UTILIZATION OF POPULAR LEGACY (FOLKLORE) IN KUWAITI CONTEMPORARY THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES: SELECTED MODELS

Skeena Murad

Doctor of Art Studies, Assistant Professor;
e-mail: skeenamurad2019@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0002-5807-9482
Higher Institute for Theatrical Arts, Kuwait City, Kuwait

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyze and systematize the experience of using folklore in contemporary theater practices in Kuwait. ***The research methodology*** is largely based on the structural-aanalytical art and cultural studies approach. ***Scientific novelty.*** The role and place of local folklore in the performances of contemporary Kuwaiti theater in the context of two vectors of its use have been first explored: folklore in dramaturgy and in the performance. As a result of the study the author came to the following conclusions: some authors avoid literary imitation of folklore and actualize it by adding to the author's narratives; folklore serves as a source of artistic search for new forms for contemporary theatrical performances; sources of Kuwaiti folklore are folk customs, traditions, rituals, songs and fairy tales; in performances, artists used folklore means through censorship restrictions, for artistic and aesthetic purposes, and sometimes to satisfy and influence the audience; the authors adapted and updated the folklore materials for different categories of viewers; folk symbols and gestures served to validate the author's ideas; the directors used folklore to create metaphorical theatrical forms of a new aesthetic dimension and to embody the director's vision with indirect artistic means; directors, using Kuwaiti folk songs, dances, holidays, as well as costumes and decorative elements, gave the works new meaning and new interpretations; the folklore allusions in the new productions called in the audience a bewilderment and sometimes shocked; contemporary theatre of folklore shows that theater is not only a word but also a visual language and audio language, which includes dialogues and creates an aesthetic image of the performance; sometimes the performances used methods close to cinema and television.

Keywords: Kuwaiti folklore; Kuwaiti theater; performing arts; dramaturgy

The problem formulation. Concept of Popular Legacy (Folklore)

"Legacy" is the heritage inherited by sons from their fathers and forefathers, including money, behaviors and habits affecting the individual.

Popular legacy is a teamwork and field of ancient experiences inherited by new generations from their ancestors. It includes habits, traditions, tales, ideas, riddles, quizzes proverbs, songs, dances and culture that shape the people's identity. Of course, these elements differ from one nation to another according to geographic and demographic characteristics that distinguish one nation from another.

Therefore, popular legacy, or national heritage, is a set of situations not knowledge as it does not introduce knowledge that belongs to all mankind and is not distinct for one single society. Knowledge itself has its internal vital legitimacy through ideological situation acquired by social positioning. When dealing with it, we should consider the fact that history is dynamic and renewable, not a closed unit (Al-Barghouthi and Abd Al-Latif, 1987, p.79).

Popular legacy became a topic for study in most academic institutes under a new term: "Folklore". This English term equals the Arabic term "Turath" or legacy. It is defined as a set of folk customs, traditions and heritage of a specific society. "Hood Allen Dander" defined its components with legends, myths, folk tales, proverbs, riddles, quizzes, folk costumes, folk dances, folk theatre, folk arts, folk beliefs, folk music, folk poems and folk songs (Al-Barghouthi and Abd Al-Latif, 1987, p.94).

Analysis of the previous researches and publication

First: Folklore and Theatre

The Arabs didn't abandon their past, nor their legacy. Instead, they stuck to it in a self-asserting manner in front of western effects in arts, literature and theater. They aimed to authenticate their Arabic art through returning to its folk roots and searching for new forms for their deeply-rooted creative works. This is why many Arab theater artists utilized folklore. The Arab Theatre evolved on folklore. This was first seen in "Haroun Al-Rasheed" by Maron Nakkash and continued with Abu Khalil Al-Quabbani. When the Arab theater was well-established, folklore represented a main source for many playwrights including Ahmed Shawqui, Tawfik Al-Hakeem and Mahmoud Diab (Egypt) – Ezz El-Din Medany, Al-Tayeb Al-Sediki and Abd Al-Kareen Barsheed (Morocco) – Sadalla Wanous (Syria).

They used folk tales, rituals and history as main sources for their writings. Their treatment of folklore varied leading to the appearance of two different trend: The first trend created some direct plays that were artistically shallow due to literal use of folklore. This turned folklore into a mere historical material, but not an aesthetic one. These works stopped at documenting history as they didn't use it in an artistic manner, not mentioning turning it into effective actions that can achieve aesthetic values and amusement. Therefore, they can be considered more historians than playwrights.

We can say that treating folklore as a ridged historical material can not be considered as contemporary as it directly treats events and characters in a shallow manner. Here, folklore is nothing but mere information intercalations to the play (Ramadany, 1987, p.81). Those writers didn't deeply understand folklore and didn't reflect their visions over what they chose of folk patterns that may not be suitable for their reality "as not all folk patterns worth using in artistic works. Instead, there are some folk elements that have greater ability to contain symbols and significance" (Abd Al-Rahman, 2009, p.67).

