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## Manipulation Under the Mask of Justice\* *Adaletin Maskesi Altında Manipülasyon*

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## Asya Studies

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### Abstract

Bertolt Brecht's *Round Heads and Pointed Heads*, initially performed in Denmark in 1936, criticizes an unjust legal system where marginalized individuals are silenced and their grievances remain unheard, while those in the position of power are given preferential treatment. At the beginning of the play, the monarch of Luma relinquishes sovereignty of the nation to the Iberin authority as a means to quell civil unrest stemming from the economic turmoil. Consequently, a new law is enacted promoting the principles of equality, and justice is promoted for the first time in society. The Iberian government manipulates public perception by disseminating a conspiracy theory that serves its political agenda. Blind obedience in society is perpetuated through the stereotypes that associate the pointed heads with deceit and immorality while portraying the rounded heads as examples of honesty and loyalty. To demonstrate equal treatment under the law, Iberin imposes a penalty on a landlord with a pointed head for the sexual abuse of a working-class young girl with a round head. At the conclusion of the play, the landlord's acquittal as a result of his privileged social standing raises concerns among spectators regarding the fairness of the legal system. Throughout the play, the vulnerability of innocent individuals who are left defenseless and the portrayal of justice institutions prioritizing their own interests are highlighted through the elements of epic theatre. The use of elements such as minimal setting, alienation effect, chorus, and music serve as a tool to convey the message to the audience about the theme of justice which is susceptible to manipulation. The objective of this research is to analyze techniques of epic theatre used in the selected work.

**Keywords:** Stage, Spectator, Justice, Epic Theatre, Brecht

### Öz

Bertolt Brecht'in 1936 yılında ilk kez Danimarka'da sahnelenen *Yuvarlak Kafalılar ve Sivri Kafalılar* adlı oyunu; toplumun alt kesimini oluşturanların derdini anlatıp sesini duyurmadığı, güçlü olanın ise haklı durumuna geçtiği bir adalet sistemini gözler önüne serer. Oyunun başında Luma kralı halkın ekonomik krizden dolayı çıkardığı isyanı bastırmak için ülkenin denetimini Iberin hükümetine devreder, o da ilk defa eşitlik ve adalet adı altında yeni bir kanunu harekete geçirir. Iberin hükümeti kendi çıkarlarına uygun bir şekilde planladığı komplo teorisi ile halkı dizginlemeye çalışır. Ülkede sivri kafalıların hilebaz ve ahlaksız yuvarlak kafalıların ise dürüst ve sadık oldukları fikri empoze edilerek toplumda kör itaat sağlanır. Adaletin herkese eşit uygulandığını göstermek için Iberin sivri kafalı toprak ağasını yuvarlak kafalı işçi sınıfı bir genç kıızı taciz etmesinden dolayı idama mahkûm eder. Oyunun sonunda toprak ağasının statüsünün üstün gelmesinden beraat etmesi adaletin nasıl işlendiği konusunda seyircinin kafasında soru işaretleri oluşturur. Oyun boyunca masum insanların savunmasız bırakılması, adaleti temsil eden kurumların kendi çıkarlarına göre hareket edip aralarında yaptığı anlaşmalar epik tiyatrunun unsurları aracılığı ile resmedilmiştir. Minimal sahne düzeninden yabancılaştırma etkisi, koro ve müziğin kullanımına kadar tüm unsurlar seyirciye adaletin nasıl manipülasyonlara açık hale geldiğini yansıtmada birer araç görevini üstlenirler. Bu çalışmanın amacı, ilgili eserde ön plana çıkan epik tiyatro tekniklerini tespit etmektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sahne, Seyirci, Adalet, Epik Tiyatro, Brecht

