

The Engagements Of Imagination For Creation And Innovation In Iraqi Theatre - A Case Study Of The Play Nuqtat Albidaya

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the element of imagination, its effectiveness, and its importance in the arts in general, and in acting in particular, and whether it is a fundamental pillar upon which the actor relies in portraying a character. The study also seeks to reveal the extent of imagination's effectiveness in the field of theater.

The main motivation for writing on this topic stems from the fact that imagination has occupied a significant place in the critical and philosophical discourses of philosophers. Furthermore, early humans used their imagination as a method and means of interacting with others, a fact that is enshrined in many of the myths and beliefs they held. Thus, imagination is a dynamic and driving force behind many art forms in societies.

Hence, the need arises to understand its importance and weight in how it is employed in the arts, and in fostering creativity and innovation in all their forms.

Keywords: Engagements, Imagination, Creation, Innovation, Iraq.

Introduction

Chapter One/ Methodological Framework

1-1: The Research Problem and the Need for It:

The vast world that the art of acting is unique in has made it a world that has the ability to transcend the constants of reality and delve into the depths of other multiple worlds upon which the artist relies through his imagination to evoke amazing images that contain great excitement and beauty, to evoke imagination and make it an active pillar in creating those worlds, as the actor or any other artist cannot abandon or dispense with it, as it is the only means that enables him to explore the depths of characters with different and varied dimensions with depth and creativity. Imagination's effectiveness is not limited to theatrical performance alone; it extends

to film acting, story writing, poetry, and public speaking. Its scope expands significantly in children's theater, where it is highly effective in conjuring characters born from the writer's imagination. Therefore, we see imagination playing a vital role in all artistic activities. In acting, it grants the actor the ability to innovate and express their own feelings and experiences, which they may not have encountered before, and to embody these in the characters they portray. In poetry, it enables the poet to create exquisitely beautiful imagery that invites the listener to soar within the atmosphere of the recited poem. Among the functions of imagination is its active role in developing works and its role in connecting creative and innovative mental processes. Hence, the research problem lies in the following question:

How can the element of imagination lead the theatrical actor to creativity and innovation?

1.2: The Importance of the Research:

The importance of this research lies in its highlighting of the element of imagination and its significance for the actor in achieving creativity and innovation.

1.3: The Objective of the Research:

To identify the element of imagination and its components in acting performance.

1.4: Research Scope:

- a) Timeframe: 2024
- b) Location: Iraq / Mosul / College of Fine Arts Theater / University of Mosul
- c) Subject Matters: A study of imagination and its functions in creating and innovating in theatrical art.

1.5: Definition of Terms:

A. Operations: Linguistically, the word (to operate) means to work, act, and influence. Technically, it refers to "the mechanisms of action and activation employed by an element within the artistic structure to produce meaning" (Foucault, 1987, pp. 32-35). Operationally, it refers to the mechanisms employed by the actor's imagination in their performance as a means of producing an innovative theatrical image.

B. Imagination: "A movement initiated by the senses that continues after the absence of the sensible object" (Aristotle, d.).

Jean-Paul Sartre, in his book **The Imaginary**, defines imagination as "a consciousness that refers to a non-existent object as non-existent" (Sartre, 1981, pp. 23-27). Operationally, it refers to the actor's evocation of unreal or present images and their transformation into a tangible representational act through the actor's imaginative mental capacity.

C.. Creation: Henri Bergson, in his book **Creative Evolution**, defines creation as "the production of something new that did not previously exist" (Bergson, p. 98). Operational definition: It is the

production of a new image or performativity act that generally did not exist before the performance began on stage.

D. Innovation: "The ability to produce the greatest number of new and original responses to a problem" (Guilford, 1967, p. 138). It has also been defined as "the ability to bring forth something new, original, and valuable" (Ibrahim, pp. 15-18). Operational definition: By "ignitions of imagination," he means the mechanisms that the actor employs to harness their imaginative capacity and utilize it for creation and innovation in their performance, transforming the text into a sensory experience with aesthetic value in the theatrical performance.

