary visions of George Fuchs about theatre and was influenced by it, particularly by his vision of the old ritual Greek theatre and the influence of this ritual on the Greek theatrical scenery and the performance of the actor in that era. The effect of these views on the crystallisation of the concept of Conditional Theatre was very noticeable.

Fuchs encouraged him to move from the idea of the opening wall of the stage, which was associated with the stage scene of the Italian box, to the idea of the proscenium, which he believed that it breaks the fourth imaginary wall and brings more emphasis on the actor's performance and his relationship with the spectator. Fuchs also suggested making many adjustments to the stage structure and adding levels. He believed that the shape of the current stage is superfluous at best and very annoying at worst. It is precisely here that Fuchs is an essential source of many of Meyerhold's ideas, even before he got to know Craig, who arrived in Moscow in 1908; this year, Meyerhold has returned to Moscow.

By 1910, symbolism had begun to give way to other aesthetic styles, the most prominent of which was the emerging expressionism in Europe. At this time, Meyerhold abandoned the symbolism in favour of the theatrical grotesque as an artistic style, his research with theory, and experimentation in practice. This method, which will have its own space in this chapter, is considered the artistic father of the Absurd Theatre, the creations of Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty, and even too many of Brecht's creations.

Meyerhold presented thirteen performances in St. Petersburg during the two years, including Alexander Blok's "Balgancik - The Puppet Show" in 1907. In this show, he used the Commedia dell'arte with other art forms to highlight their contrast. Meyerhold introduced actors from the audience hall to the stage. There was frequent boycotting by the narrator, who employed the costumes of the circus

clowns and the midpoint masks used in the *Commedia dell'arte*. In addition, Meyerhold changed the stage set in front of the audience's eyes. Which was considered by the critics as premature, and the public still needs to be ready to accept such techniques.

We know that most of these techniques were adopted in the Epic Theatre later by Brecht. Brecht, like Meyerhold, rejected the *mise en scene*, which was subjected to the Naturalistic-Realistic Rules, preferring to explore new forms.

For example, Brecht was known for his tendency to show the lighting sources in theatrical scenes, considering it a form of Alienation. We also found Meyerhold in his directing of *The Earth of the Turmoil* in 1923 of Tretyakov and *The Queen of Spades* in 1935, using optical spots and Follow Lights and showing their sources. In this way, Meyerhold and Brecht after him did prevent the lighting from being an element of illusion. This was one of the other ways to remind the spectator permanently that he was sitting in a theatre.

In addition, both creators employed all elements of fashion, make-up, and accessories in order to uncover what is happening around the actions, without ornamentation or any tendency to simulate nature, so it was the audience's role to complete what is missing the theatrical scenery's of the play using his imagination. They did not allow the stage to become a painting Gallery to satisfy the spectator's taste and let him relax.

The term Epic was first used by Brecht in 1926 in his introduction to *Man Equals Man*, eight years after his first full-length play *Baal* in 1918. Although Epic is associated with Brecht, the truth is that the term was known and circulated before. In 1924 the term Epic was associated with Erwin Piscator's creativity and was used by German critics to describe some of the creations of Pirandello and even Stanislavski.

The origin of the term "Alienation effect"<sup>1</sup> [1] is reverted to a Russian critic Viktor Shklovsky. In his book "Art as a Device" in 1917, Shklovsky considered that what he called in Russian "приём отстранения" the concept of familiarisation is the basis of all Arts. Meyerhold and a close friend of Sergey Tretyakov knew Shklovsky well. It is believed that Tretyakov transferred Shklovsky's ideas to Brecht. For example, those who believe in this conviction (Robinson, 2008) assert that Tretyakov taught Brecht the Shklovsky's term during Brecht's visit to Moscow in the spring of 1935. Brecht first used the term Alienation effect in his article entitled "The influence of Alienation effect on the Chinese acting performance" in 1936.

So we can conclude that he first mentioned this term after visiting Moscow in 1935 and watching the play show of the famous Chinese actor Mei Lan-Fang. Meyerhold and their familiar friend Tretyakov have watched the same play show. For our part, we can acknowledge that Tretyakov connected the term to Brecht to employ it in his later critical writings and, over time, became associated with the epic Theatre of Brecht. Thus became what is known as the Alienation Effect, as the driving force and motivator of Brecht's texts and spectacles. In this research, however, we do not seek to confirm or refute Douglas Robinson's view, as it is important to stress that the Alienation effect was known in the Russian Theatre and Meyerhold, like other Russian intellectuals, like other Russian intellectuals was familiar with it.