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## INTRODUCTION

In the past, the function of theatre was primarily to provide people with a sense of enjoyment. This aspect of fun and entertainment is what gives theatre its unique dignity and significance, requiring no other justification. Turning art into moral lessons means the risk of diminishing its value and effectiveness. Instead, it should be presented in a way that is appealing to the senses (Brecht, 1966: 181). This is actually a method of viewing plays that dates back to Aristotle's idea. Hedonism was the dominant ideology until the new idea of epic theatre came along. The audience empathizes with the performers on stage by putting themselves in their experiences. Thus, Brecht diverges from the principles of Aristotle and challenges fatalism by discussing the theme of tragic fate in literature. He discussed how the actions and decisions of Oedipus and Shakespeare's tragic characters lead to their downfall. The brutality in these stories serves as a form of art to explore the dark sides of society. The thought of a catastrophic fall is more than just criticism and a feeling of helplessness in the face of fate (Brecht, 1966: 189). Brecht suggests a yearning to build a new theatre transcending the destructive impulses of these tragic characters. In this sense, Brecht's theory of epic theatre was developed in response to a rejection of fatalistic ideas, instead emphasizing a problem-solving approach to social and political issues.

Brecht believed that theatre should not just reflect the world as it is, but should also have the power to provoke critical thinking (1966: 183). He sought to inspire audiences to question the world around them. (183) According to Brecht, just as nature undergoes transformation, society also changes, embodying the spirit of change and freedom. Thus, the actor must adapt to the changing world and consider how their characters reflect broader social issues (1966: 188). Especially, Brecht's interest in Marxist studies and reading Marx's Capital led him to incorporate the themes of economic struggle and social inequality into his theatrical works. Especially, the play called Joe Fleischacker which depicts the downfall of a family due to economic struggles in Chicago inspires Brecht. He began to bring to the stage contemporary issues such as stock market manipulation and financial crises (Mumford, 2009: 20). According to Löwy, the danger lies in the manipulation of the historical narratives by the ruling classes for their own benefit. The manipulation resulted in the oppressed class serving as tools to maintain those in power (2005: 44).

Epic theatre is characterized by several traits, including the alienation effect. "[T]he technique of *Verfremdungseffekt* is developed out of the scientific method of historical materialism and taken from Marx" (Stevens, 2016: 35). Marx's concepts of 'Entäusserung' and 'Entfremdung', commonly translated as 'alienation', inspired Brecht's concept of *Verfremdungseffekt*. The alienation effect, similar to Marx's analysis of the socioeconomic process, aims to shed light on social norms by presenting them in an unfamiliar way. Like Marx, it involves examining ideas, behaviors, and events within a historical context (Stevens, 2016:35). This alienation effect led audiences to shift from experiencing a sense of joy and happiness to a critical assessment of the performance. The audience's awareness of the theatrical nature of the performance and the performer's conscious portrayal of a character blur the line between them and create a sense of estrangement. As Diamond observes, "Spectators are prevented from identifying emotionally with any single action or character, but are encouraged to make connections between a previous historical moment and their own" (1988: 193). The focus of theatre shifts from individual reactions to a unified audience experience. Spectators start to engage in a discussion and the concept of a unified audience loses its power, which allows for diverse perspectives (Benjamin, 1998: 10). The characters in the play have some contradictory nature such as being tough and kind. These contradictions do not just define the characters but also shape the whole play (Williams, 2006: 237). Thus "it is not the case of this woman but see and consider what happens to these people" (Williams, 2006: 235).

Epic theatre also breaks away from traditional linear storytelling and scenes do not need to be connected with each other. Each scene stands on its own and is detached from the ones that come before it. That is to say, each scene is designed to explore different themes and ideas independent of the overall plot's context. For Brecht, the content and ideas presented in these scenes hold significance. In this sense, he values individual scenes to convey his message clearly. For example, in *Mother Courage* each scene serves as individual pieces coming together to paint larger social issues in play during the Third Years War (Squiers, 2014: 60-61). Thus, epic theatre is unrestricted to follow a nonlinear plot, highlighting the unresolved tensions of the material world. It deliberately avoids resolution to draw attention to the ongoing social conflict (2014: 59).