Mustafa Ramadani indicated that some of those writers didn't have critical awareness of folklore. This turned their works into mere historical presentations of events and characters with direct intercalation, chaos and lack of external consistency of events. It only concentrates on historical events as it happened without freeing them to be effective and active (Ramadany, 1987, p.82).

165

The second trend treated folklore in a contemporary manner as we can see in the writings of Tawfik Al-Hakeem, who used different sources of folklore and utilized them in a way consistent with contemporary issues. This can also be seen in the writings of Sadalla Wanous, Mahmoud Diab and Others.

Second: Folklore in Kuwaiti Theater

Kuwaiti theater is no difference from Arab theatre in reviving the past through folklore. This appeared in an early stage as we can see in "Al-Haddama" (The Demolisher) and "Mataeb Saif" (Summer Troubles) by Saqr Al-Rashoud, "Sakkanat Martu" (Demonic Possession), written by Hussain Haddad and directed by Abd Al-Rahman Al-Dowaihi and "Bakhour Om Jassem" (Om Jassem's Incent) in addition to "Nora" where Fouad Al-Shatti used folk games and ancient songs. Other plays that utilized Arab Folklore include "Ali Jannah Al-Tabrizi" by Alfred Farag, "The Third" by Hasan Yaqoob Al-Ali, and "The Game" by Khaled Abd Al-Latif Ramadan. Some writers used folklore as part of their plays, but not as a basic material for the main event. Others depended on folklore as a main source of the text.

Nevertheless, some artists utilized folklore as it is in real life, without reflecting their own vision on it, nor even treating folklore according to a contemporary point of view, as we can see in "Sakkanat Martu" (Demonic Possession) where exorcism rituals were used in a realistic manner with dramatic justifications. Here the director used this realistic ritual when the dominating wife was faced by her husband's fury. This created a sudden shift in her character and made her collapse under nervous breakdown. But her family thought she was possessed by demons and this led them to use exorcism rituals for treatment. The director put a real band, "Oudh Al-Mehanna Band", on stage to perform real exorcism rituals.

In "Bakhour Om Jassem" (Om Jassem's Incent), folklore took a specific dramatic line in folk beliefs when "Om Jassem" provided her neighbor with what she thought to be "Blessed Incent" to help her son get married as she thought that this blessed incent will relieve her neighbor's concerns, provides her with what she desires and makes her son more obedient.

Other plays depended on historically-based folklore as in "Ali Jannah Al-Tabrizi" and "A Party on a Pole".

Mohamed Mubarak Bilal (2013, p.86) indicated that utilizing folklore in Gulf theater in general, and especially in Kuwaiti theatre, can be divided into two types: "one utilized the folk form as a topic for the play text while the other utilizes the artistic form of folklore seen in folk songs, dances and other verbal forms of tales and myths". But Kuwaiti theater depended on folk topics not forms in texts.

This leads us to a major question: What led Kuwaiti theater artists to folklore? How did Kuwaiti contemporary theatre deal with folklore? And why?

Third: Folklore in Contemporary Kuwaiti Theater

There are some contemporary theatre experiments in Kuwait that dealt with folklore to treat some humanistic, social and living issues in the society. Therefore, folklore became a major source of artistic material and a new technique in contemporary theatrical

166

performances. Sources of folklore varied from domestic ones to more humanistic folklore covered with Kuwaiti flavor, including customs, traditions, folk songs, folk characters and folk rituals molded in one folk alloy where form and content are insuperable to preserve the main source and introduce intellectual contents.

Theater artists depended on folklore for several reasons like avoiding direct treatment for artistic and censorship reasons. They even tried to establish folklore through introducing it in new theatrical forms to create aesthetic values and achieve amusement for audiences.

The purpose of this article is to analyze and systematize the experience of using folklore in contemporary theater practices in Kuwait. The researcher selected some contemporary Kuwaiti performances that utilized folklore during the past few years. Selected performances include:

- "Al-Boushia" (The Veil) written by Ismail Abdullah (UAE) and directed by Abdullah Al-Aber;
- "Ghaffar Al-Zalla" (The Forgiver) written by Mohamed Al-Mohandes (Oman) and directed by Abdullah Al-Aber;
- "Salha" by Ahmed Al-Awadi;
- "Al-Mougeb" (Exorcism) by Mohamed Al-Hamali.

These selected models will form the applied part of this research and through which we will see how folklore was utilized in contemporary Kuwaiti theatre through two main axes:

1. How folklore is utilized in the play text
2. How folklore is utilized in the performance

We should consider the fact that form and content are insuperable and we only do so for scientific purposes.