Through this style, "the Alienation effect", Brecht seeks to ensure that everything on stage is estranged from what is in nature, and thus ensure that the spectator does not fall into the illusion of Truth and Reality and never forget that he is in a Theatre, and stay alert analysing all the actions presented in front of him and therefore incites him to think and connect the events of the play to his Reality, to conclude the horrible situation in which he lives, and therefore, the need to seek change.

## The Biomechanic

The method of dealing with the actor was one of the most common points of encounter in the artistic career of Meyerhold and Brecht. Both rejected the Realistic school in acting, which is based on the Art of Experiencing according to Stanislavski's system, and presented to the actor another approach based on external representation, the Art of Representation—a more physical Method.

Meyerhold, specifically, was more oriented to employing his discoveries in science. For example, Meyerhold benefited from Pavlov's research to develop the principles of the Conditional theatre, and then he moved to William James's research in Biomechanics. He employed Taylorism, which is referred to Frederick Winslow Taylor, who studied the physical activity of factory workers in America, to conclude that it is a futile and unproductive process, wasting a great deal of energy and effort in vain, and therefore advised to use body, energy, and Temp optimally, that commensurate with the task assigned, and lead to improving the production. Of course, these tempting principles to increase production would not pass without attention to the Communist Revolution, which suffered from the problem of wasting energy and low productivity,

<sup>1</sup> Verfremdungseffekt- (Ger), estrangement effect, Distancing effect.

which made the Communists before and after the October "Revolution" adopt these ideas. Lenin adopted Taylorism as a practical principle for the Soviet labour forces once the country was under control.

Meyerhold, who by nature likes to employ science in his theatrical experiments, who used to use anything in the interest of promoting his ideas, wanted to surf the wave of Taylorism in order to pass his method of theatre, to convince the new Regime this Theatre is consistent with the principles and ideas of Communism, and thus it reflects the spirit of revolution, in contrast to Stanislavski's Method, which has been hinted at as a remnant of the old bourgeoisie. The idea was not up to everyone; despite the support of Trotsky for Meyerhold's views, Meyerhold was a close associate of this leader, which would bring many disasters to him and his Theatre after Stalin took control of the country, and Trotsky's fled the USSR to become an Enemy of the People.

The actor that Meyerhold searched for was ultimately an echo of that produced by the art of representation approach in acting. The actor seeks to reach the character from the outside and thus matches what was already practised in a French school and with the teachings of Denis Diderot specifically. However, if Meyerhold presented his idea in a way that he needs an actor, who does not embody the character internally, as Diderot demands, it would be considered a rejection of the artistic Realism associated with the Art of Bolshevik progressivism in the Soviet Union.

We conclude that the actor Meyerhold seeks is no different from that sought by Brecht, in terms of the approach to the character, along with the other elements of the presentation of the Alienation effect. Nevertheless, Meyerhold needed to promote his idea through Taylorism. This conclusion, of course, does not underestimate the Taylorism role in crystallising Meyerhold's Conditional Theatre; for example, in his lectures about theatre scene design, Meyerhold reviews many examples, urging students to devise ways to simplify stage decorations and not to overuse materials, particularly heavy ones, as well as to design stage components, in easy ways to be transportable, and able to be used in multiple ways in more than one scene, and even in more than one theatrical work. Meyerhold embarked on his theory of Conditional theatre out of physiology. Again, he went back to physiology to form his views about Biomechanics to find a theory of acting compatible with Conditional theatre.

William James studied Reflex actions and their effects on behaviour. These researches and studies in Reflexology were valuable hunting for Meyerhold, who, having long studied the Theatre Scenery and searched for the appropriate text for

the Conditional theatre. Now he had to find a revolutionary formula for acting. What did Meyerhold benefit from William James?

James rejected Freud's view about the role of the subconscious in generating sense and argued that feeling is generated physically. For example, if a person encounters a wild animal and runs, the jogging act, not the animal's vision, will stimulate fear. This example became the core of the arguments between the supporters of Theatrical pioneers Stanislavski and Meyerhold.