The various elements incorporated into the performance, such as music, choro, minimal prompts, and stage decor all serve to create a sense of alienation throughout the performance. These elements disrupt the play's natural flow and make it hard for actors to empathize with it. In this way, these alienation tactics

allow the audience to indirectly experience what is happening on stage. Spectators view the performance with a discerning and analytical mindset. Williams emphasizes the importance of the audience's awareness and engagement with the performance. The performance on stage in this regard is conveyed through visual representation rather than real-life experiences (1969: 279). To give an example, the choir disrupts the progression of the play on stage through the recitation of songs, poetries, and ballads. It gives the audience a time to think about what happened. Brecht infuses his plays with the musical styles of his time to enhance social dynamics between characters. He believed that incorporating a song element into the text both provides a new perspective for the performers and conveys a deeper message of a performance (Eddershaw, 1996: 15). Furthermore, songs are a way for the author to express his ideas, either directly through a character or subtly through irony. Singing of the song in epic theatre highlights gestures and presentations of the characters on stage. By having the character step forward it allows for a separation between the song and the dramatic action. This technique emphasizes the importance of the gestures and movements in conveying the message of the play (Speirs, 1987: 55).

Brecht preferred to keep his plays staged on a bare set, with only props and minimal indications of the setting. The stage directions and movements of the actors were planned in coordination with minimal set design. For example, a few props like a door frame indicate a house while a painted backdrop provides artistic commentary on the action taking place. A simple set design emphasizes the characters and objects in a story, drawing attention to what is most important. The elements of the set and action come together and create a cohesive storyline. Thus, the audience uses their own imagination to fill in the gaps and create a fictional world presented on stage (Speirs, 1987: 67-68).

#### **HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Before moving to the analysis of Brecht's work, *Roundheads and Pointed Heads*, it is vital to briefly discuss the historical background in which the work is set. Economic downturns and political unrest emerged in society following Germany's defeat in World War I. The economic crises faced by many war victims contributed to the rise of Adolf Hitler. Hitler manipulated the German people's sentiments by attributing all social issues to the government and offering himself as a savior leader who could solve problems in Germany. He succeeded in captivating the audience, particularly through his eloquent and impassionate rhetoric. Economic policies enacted by the Nazi party in Germany resulted in a significant upturn and foster a revival of industrial production. However, this condition was short-lived. The working conditions of the working class deteriorated significantly. The villagers who subsisted on animal husbandry were compelled to purchase materials at extremely high costs as a result of escalating taxes. Despite the initial perception of Hitler's rise to power, as a revival for the German people, they ultimately faced further hardships as a result of his discriminatory policies and fascist practises. He enforced dictatorship on all parts of the country and resorted to violent suppression tactics. The revolt against the Hitler regime consequently underway. The social conflict has been addressed in numerous literary and artistic genres. The political climate during Hitler's reign inspired many writers to pick up their pens. Inspired by the events he witnessed, Brecht portrayed the spirit of rebellion that stirred in the hearts of the oppressed people. His writings primarily focus on addressing the resistance experienced by the oppressed and defense of the rights of the working class. In this sense, Brecht's epic theatre serves as a medium for bringing attention to the audience regarding society's social and economic problems.

With this play, Brecht reveals the underlying realities that are concealed beneath surface appearances, which make spectators draw conclusions based on their observations. His approach makes the audience question the social and political implications of the events portrayed on stage within cause and effect relationship.

In this context, this study responds to these questions: Does Brecht's portrayal of social class in the play reflect the criticism of capitalist society and the political climate of the 1930s in Germany? How the questions about justice in society, class struggle are reflected in our society today? How do the techniques of epic theater engage audience in critical thinking about social and political issues? To what extent do the characters representing the upper and lower classes in the play effectively portray the oppressors and oppressed in a realistic way? Can the audience maintain a receptive mind to the social issues presented on stage? By addressing the questions, this study will contribute to the construction of an equal society.