1. Utilizing Folklore in the Play Text

It is well-known that folklore is the outcome of mass human behaviors stemming from social reality. When some authors tried to inspire folklore, they fell into the trap of literal transfer of folklore while others managed to avoid this through utilizing folklore to serve their contemporary thoughts by adding new modern tales to folk ones.

In "Salha", Ahmed Al-Awadi dealt with verbal folk tales concentrating on the characters. He used the folk character of "Salha" as a central character for events, reflecting his vision on her attitudes and characteristics known from the folk tale. He also added new tales that may be different from traditional issues and unrelated to folklore, instead, we may find them more relevant to humanistic issues, but the author put them in a folk mold through mixing the folk tale with tales of his own. He didn't reflect folklore as it is on reality. Instead, he treated folklore in a different manner as folklore is ridged.

As a folk tale, "Salah" was not known, with all its dimensions and didn't take a wider scope in folklore. Instead, it was a local folktale limited to "Failaka" island and may by on local inhabitants knew the tale. Here, the audiences don't realize all symbols and signs easily, but the author managed to identify their significance through identifying the character's personality that brought the audiences to the general atmosphere of the play. The author here managed to turn a folk tale into a tale that suites all times.

167

The author explored several ideas including destiny, sectarianism and power of money. He managed to interweave his ideas to complete his vision. Through social class, he wanted to identify the man's destiny in life as if he wanted to assert that present is an extension of the past and past mistakes will lead to present consequences. Fathers' sins are paid for by their sons. He asserted this idea in phrase at the beginning of the play "When Victims Dance, History Dances too". This statement provides the audiences with many concepts.

Past/present relationship is clear in the conflict between Mariam, the biological mother representing past, and Salha, the mother that raised the child representing present. In that scene, the son was possessed by his deceased biological mother:

Salha: What brought you Back?
Ayoub: Revenge
Salha: There is no revenge, you got what you wanted.
AyoubL I want my right
Salha: Your right is at God's hands, so take it.
Ayoub: I want my son to bring it back
Salha: Leave him alone
Ayoub: You have nothing to do with my son
Salha: He is my son. I raised him.
Salha: But I got pregnant in him (Al-Awadi, 2017, pp.28-29).

Here, the author used "possession" as a dramatic trick to recall (flash back) (flash back) the mother's character as a representative of past and to distinguish her from the present represented in the real character. He also tried to assert his idea about revenge, an idea of his own.

At the beginning, the author explored the idea of destiny as an inevitable as man's destiny is defined by past events. But at the end of the play, he changed this idea about destiny when Salha kills Ayoub, the unknown young man, according to his wish, as if the author wanted to say that man creates his own destiny.

This idea of destiny leads us to the existential point of view of Jean-Paul Sartre who indicated that man chooses his destiny. This may be an idea for another research in the future.

Although all ideas are clear, we cannot ignore the author's style. The dramatic line of events ran fast in a way that is more like TV shows. This may be due to the author and director are one person who wrote the play from the eyes of the director, not the author.

He also depended on signs, icons and symbols in personifying his ideas to avoid directness, may be for censorship reasons to avoid something that stem from religious or doctrinal origins, like the tomb of "Al-Khadr" in Failaka where people used to go for blessings and to fulfill their religious vows by offerings and sacrifices. The author here used clear dialogues to represent folk beliefs without portraying the tomb directly and replaced it with some significant statements.

This is clear when Mariam carries her son in front of the wall, representing the sacred tomb of Al-Khadr. She puts Henna in a pot and mixes it with water this rubs the wall with it while saying the following monologue:

168

PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE

Bulletin of Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts.
Series in Stage art

2019 • 2(2) • pp. 164-178

> *"God, for you I apologize, by you I start my life over and with you I approach near death. You are my salvation … my only savior. Help me to achieve salvation from my sins. Here I'm bringing my son as an offering. Take him from me and do whatever you wish just to be satisfied and send my worries away"*
> (Al-Awadi, 2017, p.5).

The author also used folk songs, like the sea song, specifically after the monologue of Mariam who secretly married a rich young man while her father was away in a diving journey. When her father was about to return, she asked her husband too declare their marriage but he refused because of his social status.

The song took us to the world of the sea so that the audiences can imagine the father whom they don't see as if the author is trying to recall (flash back) (flash back) an invisible image through an auditory one. A folk image recall (flash back) (flash back) ed by a folk song.