Meyerhold, later Michael Chekhov, and even Brecht were actively seeking to qualify an Actor to perform automatically away from logical actions, internal motivations, and justifications, which hinder the actor's creative process, in their opinion. "The imagination of actors and directors will be free of chaos, logic, and arbitrariness" (Chekhov, 2013, p. 77).

However, Stanislavski considers that his method, the Art of Experiencing, is the most appropriate for the actor to influence the feelings of the spectators and the implementation of the supreme goals of art, which is the most important in his system and expressed in the so-called Super Task. For this reason, Stanislavski attaches great importance to educating the Idealistic Actor. The authors, and all the actors in the theatre, were asked to present not an amazing performance, not enthusiasm and an external movement, but inner emotions and great ideas". That is why the actor, Stanislavski adds, "needs to present a more spontaneous and simple art, but deep in its influence" (Stanislavski, 1954. 460). By comparing these ideas with Brecht's views about the concept of Super Task, the considerable difference, which spreads unjustifiably among critics, will diminish.

The Super Task is not the idea of the text or the show but the high ideals that the artist wants to improve society by implanting in people's minds. Stanislavsky considered that this requires the internal Art of Experiencing, not the Art of Representation. In their turn, Brecht, Meyerhold, and Michael Chekhov turned to the same goal, but differently, from the outside to the inside.

Meyerhold, along with Michael Chekhov and even Brecht, were convinced that the expressionist feelings of the actor were associated with the Physical Gestation of the actor and that it is possible for a group of selected movements, a certain rhythm, and Poses to be designed to express the reactions of the performers to have a more significant impact on the viewer. Although preparing the actor for this approach is difficult, it only succeeds with the expert actor. Employing biomechanics, Meyerhold sought to free the actor's abilities, which could be constrained by the search

for the logic of movement and by internal justification for everything happening on the stage. Boris Zakhava explained the concept of Biomechanics in theatre, making a comparison between the Internally motivated muscular acts at Stanislavski's method and the Biomechanics of Meyerhold, "Meyerhold approaches to his well-known method of Biomechanic from a study of the famous psychologist James, the main idea of this study is expressed in the following formula: "I ran and was scared" Zakhava said, "He interpreted this formula as follows: I do not run because I was scared, but I was scared because I ran, that means that the Reflex Action "Run" precedes the feeling, and is not considered as a result of it in James's view, which is contrary to the usual perception. Meyerhold concludes that the actor must master his movements and train his nervous-motor system. Not to draw "Experiencing" of himself as demanded by Stanislavski's method." (Zakhava, 2008, 239).

However, this approach was a dialectical point, requiring a response from Stanislavski. (Zakhava, 2008) explains this view as follows: Stanislavski put the issue in another way: the basis for his method was muscular rather than mechanical. The difference between the two views, muscular or mechanical, determines the differences between the two methods. From Stanislavski's point of view, it would have been better to amend the James formula: instead of saying, I ran and was scared, we say I have escaped, and I was scared.

The muscular act was originally the result of a reason which is the act of escape. Escape is justified and motivated the fear. No one escapes from anything unless he is naturally scared. This is why Stanislavski insisted on motivation and justified every action on stage.

Both Meyerhold and Brecht believed that rigorous exercises were necessary to prepare the actor, but Meyerhold applied theory in practice. He gave lectures in the preparation of the actor, theatrical director, and theatrical stage designer on the aesthetic and artistic foundations of what was prevalent at the time. Foundations established on (William Taylor's findings and William James's theory of Reflexology, as well as what Meyerhold expert from the techniques and traditions of the Asian actor), and the employment of all this in the development of an anti-Stanislavski system, tend on the Art of Experiencing. He sought a System capable of serving the actor of the Future Theatre, as he liked to call it—the Biomechanic system.

In addition to the biomechanics, the process of preparing actors at the Meyerhold studio was based on: Commedia dell'arte, boxing, duelling, pantomime, acrobatics, clowning, dancing, and singing. Through all this, the student acquires

agility, rhythmic sense, and the presence of the actor, which is expressed externally- physically and capable of expressing and responding to the director's different requirements according to the director's point of view, and his vision in directing any work.