Chapter Two / Methodological Framework

2.1: Section One: Imagination (Establishing the Functional Concept)

Imagination has played a major role in human life in general, and in art in particular. Philosophers have emphasized this and paid great attention to it, each discussing imagination according to their philosophy of life, humanity, and their perspective on them. Among the philosophers who gave it great importance was Plato, who worked to link imagination to the process of perception. Imagination determines the nature of perceptible images... through its ability to animate those images. However, Aristotle believed that imagination arises from actual sensation, defining it as "a movement and arousal of sensation." For Aristotle, sensation and imagination are alike (Mead, 1969, p. 25).

Therefore, imagination is not merely a tool for expression, but the fundamental pillar upon which the art of acting rests. Its active role is to imbue the actor's performance with a vibrant, dynamic, and flexible character, capable of responding quickly to changing events. Imagination is "the ability to use sensory perceptions and mental images to create new and unfamiliar forms and structures." This is the view held by many psychologists who have studied imagination, agreeing that it is something

that is probable. This formulation reflects the complex nature of imagination, as it encompasses the senses that perceive things not only in their true form, but also in forms they could potentially take (Awad, 2001, p. 50).

Imagination and Reality Two close friends who cannot be parted, and the skilled actor cannot abandon imagination and the reality in which he stores his experiences. The accumulated store of experiences he possesses is a crucial factor and a creator of creativity, as he uses these experiences as a reference point in performing the roles assigned to him. Through imagination, the actor can expand the scope of these life experiences and access worlds he has not personally experienced. For example, if he is asked to play the role of a drunkard, a villain, a beggar, or any other character, he may not have acted out such behaviors or lived through those moments himself. Perhaps he has observed them and stored their actions in his memory. Here, imagination comes into play to help him overcome this predicament in portraying such characters. It is a helpful element in accessing the world of those characters, creating a vivid image of what those characters might feel, after summoning them from his imagination. Her behaviors through memory, in addition to the fact that it helps the actor to deal with unexpected and sudden situations that may cause him confusion if he is unable to deal with them. This would enable the actor to achieve the truth of the performance and achieve the element of persuasion with the audience, with the aesthetic dimension in the physical and vocal performance.

Director Stanislavski emphasized the importance of performing a role, stating, "Reflecting on the performance of a character, subjecting it to the actor's imagination, exploring its depths and nuances...and understanding the minor details to reach, through imagination, the major events the character experiences, contributes to analyzing the character and understanding its dimensions. Using imagination is crucial for understanding what the character goes through and embodying their role

through movements and emotions. He did not shy away from exploring the role through imagination; on the contrary, he insisted on it through continuous training" (Zaki, 1989, p. 196).

Director Stanislavski strongly advocated for achieving balance through imagination "between the actor's internal experience of the role and the expressions and movements he makes through his body and voice, harmonizing with the role, using (the magic of "what if," emotional memory, adapted from the ideas of the French psychologist Théodore Armand Ribot, as bridges between the actor and the reality of the character, the circle of attention for strong focus, and the continuous line of action)" (Salah, 2005, p. 98).

One might ask, is imagination a talent, or is there something that makes it grow and flourish in the artist? To answer this question, imagination is realized, grows, and develops through two important elements: talent and training. Imagination exists in children from their early years, at the stage when they imitate their toys and create characters and stories for these toys through their imagination. They personify objects and talk to them while lost in their childlike imagination, experiencing great pleasure as a result. Thus, dialogues and movements are nothing but a process of imaginative, childlike creation. Children's resort to this type of imitation and role-playing in play stems primarily from frustration they experience within their early years. This means that children have desires and dreams that are prevented from being fulfilled by obstacles, which may be familial or social in nature. The lack of direct fulfillment of these desires and dreams, coupled with the firm belief that they have not been realized in reality, leads them to seek self-preservation. They rebel against their reality and turn to an active, important, and capable element that can achieve what they could not in reality: imagination. Through imagination, they can enter worlds they have never experienced in reality, worlds created by their own minds. In this way, they save themselves from frustration and complexity.

Imagination allows children to reflect on and contemplate real and lived experiences. Therefore, developing imagination is one of the factors that produces images that evoke pleasure. Enjoying literary arts and behavioral patterns. "Imagination is our innate power to form a mental image or concept of something that does not exist or is not considered at the present time" (Hassan, 2016, p. 31).