In "Al-Bushia" (The Veil), Ismail Abdullah used folklore to reflect his own vision of authority and sectarianism in a symbolic manner that gathered the veil and the stick. These two words, repeated extensively in the play, took a clear dramatic significance as the author created a symbolic conflict between them and provided them with symbolic and dramatic significance. In the Gulf folklore, the veil is a feminine costume representing covering. Its dramatic significance is clear as it moved the events from weakness to strength through uncovering old secrets and facts buried in the old house. On the other hand, the stick and the sword are the symbols of power, authority and masculinity. The veil/stick conflict is actually a man/woman conflict, weak/strong conflict or rich/poor conflict. Although the stick oppressed the veil at the beginning, the veil defeated the stick at the end.

Again, the author used folk songs to assert his ideas. He chose the folk song of "Al-Boushia" to assert ancient traditions indicating that the veil is the barrier that prevented Ghanem, the lover, from seeing the beauty of his beloved Gawaher, he also used the veil to assert sectarianism when he exposed the secret of Om Hamoud who belongs to the class of masters and who is perfect at dancing (Al-Samery). She wore the veil as a disguise to practice the career of Ghanima, grandmother of Gawaher, during festival nights.

The author also used folk sea songs to recall (flash back) (flash back) the events of Ghanem's diving journey. He also used folk song based on an ancient art of "Arda" to assert sectarianism as only masters used to bring bands to present this art in their occasions. He also wanted to assert the power of Hamoud before breaking into Gawaher's house as this art, according to folklore, was practiced in battels as an expression of victory.

These verbal arts represent a significant part of folklore and they are wholly based on language. Abdullah Al-Barghouthi indicated that "There are three levels of Arabic language created by our nation along ages in different countries, to express our culture. These are Standard Arabic, the intermediate Arabic (between standard and slang) and slang tongues used in daily life, folk poems, folk songs, tales, legends and proverbs" (Al-Barghouthi and Abd Al-Latif, 1987, p.96).

Folklore is the outcome of daily life. Therefore, most authors used slang tongues in their plays, as in "Ghaffar Al-Zallah" (The forgiver), "Al-Boushia" (The Veil) and "Al-

Mougeb" (Exorcism). But in "Salha", the author used two levels of Arabic: the intermediate Arabic and the Kuwaiti slang. This led us to a major question: Is this linguistic merge of any significance?

Ahmed Al-Awadi use this technique to separate past from present as events are interwoven and lack chronological sequence. This is why the author wanted to distinguish past from present, depending on intermediate standard Arabic for present dialogues while slang tongue is used for past dialogues.

In other dramatic situations, he used slang tongue for dialogues while standard Arabic was used for monologues to distinguish between internal and external aspects of characters. This is very close to the expressionist approach in focusing on secrets and internal aspects of characters.

No doubt, the merge between standard Arabic and slang tongue makes standard Arabic more like the author's voice.

In "Al-Mougeb" (Exorcism), Mohamed Al-Hamali used Kuwaiti folklore to explore social and political issues. He used exorcism rituals practiced by commoners to heal those who are possessed by demons. He depended on a specific social class, through its social and financial suffering, to assert this idea.

On the other hand, Ahmed Al-Awadi, in "Salha", depended on exorcism to expel demons. Therefore, he used some words that are well-established in these rituals.

While Salha is practicing exorcism to heal Ayoub and expel demons, she said:

> *"You, who prevents all horrors, you who knows all secrets, you who returns insane to sanity, preserve our reasons and our beliefs. Solve our problems. To those who know and those who don't. to those are awake and those who aren't, to those who are ill and those who are well. Bring the sacrifices' blood and turn it against our enemy"* (Al-Awadi, 2017, p.27).

170

Through indirect gestures and symbols, Al-Hamali provided his play with several interpretations. Sometimes, he concentrates on the proletarians who are suffering obstacles of life that lead them to feel strangers in their homelands. Their suffering of poverty leads them to practice such rituals to earn their living. Sometimes, their nationality is undefined. They have no identity and this drives many of them to practice illegal works like killing deceit that are very dangerous for the society. The author linked them to folk rituals that are illegally practiced to assert their conflict.

This class is in conflict with authority. The events evolve as the authority tries to assume its responsibilities in keeping law and order to protect the nation. But this class justifies its acts and behaviors due to its conditions. Rabea, the land lady, says: *"What bothers you if you see someone happy with a smile on his face? What bothers you if you see him comfortable?"* (Al-Hamaly, 2018).

Another conflict of this class is the conflict between religion and folklore. Religion rejects all folk habits that contradict with Islamic legislations. The author here exposes the religious man at the end as an opponent of authority. Maybe he wanted to mock those who pretend to be religious while they are not.

Here, the author concentrated on the conflict between old and modern. He utilized folklore to represent past/present conflict in addition to the conflict between this class and the authority. He used the religious man to support his idea as religion will reject such rituals.

He also utilized folklore as a dramatic justification as these rituals contradict with religious values. This is where he found the opportunity to use the religious man.