Meyerhold sought to prepare an actor more willing to meet the requirements of the *mise en scène* that fits the Conditional Theatre; he considered that it is not necessary that elements of the scene are unified as in the Aristotelian scene, but rather make a harmonious montage that serves the overall vision of the director. Every element should be made clear, mainly since his theatre is based on neglecting the idea of the three unities in classical drama (action, place, time), and this is another manifestation of Alienation in Conditional Theatre. Even if Meyerhold did not use the term in the light of documents, which is currently available in our hands, we have mentioned that the origin of the term belongs to the Russian critic Viktor Shklovsky, so it is impossible not to acquaint Meyerhold with this artistic principle.

In Brecht's work, through the Alienation of all elements of the theatrical play, he aims to serve his Didactic goal. In contrast, Meyerhold's work serves the montage, the artistic unity of the show, and the directing vision, which ultimately aims to influence the spectator.

The Biomechanic became the basis of the actor's preparation in Meyerhold's view. Before that, Meyerhold's research and experiments, for example, in Povarskaya Street Studio, were mainly related to theatrical directing and scenery, whereas Pryusov served the studio in terms of the literary aspect to determine a parameter of Dramaturgy compatible with the Conditional theatre. Still there, the actor's preparation issue, which Stanislavski had imposed not only his primacy but even his dominance over the only known and clear system for the actor's preparation, the Art of Experiencing. Stanislavski, although acknowledging the importance of the Povarskaya Street Studio experience, he considered that there is a great unforgivable disadvantage in it because it did not add anything to him as an actor, which he said was more apt to describe the studio as a "studio of Directing".

Meyerhold developed new techniques consisting of 12 consecutive episodes called Etudes. He employed these "etudes" as a system to prepare the actor, responding to the requirements of the stage he founded. Although some of these Etudes were shown in his plays, it is essential to note that the etudes were used as training techniques, not as a major part of the *mise en scène*.

The rigid exercises of the etudes, the repetition of such "Shooting of Bow and Arrow", "Throwing the stone", "The Slap", and others, gave Meyerhold

studio students distinctive flexibility and balance, allowing them to control all their physical means. While pantomime, an important part of the actor's preparation at Meyerhold's studio, focuses on the "Gestation" mainly in hands and fingers. Biomechanics focuses on the insertion of other parts of the actor's body, such as the arm, legs, stem of the actor, chest, and others, in contrast to Stanislavski's Art of Experience, which is based on the inner life of the actor as a driving force of external action. Biomechanics is a motor principle that requires a tremendous concentration on accuracy, balance, and durability.

However, it should not be forgotten that even in Stanislavski's System, there was great interest in the actor's development at the Physical level and that his system in the preparation of the actor did not neglect the actor's body but gave great importance to the acrobatics, fencing, and dancing, providing flexibility, balance, and durability for the actor's movement and body, this was on the process of preparation, but on stage, there was always insisted that it must be there a justification or inner motivation for every movement on stage.

The difference between the two approaches lies in the motive: internal-logical at Stanislavski, a physical at Meyerhold.

Thanks to this method adopted by Meyerhold in the preparation of the actor, the performer in his theatre became closer to the actor in the Chinese Theatre or Kabuki than to the actor in the Russian or European Theatres, specifically the actor of the Moscow Art Theatre.

Meyerhold's biomechanics focused on rhythmic motion embroidered with Dynamic Poses, accompanied by music emphasising dramatic Expression silence, all of which required a flexible trained actor and spontaneous motor stimulation. In this way, Meyerhold, as an actor's educator, transacted with the actor as if he were the conductor of a musical orchestra leading them in a musical symphony. When he was directing in opera or ballet, actors and dancers interacted with him with their bodies, minds, and spirits simultaneously.

This feature of Meyerhold made Stanislavski ask him to produce three performances in the studio of the Moscow Art Theatre when Stanislavski's illness forced him to commit his home in 1938. Indeed, the great artist's ethics did not allow him to see Meyerhold sitting without work after the authorities closed his private studio. However, the skill of Meyerhold and his style of dealing with actors and music won the respect of Stanislavski, who had previously criticised Meyerhold for focusing on scenic design and directing and neglecting the actor in Studio Povarskaya Street. However, that issue has passed after 32 years. In one way or another, Stanislavski admits that Meyerhold has something

to add to the actor, even for those actors prepared by Stanislavski himself.