Therefore, the seed of imagination lies within a person from childhood, and what stimulates it is the obstacles and challenges that drive them to overcome them. This ability may diminish if one ceases to confront, challenge, and strive continuously. Therefore, specialists seek to develop these abilities and capabilities through practices and exercises that cultivate this imaginative capacity, which in turn lays the foundation for creativity and innovation. For example, fairy tales, stories, and myths; encouraging free play; and providing handicrafts such as modeling clay and building blocks that children use to create shapes through their imagination—all these tools work to develop children's imagination. As for the art of acting, directors strive diligently to provide continuous training for actors to develop their imaginative abilities. And what if (or if) The magical element (and the questions "How?", "When?", and "Where?") proposed by director Stanislavski are merely tools to activate the imaginative capacity of his actors. These are training questions that stimulate the actors' imaginations, encouraging them to search for answers through their own minds, enabling them to embody characters whose dimensions they have not personally experienced. Through imagination, they can enter the character's world and portray them authentically, as well as the environment in which they live. Therefore, director Stanislavski emphasized the importance of avoiding errors in their performances when embodying the character. He said, "To avoid mistakes, always remember, when you begin studying each role, to gather all the relevant material and add a great deal of your own

imagination until you ultimately create something resembling life, something that makes it easier for people to believe what you are doing" (Stanislavski, 1973, p. 17).

In this way, imagination becomes a source of pleasure and beauty. Through it, the poet also evokes beautiful imaginative images, thus occupying an important place in... His establishment of poetic images, reaching the essence of intuitive language, and expressing the state he describes in such a way that it reaches a high degree of convergence with life's truth, until he reaches the point of conveying the idea he intends to convey to the recipient. This was confirmed by (Hegel) in his statement: "The poetic image begins from within consciousness and imagination, meaning that it begins from the psychological self, and then it moves to a tangible material form that expresses the objective aspect of the world" (Ibrahim Abdel Qader Al-Mazni, 1976, page 235).

One of the functions of imagination is that it grants humans the ability to express their inner thoughts and to express themselves in various unconventional ways. This means escaping the constraints of knowledge and social norms. Imagination contributes to the realization and production of all of this. It results from the process of combining memories and the experiences, knowledge, and images that an individual has accumulated and previously contributed to forming. This accumulated knowledge and images are then employed to create a new structure built to achieve the individual's desires or to address the reality they live in. Imagination also involves searching for new horizons and fostering a culture of innovation. The great development that human life and civilization have witnessed, and the resulting innovations and inventions in all aspects of life, especially the arts, have all been products of imagination. Indeed, "Every aspect of our current life was once an idea and a figment of people's imaginations before it became a reality. The world has witnessed many civilizational achievements

thanks to the capacity for imagination that humankind possesses" (Al-Tayeb, 2006, p. 36). This is confirmed by the philosopher (Plato says, "Every human being possesses a divine source of knowledge residing in their soul, which knew everything before birth. When a person is born, they forget everything... and they can retrieve that knowledge through imagination and memory" (Subhi, 1988, p. 23).

Based on the foregoing and the nature of the relationship between reality and imagination, memory becomes a third element in the subject of imagination, its growth, and its capacity for production. Memory draws all knowledge and information from the reality in which a person lives, and it performs its function of storing past information. Here, memory represents reality. Then, the element of imagination comes in, drawing upon memory, which represents reality, to draw forth renewed future images that work to change the image of the present reality. Thus, memory is an important factor in the dynamism of human imagination. Therefore, it is necessary to develop it so that it does not lose its ability to store and recall. As a result, through imagination, a person produces new images and ideas. Through imagination, a person has stirred the world from its slumber in dealing with the given, the familiar, and the prevalent, and moving towards "dealing with..." The world, shaped by human will and action, thus becomes our world through imagination, after having been a world existing independently. What was once raw becomes a useful reality. Thus, through imagination, humanity transcends exaggerated objectivity to achieve an interconnected and interactive relationship between the self and the object, with both existing in a state of mutual dependence and existential solidarity (Fayyad, 2023).