2. Utilizing Folklore in Performance

Utilizing folklore according to this level grows towards putting folk components in this historical context to fully deliver their visions and contents (Abd Al-Rahman, 2009, p.671).

Directors utilized folklore to create new theatrical forms and to achieve a specific aesthetic dimension through artistic tools away from directness. They used folklore and added new visions away from literal mimic of reality. Their mission was not to use folklore just to transfer information. Instead, they aimed to create affects and amusement for the audiences as folklore creates a kind of intimacy and nostalgia as it stems from the people and is closely related to their emotions.

Directors utilized forms of Kuwaiti folklore like folk songs, dances, costumes, decorations and festivals, but they didn't use them literally. Instead, they reformulated them through creating artistic images for the content of this folklore. This created new significance and more interpretations for the artistic work that enriched this theatrical work artistically and aesthetically.

Most directors adopted the symbolic and expressionist approaches in utilizing folklore, especially in performance, décor, songs and even dances. In "Al-Boushia" (The Veil) for example, Abdullah Al-Aber inspired folk songs to express the idea and title of the play. He also used other forms of songs, sea songs, as a recall (flash back) (flash back) technique to assert that the events happened in the past to prepare the general atmosphere for the audiences.

In the wedding, Al-Aber used folk songs to express joy, as it is in traditions. But in "Ghaffar Al-Zalla" (The Forgiver), he gave it a different significance from its folk one according to the dramatic context. He used it in a way that is different from the folk state or folk meaning. This unfamiliar state created shock and excitement among audiences. It imposed several questions leading the audiences to think and interpret to reach for the desired meaning. The wedding song, as usual, is used in weddings to express joy and happiness of family and relatives. But Al-Aber used this song in a sad situation to express revenge, just to assert the content of the play. This is also asserted by performance and costumes so that form/content interaction is clear. He used black and red in the bride's dress to express sadness and vengeance.

The same approach was adopted by Al-Awadi in "Salha" where he used the folk words of the wedding song while modifying its melody to express sadness and sorrow. In addition, he used black veil, instead of the usual white veil, for the bride. He wanted to signify the upcoming fate. Furthermore, he modified the performance of the bride's accompaniment and imaged them as demons who throw pebbles, instead for roses, on her. Here, the director used folk elements while changing its significance to create a new vision different from reality. The folk rituals of wedding is turned into a sad one, similar to the religious ritual of stoning the devil, as if the bride is religiously sinner. He tried to link the social thinking with the religious one. When a woman breaks familiar traditions, she is considered a sinner and her punishment should be similar to the devil's as she got married without consent of her family. Religiously speaking, a woman in Islam cannot get married without agreement of her guardian. In addition, she got

married to a man although she is still married to another one. This means she violated Islamic legislations and is considered adulteress.

This confirms the form/content relationship as it fulfills the director's goal. These changes may serve dramatic goals linking two dramatic lines (contemporary/ traditional), and intellectual ones in using folklore to reflect on reality.

Mohamed Al-Hamali used the wedding song in a context that is totally different from its folk ones as he used it in celebration of victory that carries the same happiness of wedding for this class as it represents a moment of a new life for them. here, the wedding song made the intellectual meaning even deeper. Folklore is used here for confirming ideas.

This style of treating folklore is considered a language among other visual and auditory languages used in the performance. This is related to the concepts and techniques of contemporary theatre that confirm that theatre depends not only on verbal language but also on visual language and auditory language that includes dialogues, to create the aesthetic image of the performance.

Both directors, Al-Aber and Al-Awadi, didn't use realistic décor. Instead, they they inspired the realistic spirit and basic lines to create meaning. In Al-Boushia (The Veil), the scenographer pictured the folk form of the house, as most old houses contained two floors: the ground floor for residence and the upper floor as a roof. But he didn't picture it as it is in folklore. Instead, he eliminated its details like doors and windows, and turned the place into signs that serve the content, like sectarianism and social status. Here, the house is a symbol of its resident's profession (serving festivals and dances). Gawaher is the granddaughter of land lady and practices the same profession of her grandmother, Ghanima. Ghanem's family refused the marriage of their son to her due to sectarian differences as folklore indicates that masters can never marry from lower classes. The issue becomes even deeper when the girl practices a profession rejected by the society due to wrong concepts about the dancer's profession, not mentioning that she inherited the profession of her grandmother. These folk traditions are the barriers in front of their marriage.

In Al-Mougeb (Exorcism), the scenographer used fine details of reality to embody the scene on stage. Unlike Al-Boushia (the Veil), the scenographer here imaged the form of the old house at present with all its details and effects of time on it to the extent that the stairs are about to collapse. By that, he jointed both times (past and present) and used the idea of old/modern opposition.