In this context, we recall this story: When Meyerhold began working in the studio of Moscow Art Theatre, a group of actors sent a letter to their supervisor Stanislavski at his home, wanting to know if they should always hear and obey Meyerhold? -"They should listen to Meyerhold all the time and listen carefully to everything he says. They had to understand this on their own, and they also need to realise that they are my students" (Марков, Ростокский и др, 1967, 588), Stanislavski replied through the messenger.

In 1922, Meyerhold in Moscow supervised the so-called State Institute of Theatre Arts (GITIS). He introduced a play that was a milestone in the Conditional scenery and the employment of the Biomechanic actor as part of this Conditionality. He addressed a theatrical text by Fernand Crommelynck entitled The Magnanimous Cuckold. This experience is the clearest example of the rapprochement between Meyerhold and Brecht.

The theatrical scenery in this spectacle played a crucial role in establishing a *mise en scene* in proportion to Meyerhold's actors, who were prepared according to Biomechanics etudes, which Meyerhold began to promote as an alternative system for Stanislavski's preparation system. The designer Liubov. S. Popova designed the scenery as if it is a part of a mechanics of a strange machine consisting of slopes and corridors devoid of any appearance of decoration and ornamentation, as well as stairs and steps, wheels and levels; she also designed in the scene a slide down of three meters, and swing Aerobics, and placed a windmill arm produces a disturbing sound. The purpose of these windmill arms was to express, by voice and image, the beginning of each act. In addition, Popova did not allow a display curtain, no side curtains, or even the overhead blinds that usually conceal the overhead lighting sources. The scenery was set in an empty, bare courtyard of all kinds of curtains, and this was precisely the place where actors performed.

The scenery in this spectacle is designed to employ what the students learned from the Biomechanic etudes, which Meyerhold began developing and working on. In this spectacle, he focused on the etude "slap on the face" and "the leap to the chest" etudes. When Cooper suggests to Bruno that he send a love letter to his wife, After the fifth slap, Cooper comes out through the revolving door, comes back quickly, and performs the etude leap to the chest. This scenery presented the best possible environment to express the vision of the director and the establishment of a *mise en scene*, which is entirely contrary to what is known in the Russian Theatre, and to provide multiple spaces for actors to show their talents and their

exceptional abilities in terms of flexibility and balance and durability, and interact with the rhythm of the scenes Poses, or Gestations.

Meyerhold presented his project as a structuralism scenery and a production of the socialist proletarian era, as well as his application of the Taylorism principles, whether in rhythmic movement calculated without any increases or waste of the actor's energy or in the economy of all elements of the scenic stage design.

In contrast to Stanislavski's Realism, Meyerhold and Brecht were later inclined to employ Collective Formations to express their ideas. Stanislavski builds the *mise en scène* based on the centrality of the actor and asks the actor to connect with the inner life of the character he played and that each movement, word, and action performed by the actor should be motivated by the inner world of the character so that the actor and the character unite in one person. Meyerhold and then Brecht sought a radically different type of actor. An actor had an external position of the character and the theatrical text. This method leads the actor to a situation that does not allow integration into the Theatrical text character.

Moreover, it keeps the spectator at a distance from actions and does not integrate into them. He remains able to analyse and interpret the actions presented in front of him, using the eye of the critic. The actor at Brecht theatre is asked to present the Actions using the Art of Representation.

As an illustrative example, Brecht showed an example of the technique of Helene Weigel when she performed Jocasta's servant in the play "Oedipus the King". Weigel presented the role usually performed by a man at the moment of the declaration of the queen's suicide. In this particular situation, the actor usually regurgitates all the feelings he can to influence the spectator to share his tears and sympathies with the victimised suicide queen. However, Weigel chose to capture the spirit of the tragic scene outside the stage clearly, and reverently. She realises that the task of the character is to provide the news without attracting the spectator's attention to her acting skills. What is needed is to draw their attention to what has already happened, not to the person of the great actress.