In this work, Brecht portrays the system of exploitation in this work, where people view morality as a means of securing wealth and power. He unmasks the moral depravity and hypocrisy prevalent among the upper members of society. Political leaders who strive to create a seemingly equal society in fact use

strategies that prioritize the survival of those who are deemed powerful while neglecting the needs of the marginalized. The deceptive actions of Viceroy and Iberin in portraying themselves as agents of justice while upholding social inequalities are criticized. Conversely, the play conveys to the viewer the struggle of the lower class against the oppressive upper class, along with the economic and political constraints they encounter. In this way, this play uses epic theater techniques to illustrate the plight of the lower and upper classes, requiring no additional explanation during the play. Audience are brought to a heightened awareness of the performance through the use of epic theatre techniques, notably alienation effect. Each act opens with a musical interlude, and the choir, minimal stage setting and projections all serve to undermine play's realism, allowing the message to be more easily comprehended. These techniques are clearly intended to impact the audience's ideas and make them more conscious of their lives. Thus, it becomes evident that the destiny of societies is not fixed but rather subject to change.

Through a critical examination of the technique of epic theatre, this research paper shed light on the vulnerability of innocent individuals and manipulation within systems of power. It also seeks to demonstrate how the techniques of epic theatre can effectively convey messages about injustices in capitalist societies.

### **ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EPIC THEATRE ELEMENTS**

In the opening scene, the theater director takes on the stage and speaks directly to the audience. He discusses the subject matter of the play that the audience is about to witness. He explains that in this play the characters will be distinguished by their costumes to represent their social status. He talks about the superficial prejudices faced by individuals based on the shape of their heads (Brecht, 1934: 4). By highlighting this aspect, he prepares the audience for a play addressing the theme of the harsh realities of society. From the beginning of the play, the spectators are encouraged to pay attention to the themes of class struggle and inequality present in the play.

He destroys the illusion of the stage and causes the audience to experience a peculiar sensation with his speech. Then, the governor comes to the stage and he uses the visual representation of skull scales to draw attention to the disparities and injustices in society. The pointed skull represents sickness and decay while the round skull symbolizes equality. He confidently asserts that these props reveal the true nature of individuals based on their skull shape. The visual elements of the skull serve as a memorable image for his message. Thus, he aims to convince the audience of the effectiveness of his approach to assessing physical characteristics. Holding the scale in his hands symbolically demonstrates his commitment to fairness in his governance. In other words, he conveys the impression of dispensing justice with equality.

Another key aspect of epic theatre is that the performer guides the action on the stage and interprets the happenings for the audience. The farmer character steps out of his role to provide commentary on the actions taking place.

Lord and tenant should unite, they're saying,  
 And what's the reason? 'Cause our heads are round!  
 But he collects the rent, while J must pay it!  
 .....  
 If we're such friends, why not abolish rent?  
 A gulf of cold and hunger still divides us,  
 That's not a thing we'll lightly circumvent! (Brecht, 2015: 31)

He emphasizes the unjust power dynamic between landlords and tenants, forcing people to critically examine the reasons. True friendship cannot exist as long as there is a vast disparity between the two classes. By directly addressing the audience, the farmer creates a sense of alienation. The farmer's words are a call for economic equality among all people, regardless of their social status. Brecht's approach in this scene is not overtly political, instead offering a broader perspective. As a result, it provides a more objective analysis of the power dynamic in the play. The farmer's discontent is etched in the memories of the spectators and it makes them analyze their own ideas on issues like rent and social inequality.