Place in Al-Boushia (the Veil) is the substantive equivalent of the girl. When she is inside, she represents power, but outside, she is weak due to her class. The manner of entering the place has different significances. When the son enters the house, in disguise, he wears the veil and cloak in a weak intrusion for fear of his father so that no one can see him entering the house of a dancer. This served his dramatic goal of reaching his mistress. But when he breaks into his father's house, he has the power and authority to do so. This interchangeable relation between the place and the manner of entering it is a symbol of rape confirming the power of the stronger over the weaker.

In Al-Mougeb (Exorcism), place takes a similar significance as it is the substantive equivalent of Rabea the exorcist performer (Mutawea). She has power inside her house

172

PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE

Bulletin of Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts.
Series in Stage art

2019 • 2(2) • pp. 164-178

in front of even stronger external power that tries to break into the house. Officer "Hala" tries to break into the house in disguise of another girl who fell in love with Surour, son of Rabea. But his tricks failed in front of Rabea's trick, as once power is inside the house, in spit of its strength, it becomes weak in front of Rabea's powers. Maybe, the author here refers to stability of folklore and old traditions in the face of modern contemporary laws.

Nader Al-Kunnah thinks that Al-Aber "didn't stop at the edge of director's vision. He manipulated the text as dramaturgy. In a way close to Brecht, Al-Aber gathered the lines of the tale and linked them into one dramatic nerve and one aesthetic texture that joins realistic history with fantasy and Gulf folklore" (Bilal, 2013, p.86).

The researcher disagrees with that as analysis indicated that Al-Aber was consistent with the vision of the author and committed with the dramatic text while providing the performance with a folk form under contemporary direction vision. Al-Boushia (the veil) had several significances during the performance in addition to creating several transformations. The director depended on its folk concept and interpreted it on his own way through image to assert sectarianism through costumes. For example, Gawaher's veil is distinct from the group's veils as she was the land lady and responsible for the band. In addition, Om Hamoud's veil was distinct from Gawaher's due to sectarian reasons.

In addition, he used the stick in décor with the same symbolic significance as in the text while giving it a new meaning through dramatic image. Décor consisted of a punch of sticks forming the house and the well. The stick, as a straight vertical line, expresses rigidity. It is the symbol of power and masculinity and a weapon for masters.

173

The well represents depth, a symbol of truth and buried secrets. The director gave it a new aesthetic image and a new dramatic dimension to confirm his idea. When Om Hamoud's veil comes out of the well, it looks like as if the director is exposing a buried secret of this old house.

In Al-Mougeb (Exorcism), Al-Hamali used the folk symbol of the stick. Rabea was given power and rigidity through holding her stick in most scenes. The stick here had two significances: a symbol of power and professional tool used by the exorcist performer to expel demonic spirits.

Both Al-Aber and Al-Hamali used décor items previously used in folklore to give the performance a folk nature and to be a base for events.

Al-Awadi wrote "Salha" in a manner similar to scenario; a descriptive text that describes image in details through stage directions. It is more like a direction plan for the performance. Therefore, we cannot distinguish the director's view as he was committed in his performance with stage directions of the original text. This coherent process didn't enable him to introduce a vision that different from the author's vision. he seemed to be initiating the text directions.

This is consistent with the concept of text structure in image theatre as "The text is ridged document of a verbal communicative event according to its absolute static time. Directing this kind of image theater means to face this document and turn its static nature into a dynamic one to create worlds of dreams, rituals and exoticism" (Al-Gassab, 2003, p.39).

This is the same for Al-Hamali who played the dual role of author/director. He also used some direction tricks for dazzling the audiences, some of which served the dramatic idea like sudden use of fire or using similar characters to appear at once as one character, in addition to moving objects that fly. He used these tricks to confirm the existence of demonic spirits. Some other tricks didn't serve the idea, instead, they were merely used for just dazzling the audiences as we can see in the interrogation scene when police officers interrogated the daughter of the exorcist performer. Al-Hamali used cinematographic technique to make the audiences observe the scene from top in a Hawk-eye technique. This makes the audience' eye plays the role of camera lenses.

Utilizing the hierarchical shape with levels was different among directors as some used it for identifying classes while others used it for identifying time and place.

In "Salha", the director divided the stage into two areas (front/back). The back area was divided into into two levels to assert sectarianism, money power and the difference between weakness and strength. In some scenes, Salha was on the lower level due to her class, according to the folk tale, while Mariam and her rich and powerful husband were on the top level. This provided décor with various interpretations of authority and power. The director here enabled the audiences to interpret significances as they he wishes without being direct.

The front area of the stage expressed the idea through two fixed items without any direct reference to them. actors' performance and dealing with these items identified its symbolic meaning. One of them symbolized the tomb and death-waiting destiny while the other symbolized religious beliefs and rituals held in the place mentioned in the folk tale. Here, the director used a plain wall to symbolize destiny, turning décor into an image language to assert his idea.