It is clear from the above that imagination has a significant and active contribution to human life and its progress, especially in the field of arts, which are the aesthetic expression of thoughts, feelings, and emotions, elevating humanity

towards sublimity and renewal. Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is the power of everything. Without imagination, there would be no invention or art in the world. The power of imagination is indispensable for all creators, scientists, successful individuals, and athletes. Any art without imagination is a dead, soulless product." He emphasized that creative thinking is non-verbal visual thinking based on thinking in images and visual imagination. Imagination is the ability to break free from the control of reality. (Hassan, 2023) (2016, page 20).

Liberation is not necessarily about abandoning, transgressing, or escaping reality. Rather, it's about reshaping it in a more beautiful and creative way, allowing us to experience it more deeply. In the art of theatrical performance, a director can create renewed worlds, offering the pleasure of watching unfamiliar worlds conjured up by the director and actor from their imagination. These worlds contain elements of reality, not pure fantasy, and are brought to life on stage. Similarly, poetry draws its words from images of reality, but through the artist's imagination, we hear verses with images more beautiful than those found in reality. Thus, all arts draw from reality without transcending it, producing rich, beautiful, and captivating art.

2.2: Section Two: The Role of Imagination in Theatrical Art:

My initial forays into the realm of imagination in theater stemmed from myth. The true impetus behind myth lies in humanity's profound yearning to understand the origins and essence of things. Thus, it has been described as "an imaginative story that recounts humanity's journey towards attainable goals, and narrates humanity's love of knowledge and the search for truth through methods based on imaginative storytelling, oral tradition, and the pursuit of enjoyment and suspense" (Shuhaymit, 2024, p. 35).

Myth tells stories born of imagination, their themes drawn from real-life events and experiences, presented in a poetic style rooted in symbolism.

Moreover, it transcends reality, extending its narratives vertically into the supernatural. It also expresses the possible and the impossible, the unseen beings, the world of gods, and hidden powers—all products of the collective imagination possessed by peoples.

From the very beginning, or rather from the beginnings of human life and its way of living, and from the moment the first seed was sown for the emergence of civilization and the world at large, humankind has lived and thrived on the duality of the known and the known and the unknown. This duality, which evokes and stirs fear within humanity, prompted it to activate that active element called (imagination) to establish an atmosphere of myth in its lived reality, in order to control its fears arising from natural phenomena and to live in a state of psychological balance between itself and its reality. Thus, fear is the primary source for the emergence of myth. There are other secondary factors for this emergence, namely, humanity's attempt to connect with that hidden thing that it believes controls its destiny in life. And what are mythical religious rituals but for the purpose of achieving this connection and establishing a religion built on mythical imaginings? Hence, myth becomes a condition of human life, with a feeling of connection between the human mind and a hidden mind that controls the universe, and what results from that is a feeling of joy, happiness, and psychological stability for humankind. (Al-Sawah, 2002, page 24)

The myths produced by the imagination of ancient societies adopted a function that was almost a specific function, and their production showed something vital to confirm the continuity and survival of those societies, as the myth was then considered the (holy book) for the people of those societies, in addition to taking it as a highly effective means to serve and maintain the natural and social order, and to control their social structure. The imagination of ancient societies produced myths representing heroic epics of figures with extraordinary abilities. Among these epics, where the imaginative element played a

major and significant role, are the Iliad and the Odyssey by the Greek poet Homer. These epics are a powerful expression of the Greek people's imaginative capacity to create legendary stories that represent Greek culture. They are among the oldest works of Greek poetry, recounting the siege of Troy. Greek myths are also embodied in a large number of diverse narratives and arts such as painting, pottery, and sculpture. These myths aimed to understand the nature and origin of the world. Furthermore, these narratives trace the lives of gods, heroes, and mythical creatures. These narratives were transmitted orally and are considered part of the religion of ancient and modern Greece. Their origins lie in the human imagination that created these myths, which have remained immortal, providing much inspiration for Greek literature. Knowledge. (Stende, 2005, page 48)