The use of projection is evident in nearly every scene. The use of projection in the play is a way to reflect the contemporary realities. Through the process of projection, spectators are guided to engage with the external world and contemplate the underlying social and political factors on stage. To illustrate, by projecting reports of "unlawful land appropriation by peasants" on stage, the audience is able to see the

injustice that exist in the society at hand. Furthermore, Iberin's decision to restore justice in the name of the Zakkish people is justified by the projection. Thus, it enhances the epic aspect of his character as a heroic figure battling for the downtrod. Furthermore, the gap between the world of judge and Iberin who represent upper class and the world of farmer who represents the lower class is contextualized by projection. Iberin fails to address the hardships faced by common citizens. Instead, he highlights the challenges encountered by the Royal Government Troops. (Brecht, 2015: 37). In this sense, the spectator witnesses a clash between what is narrated on stage and what actually happens in society. Through objective representation, the audience is invited to ponder the causes behind the recorded events.

The first rule Iberin put in place after being chosen by the Viceroy was to put people into groups based on their physical traits. Iberin's politics are founded on the idea of the Zaks 'supremacy who are perceived as indigenous people, whereas the Ziks are viewed as foreign invaders with sharp minds prone to deception. Thus, his theory leads to discrimination against the Ziks, blaming them for all of the country's problems. Farmers were experiencing financial hardship as a result of rising prices, which caused economic instability and social unrest. Similar to Hitler's ascend to power, there is a growing sense of rebellion against the government and the ruling class. This corresponds to Hitler's rise to power in Germany. The peasant's defiance in resisting their tithes and the uprising of the corn signify the social issue of exploitation and unrest. "A giant sickle", which represents the peasant revolution, serves as a striking example of the epic theatre technique of using symbolic elements to convey political and social messages.

The dialogue between Iberin and Callas, who is a member of the working class, highlights the power dynamic clearly.

IBERIN sharply: Could you ever imagine  
that your daughter would have an unlawful relationship  
with your landlord at the tender age of sixteen?

CALLAS: Certainly, but the advantages for us weren't that  
significant. A couple of times we were allowed to use the  
horses to cart wood. But — he addresses the assembled  
crowd — if you have to pay rents which are ten times too  
high, then it doesn't help that much if you're just let  
a little bit every now and again. Even then we couldn't rely  
on it! What I need are horses of my own.

IBERIN: 'So the landlord abused his economic power, and  
plunged your daughter into misfortune?

CALLAS: Misfortune? It was the girl who had all the benefits! (Brecht, 2015: 41)

This quotation highlights the abuse of economic power and oppression of the lower class. The landlord's exploitation of the lower class and Callas's family dependence on horses as a source of income highlight the difficulties faced by the working class in a capitalist society. Callas accepts this unjust system, going so far as to mention the benefits his daughter received. His attitude reflects key elements of epic theatre where the characters are depicted as the products of their economic circumstances. It attacks a system that perpetuates injustice and exploitation, calling for collective action and social change.

In response to this, Iberin stands up against abuse by condemning the landowner Zik de Guzman for corrupting a Zakkish girl. He declares that his mission is to root out evil and injustice. He raises his voice above the cheers of the crowd, vowing to bring about a new area of peace at all (Brecht, 2015: 41). Iberin's exaggerated language reflects the epic theatre technique of alienation. By exposing political and social issues through Iberin, Brecht encourages the audience to think about the actions of those in power. The spectator is forced to question Iberin's true intentions behind what appear to be acts of justice. Thus, spectators are engaged with the motives of Iberin rather than passively accepting his actions on the stage.

The audience is exposed to the harsh realities of capitalism and is left wondering if Iberin will bring about justice. On the other hand, the chorus's entrance on stage and strategic hints at the unfolding events serve to provide insight into the progression of the events and the audience's desire for clarity. The Ballad of the Button is a story about using a button to predict whether or not a brother will pay his debt. The actor threw the button and proclaimed that if it landed with the heads facing up, the brother would be absolved from paying his debt. On the other hand, if it comes up tails, he will pay (Brecht, 2015: 46). The line "these holes go right through" is used over and over again, making it sound like the brother may not have much choice in this regard. The ballad of the button draws attention to the powerlessness of authority. It serves as a metaphor for the uncertainties of life and fate. The button also serves as a break in the action. The

audience is compelled to confront the artificiality of the performance. The use of props like buttons challenges the traditional theatrical conventions and encourages them to be engaged with the themes and messages presented on the stage. Thus, the underlying significance of the song and its connection to the play's message are left for the audience to contemplate.