In Al-Mougeb (Exorcism), Al-Hamali used levels in many scenes. Sometimes he used them to express the realistic nature of place. In the wedding marsh sence, he distinguished "Rabea" from other characters to confirm her victory, with all its significances, over the police. In the cellar's scene, he used a technique to show the cellar from bottom to top; a significance of place movement. This technique is close to cinema and TV as he used modern technology to achieve what is known as "elevators' theatre" that enabled stages to move up and down.

These selected performances included folk items in their language, style, simple events, songs and dances, introduced via contemporary theatrical techniques like recall (flash back) that we found in most performances. In Al-Boushia (The veil), the director exposed the truth when Gawaher wanted to remind Hamoud Ghanem with his mother's past as his mother used to come to this house and spent binge nights that included dance and singing. The director here asserts that such rituals don't belong to a specific class as they are very common.

In Salha, Al-Awadi used recall (flash back) in a different manner. Although he didn't depend on chronological sequence of events as past and present interfered, he managed to separate them in different ways. Sometimes he used language while in other times he used levels. In some scenes, he separated them by light spots that identified the character's space through drawing circles with the character in the center.

174

The director here dealt with the performance as a TV scene through a technique very similar to montage. He used different levels of light and deem to change places and move through space or to move from one event to another, like most TV programs.

This was also used by Al-Aber in "Ghaffar Al-Zallah" (The forgiver), especially in the last scene after the killing of the child. He introduced three parallel scenes at the same dramatic time with different dialogues and different places, but all of them are centered on the killed child. One scene concentrates on Hamoud, the father, holding his son and mourning him. Then he moves to Sheikha, the mother, sitting down, hugging her child and weeping. The third scene concentrates on Sheikha's mother who wanted her revenge from Hamoud, after the child became victim of his grandmother's fault. So, we see her crying and weeping over what she did. The whole image here is very close to TV montage. This technique of gathering all these moments in one time is very close to TV montage.

In Al-Mougeb (Exorcism), Al-Hamali depended on breaking the illusion through shedding light on the audiences from the beginning, as if he is warning them that they are part of the performance. In the second part of the performance he managed to involve audiences through actors who stepped down the stage and moved around the hall distributing items related to customs and traditions like incent, flower water and dates.

In addition, he used "acting within acting" technique as the play started from its end then he returned in the second part to initial scenes to assert that all that is going is acting and to justify the first part.

This technique justifies that the author can deal with two issues (reason and feelings) while letting the audiences to choose. This is very close to Brecht's technique who rejected engagement to avoid catharsis.

The scientific novelty of the article

The role and place of local folklore in the performances of contemporary Kuwaiti theater in the context of its use in dramaturgy and performing arts has been investigated for the first time.

Conclusions

According to the analysis of some selected performances that utilized folklore, the researcher concluded the following:

- Some authors avoided literary mimic of folklore and utilized it to serve their contemporary ideas and to deal with some humanitarian, social and daily life issues stemming from reality, through adding new tales to folk tales.

- Folklore became a source of artistic material and a new style in folk form for contemporary theatrical performances.

- There are various sources of folklore including domestic folklore and humanitarian folklore covered with some items of Kuwaiti folklore including customs, traditions, folk songs, folk characters and rituals, molded in one folk mold that doesn't separate from content and preserves original sources while introducing intellectual contents.

ПРОБЛЕМИ ПРАКТИКИ

Вісник Київського національного університету культури і мистецтв.
Серія: Сценічне мистецтво

2019 • 2(2) • с.164-178

- Some theatrical artists utilized folklore to avoid direct reference either for censorship or artistic reasons. Or maybe they wanted to establish folklore through introducing it in a new artistic style that creates an artistic and aesthetic image to amuse the audiences.
- Authors managed to make folk materials suitable for all ages and linked past to present.
- Authors utilized folklore and its components to assert their ideas through symbols and gestures.
- Directors utilized folklore to create new theatrical forms and new direction visions that avoid mimicking reality literally. They achieved a new aesthetic dimension through using indirect artistic tools. They utilized folklore and added to it to amuse and affect the audiences.
- Directors utilized folk forms stemming from Kuwaiti folklore through using folk songs, dances and festivals in addition to costumes and decorative items. They reformulated these items through constructing artistic images using these items. This gave artistic works new significances and several interpretations leading to greater aesthetic and intellectual amusement.
- Utilizing well-known folk significances in ways that are different from the folk state or folk meaning created a kind of unfamiliarity that led to shock and excitement among audiences.
- Treating folklore with contemporary theater techniques asserted that theatre is not only a verbal language. Instead, it is a visual language and an auditory language that includes dialogues and create the aesthetic image of the performance.
- Some performances depended on techniques that are very close to cinema and TV. Texts are written in a way very similar to scenario while direction was very close to montage technique.