Weigel refused to fall into the trap of regurgitating passionate emotions. Her didactical method makes her a teacher who leads the spectator through the turbulent actions of the play. It is necessary for the actor at Brecht and Meyerhold's theatre to give up his love of himself acting and his interest in showing his talent in such dramatic moments to attract attention to himself. This type of actor, who belongs to the external embodiment of "The Art of representation", uses their skills to transform the news "what happened" to serve a

Didactic task, thus presenting the director's point of view.

Here, Helena Weigel decided not to embody the servant's character, not to re-experience her tragedy, but to stand outside the character she performs and tell the audience what happened.

### **Harmonised views. Different Fate**

Despite the similarity between the creativity of Meyerhold and Brecht, their path to global fame and diffusion was very different. Brecht has earned a global reputation as a creator of the most prominent and clear theory of the Anti-Psychological Reality of Stanislavski.

Brecht left Germany, or fled, in 1933, as soon as the Nazi party won the election and ascended to power. He remained in exile for 15 years travelling between Denmark, Sweden, the United States, and Switzerland until he returned to Berlin in 1948 to establish the Berliner Ensemble and continue his work, experiences and dissemination of ideas, and aesthetic principles of his theatre, which the communist regime did not hesitate to adopt and published as a manifestation of Culture and Art in the "Victorious" Communist Regime in World War II. Thus, official propaganda served the art of the theatrical pioneer and benefited from his creativity and success. In this way, Brecht continued to work and disseminate his Artistic Principles worldwide until he died in East Berlin on 14/8/1956.

In contrast, Meyerhold's theatre was closed in 1938 before being reopened, without Meyerhold, under the new name of Tchaikovsky's Hall, and devoted to producing works that corresponded "better" to Communist Socialism, according to the decision-makers. Despite Stanislavski's help after the closure of his theatre, by asking him to direct three operas in what is now known as Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theatre. However, this did not stop the authorities from arresting the Playwright and the Theorist Vsevolod Meyerhold in June 1939, two months before the beginning of World War II, where he was subjected to torture, which did not come to his mind in the most brutal and grotesque scenes, to confess treason and contact with the enemy; thus they declared him as Enemy of the People. The country that sees the vow of war looming before its eyes would not have risked allowing anybody like Meyerhold to work at homeland on a Theatre that involves the viewers in the interpretation.

The tragedies of Meyerhold did not stop there, as his partner in Art and Life, his wife, Zinaida Reich, was killed in their apartment in Moscow six months after his execution. In this way, he ensures that neither Meyerhold's students nor his staff dares promote his aesthetic, artistic principles or ideas.



Even Meyerhold's lectures in Petrograd (1918-1919), which his students had recorded in their notebooks, were not mentioned in the history of modern or contemporary theatre and were published at the beginning of the third millennium.

"The Stalin regime sought to erase the works of Meyerhold from memory, wiped out many archival materials, and recorded performances, and his name was not mentioned publicly" (Law, Gordon, 1996, 74). Meyerhold was treated as if he did not exist, as was the case with Tretyakov, as well as the artists who managed to leave the Soviet Union, for example, Michael Chekhov, who completed his research and Theatrical experiments in France and then the United States.

In Khrushchev's time, the name of Meyerhold was not acquitted, as was the case with many others, including Tretyakov, but Meyerhold's family had to wait until the end of the 80s. Thus the end of the Soviet era, his name will be fully discharged and his rights restored.

Despite the significant similarity in the creative level and the artistic and aesthetic vision between Meyerhold and Brecht, and even though they made vital contributions to the progress and sophistication of the Western Theatre in its modern and contemporary form, Brecht mentioned Vakhtangov and Tretyakov and praised them; he also mentioned Stanislavski in deferent articles and periods. Despite the many visits Brecht made to Moscow during the presence of Meyerhold in the City, and the familiar friends and Colleagues artists between them, there is no mention of Meyerhold in Brecht's cultural heritage, at least as far as evidence is available.

We assume that this is because Meyerhold himself is the primary source of these artistic visions adopted by Brecht. The communist regime would not have supported Brecht's ideas and artistic visions in East Germany if he had announced any relationship with Meyerhold. Perhaps his ideological commitment to communist ideology by Brecht has prevented him from addressing Meyerhold and his influence.

As a result of this study, we can confirm that Meyerhold and Brecht's Relationship is complex and may open wide horizons for research and contemplating. However, what most brings them together is the principles of the Conditional Theatre.

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