Since the audiences are not totally oblivious to the plot, they inevitably form specific assessments and opinions. Following the conclusion of each episode or during scene transitions, the choir performs musical pieces reflecting the central theme of the play. The Song of the Sickle, as presented in the subsequent lines, is reiterated multiple times in the play and invites the audience to engage in deeper contemplation.

THE SONG OF THE SICKLE

Peasants arise!

Open your eyes!

Don't let life pass you by

One day you all must die.

Your chains will only be broken

When you yourselves have spoken.

Open your eyes!

Peasants arise! (Brecht, 2015: 27)

In the next scene of the play, the concept of justice remains elusive as economic interest takes precedence within this social system. The discussion in this scene revolves around the moral corruption of the bourgeois class. In this scene, speaking directly to the farmer, Iberin expresses his dissatisfaction that his actions toward a Ziggish landlord could be interpreted as hostile towards all landlords. He clarifies that his verdict was not against the concept of property, but rather against the misuse of it. He casts upon the farmer's resolve to sacrifice his dignity for financial benefit, implying that such a trade is dishonorable (Brecht, 2015: 73). Iberin's decision to reclaim the horse he had previously bestowed upon Callas in return for his judgment shows his authority over the judgment. By offering false justification for his actions, and questioning his fairness, Iberin manipulates the situation to his advantage. It shows how those in power distort the principles of justice for their self-interest.

Zikkish attorney also alleged that Callas performed a song that disparaged the government, consequently leading to the decision to confiscate the horses from him. As a result, the government deprived Callas of the horse he legally possessed. Callas was frustrated with the injustice of having his horses confiscated and sought justice by joining the Sickle as he says "I can't get the horses I need for ploughing. That's no law. That's no justice for me. I am going to join the Sickle" (Brecht, 2015: 75). His defiance of authority and standing up for his rights reinforce the need for change and fight for justice. In this way, Callas's attitude is likely to inspire the audience to question their beliefs and take action against similar injustices in their daily lives.

In this play, Brecht attacks the social system that drives weak and powerless women into undesirable paths. Brecht effectively illustrates that this process operates under the cover of unexplainable motives and ethical masks that are prevalent in society. In one of the scenes, De Guzman manipulates his sister Isabella into a relationship with Iberin's lieutenant to secure his own freedom. De Guzman attempted to normalize the situation by casually remarking, "I used to have my 'chats' at five" (Brecht, 2015: 83), which illustrates that women are often exploited in power dynamics. Thus he wants his sister to sacrifice her virginity for his own security. At this point, it is less important to predict what will happen on stage and more important to understand why the events unfolded in this manner. The audience starts to question whether her self-sacrifice for her brother's salvation was justifiable. Furthermore, they are encouraged to consider the possibility of a woman from the middle class, like Isabella, being thrust into such a terrible position. The play's central theme is brought to the audience's attention once more at this precise point by "Ballad of Waterwheel". These lines symbolize the continuous cycle of power dynamics and oppression. People in power are always prepared to sacrifice others to uphold their status. In this sense, Isabella's desperate plea for help from Nanna, a prostitute, illustrates restrictions placed on women based on their social standing. Nanna, as a marginalized background, is compelled to make sacrifices for Isabella who is a middle-class member. Nanna accepts this unfair practice that society approves for financial gain. As she is accustomed to sacrificing her own dignity for others, she can easily have a relationship with the lieutenant. It emphasizes the vulnerability of women in the lower class. Thus, Isabella is spared from being

forced into a relationship with the lieutenant, however, another woman is exploited solely due to her lower social status and familiarity with immoral acts.