Translated by dr. Tarek Ammr

176

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ВИКОРИСТАННЯ НАРОДНОЇ СПАДЩИНИ (ФОЛЬКЛОРУ) У КУВЕЙТСЬКИХ СУЧАСНИХ ТЕАТРАЛЬНИХ ВИСТАВАХ: ОБРАНІ МОДЕЛІ

Скіна Мурад

доктор мистецтвознавства, доцент; e-mail: skeenamurad2019@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0002-5807-9482
Вищий інститут драматичного мистецтва, Ель-Кувейт, Кувейт

Анотація

Мета статті – аналіз та систематизація досвіду використання фольклору в сучасних театральних практиках Кувейту. ***Методологія дослідження*** значною мірою базується на структурно-аналітичному, мистецтвознавчо-культурологічному підході. ***Наукова новизна.*** Уперше досліджено роль і місце місцевого фольклору у виставах сучасного кувейтського театру в контексті двох векторів його використання: фольклор у драматургії та фольклор у виставах. ***Висновки.*** Деякі автори уникають літературної імітації фольклору та актуалізують його, додаючи до народних авторські оповіді; фольклор слугує джерелом художніх пошуків нових форм для сучасних театральних вистав; джерелами кувейтського фольклору є народні звичаї, традиції, обряди, пісні та персонажі оповідей; у виставах артисти використовували фольклорні прийоми через цензорські обмеження з художньо-естетичною метою та інколи для задоволення аудиторії та впливу на неї; автори адаптували фольклорні матеріали для різних категорій глядачів та актуалізували його; фольклорні символи та жести слугували для ствердження авторських ідей; режисери використовували фольклор для створення метафоричних театральних форм нового естетичного змісту та втілення режисерського бачення непрямими художніми засобами; режисери, використовуючи кувейтські народні пісні, танці, а також костюми та декоративні елементи, надавали художнім творам нового значення та нових інтерпретацій; фольклорні алюзії в нових постановочних ракурсах викликали здивування аудиторії та інколи шокували її; сучасна театралізація фольклору засвідчує, що театр – це не лише художнє слово, але й візуальна мова та аудіомова, які охоплюють діалоги та створюють естетичний образ вистави; інколи у виставах застосовувалися прийоми, близькі до кіно й телебачення.

Ключові слова: кувейтський фольклор; кувейтський театр; виконавське мистецтво; драматургія

177

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ НАРОДНОГО НАСЛЕДИЯ (ФОЛЬКЛОРА) В КУВЕЙТСКИХ СОВРЕМЕННЫХ ТЕАТРАЛЬНЫХ СПЕКТАКЛЯХ: ИЗБРАННЫЕ МОДЕЛИ

Скина Мурад

доктор искусствоведения, доцент; e-mail: skeenamurad2019@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0002-5807-9482
Высший институт драматического искусства, Эль-Кувейт, Кувейт

Аннотация

Целью данной статьи является анализ и систематизация опыта использования фольклора в современных театральных практиках Кувейта. ***Методология исследования*** в значительной степени базируется на структурно-аналитическом, искусствоведческо-культурологическом подходе. ***Научная новизна.*** Впервые исследована роль и место местного фольклора в спектаклях современного кувейтского театра в контексте двух векторов его использования: фольклор в драматургии и фольклор в спектаклях. ***Выводы.*** Некоторые авторы избегают литературной имитации фольклора и актуализируют его, добавляя к народным авторские изложения; фольклор служит источником художественных поисков новых форм для современных театральных представлений; источниками кувейтского фольклора являются народные обычаи, традиции, обряды, песни и персонажи повествований; в спектаклях артисты использовали фольклорные приемы из соображений цензорских ограничений с художественно-эстетической целью, а также в угоду аудитории и влияния на нее; авторы адаптировали фольклорные материалы для различных категорий зрителей и актуализировали его, фольклорные символы и жесты служили для утверждения авторских идей; режиссеры использовали фольклор для создания метафорических театральных форм нового эстетического содержания и воплощения режиссерского видения непрямыми художественными средствами; режиссеры, используя кувейтские народные песни, танцы, а также костюмы и декоративные элементы, предавали художественным произведениям новое значение и создавали новые интерпретации; фольклорные аллюзии в новых постановочных ракурсах вызывали удивление аудитории и иногда шокировали ее; современная театрализация фольклора показывает, что театр – это не только художественное слово, но и визуальный язык и аудиоязык, включающие диалоги и создающие эстетический образ спектакля; иногда в театральных представлениях применялись приемы, близкие к кино и телевидению.

Ключевые слова: кувейтский фольклор; кувейтский театр; исполнительское искусство; драматургия