Towards the end of the play, a Ziggish landowner was anticipated to face retribution for his wrongdoings. It is decided that Callas will be condemned to death in exchange for paying his debts. In the final moments of the play, he gives a poignant speech, encapsulating not only his struggles but also the plight of individuals facing similar conditions.

I came to Luma town 'ere long.  
The fairy waved her magic wand.  
But what that honor may have meant -  
It didn't help to pay the rent.  
Honor goes straight to your head  
But it's no substitute for bread.  
But of my rent, nobody speaks! (2015: 99)

By directly engaging with the spectators, the actor reminds them that they indeed watch a performance. This approach offers the audience a holistic perspective on prevalent social issues. As is seen, the actor wants the spectators to contemplate the factors that led to his current predicament and invites them to interpret the underlying themes through their own perspective. Farmer's direct address shows the harsh realities of financial struggles. Honor is important, but it does not provide benefits like paying the rent. Honor holds no worth when compared to sustenance. To put it another words, he makes it clear to his listeners that virtue is unimportant compared to the pursuit of survival.

The king Viceroy successfully attains his objective by employing Iberin as a strategic instrument to put down the uprising of the villagers in the opening scene of the play. The king distorts the situation and proclaims his choice for both sides. He ultimately decides in favor of both the farmer and the landowner. He argues for the pardon of De Guzman, the landowner, citing the sacrifice of the tenant farmer and his daughter to prevent the landowner's execution. The king also recommends freeing the farmer Callas to fulfill his responsibilities and serve as a role model for others in repaying their debts. The king seems to restore harmony and balance in society by setting the landowner free. In this regard, it is possible to say that justice has seemingly manifested itself in the form of mercy and forgiveness.

Nanna bemoans the unfair treatment of the weak in society and the idea that individuals struggling to survive are always members of the lower class. She tells Viceroy that nothing has changed about the decision and expresses her displeasure with it. "The poor man's free to live in peace, and yet the rich is free to push him back into the ditch. They both go free" (Brecht, 2015: 110). She draws attention to the disparity between the rich and the poor, where one enjoys a lavish meal, and the other struggles to make ends meet. It exemplifies the erosion of trust in the legal system due to its failure to address the needs and injustices faced by people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

## CONCLUSION

The portrayal of a corrupt justice system and the socioeconomic disparity between the wealthy and the poor is evident throughout the play. Brecht exemplifies these issues within various social roles, including civil servants, lieutenants, peasants, and the upper class. Brecht's criticism of capitalist society is exemplified in the scene where Isabella arranges for Nanna, a lower-class woman, to have sex with the lieutenant to secure his brother's release from prison. Nanna's acceptance to be engaged in sex is not driven by greed but by a need to survive. It is difficult for Nanna to do what she believes as paying to rent and maintaining her own substance takes precedence for her. On the other hand, Isabella is grappled with her own personal desires and her own morality. This case can be exemplified by the tendency of privileged individuals to be more capable of maintaining their moral principles due to their social standing. When analyzing the dynamic between the farmer and the landlord, it becomes evident that the lower class is always in an ongoing struggle for survival against the dominant class, while simultaneously advocating for their own their own rights. The farmer advocates for the rights of the laborers in a marginalized communities, acting as a spokesperson for workers. In doing so, he ignites a sense of introspection and forces the audience to reevaluate their own circumstances and social standing.

At the end of the play, Brecht prompts the audience to gain a better understanding of the larger context, namely, the social and political framework. He brings attention to the fact that there must be a shift in the system that subjects to lower class to oppression. Brecht puts the audience closer to the victims of

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the system, exposing them to both internal and external reality. Thus, he invites spectators to examine their internal dynamics and confront the notion of justice in a critical manner.

**Yazarlık Katkısı**

Bu araştırma tek yazarlı olarak yürütülmüştür.

**Etik Kurul Beyanı**

Bu araştırma için etik kurul onayı gerekmemektedir.

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