Some may wonder about the influence of myths on art. Undoubtedly, myths have a profound impact on many art forms. Art often incorporates symbolic meanings in its ideas, treatments, and artistic experiences. Since myths carry symbolic dimensions and connotations related to the nature of the myths themselves—expressing the fears and dreams that humanity has possessed throughout history—and since these unseen anxieties and fears haunted humankind, the artist, through their imagination, embodies these anxieties, employing these characteristics in the artwork, whether in theater, painting, or other art forms. This adds multiple meanings and symbolic connotations, creating a response in the viewer that is both intriguing and exciting, allowing the viewer to enjoy the work through various interpretations, depending on their cultural background. The importance of myths in artistic works lies in their inclusion of numerous lessons, wisdom, and morals, deepening many philosophical concepts. Furthermore, they represent... The purpose of invoking the heritage of peoples in an artistic work is to revive that heritage. For example, in Greek theater, we find Sophocles' play "Oedipus Rex," which is rich with intriguing and controversial

mythological imagination and intricately woven events. It features a mythical monster standing at the city gate and the riddle it poses to humankind. Furthermore, the play contains profound philosophical dimensions that provoke thought-provoking questions. In literature, we find the tales of One Thousand and One Nights, with their strange and entertaining stories told by Scheherazade, the vizier's daughter, to King Shahryar. These tales rescue him from the psychological complex he suffered due to his wife's infidelity. Scheherazade's vast imagination allows her to use this imagination as a cure for a serious and debilitating illness afflicting King Shahryar. Thus, the use of myth in art becomes an element of aesthetic and intellectual value, enriching the entire artwork for the audience.

However, the practical application of imagination in the directing and performance aspects of theater must be undertaken by those who have embarked on its path and entered its cultural, anthropological, and mythological arena. That is, they must possess a broad culture encompassing all aspects of human life, in addition to their culture and familiarity with their specialization and the rules of this specialization. The art of directing is the art of visions and renewed ideas, because the secret to the enduring appeal of many theatrical works lies in the surprising, different, and unconventional visions and elements they contain, and their possession of the aesthetic element, which is the foundation of all visual and auditory arts. Another important element that represents the greatest artistic value in producing a theatrical work that achieves a response and amazement from the audience must be present, and that is the element of (imagination), as it is one of the pillars that directly influences the viewer and what the director does in creating and innovating imaginary worlds and embodying the author's idea, through active and vital elements, which are the actors, who also cannot do without the element of imagination in their performance. There are numerous examples throughout the history of theater, whether by

European, Arab, or Iraqi directors. Through the director's expansive imagination, the audience gains a sense of the reality of the event on stage. For example, in Sartre's play "Kean," the prince refers to Edmund Kean as a "ghost," to which Elaine replies, "A ghost? So, Kean isn't human?" The prince responds, "Of course not, madam. He's an actor..." In this dialogue, Sartre emphasizes that the act of collective imagination, which transforms the actor (Kean) into the character of Hamlet, negates the real human being and presents him as unreal (imaginary), like the character he embodies. Sartre sees the transformation that occurs here as similar to that which happens in a dream; the actor is influenced by and immersed in the imaginary. The character is no longer within the actor, but rather the actor becomes unreal within the character (Saltz, 2018, pp. 203-230).

The imaginative work in this In Caine's transformation into Hamlet, his character traits become intertwined with those of the character he portrays. Hamlet's struggle with the specter of death, his conflict with it, and his obligation to fulfill his duties are akin to Caine's own struggle with the constraints and limitations imposed by society. He expresses a state of inner turmoil. With his expansive imagination, Caine draws upon his own troubled reality and projects it onto the character of Hamlet to convey Hamlet's bitter anguish. We can also find the element of imagination in the work of the English director Peter Brook, and how he employs it to achieve what is called sacred theater. Through his boundless imagination, he draws the audience in, making the unseen manifest through the technique and element of imagination, creatively and dazzlingly realizing imaginative visions. He imbues them with a ritualistic character and connects them to events unfolding in society. Imagination is one of the most important tools upon which the theatrical artist relies. Imagination is an artistic necessity that produces beauty, in addition to... His contribution to the process of shaping what he imagines to create images with

creative value in the theatrical performance, and in a style far from the traditional style, works to help the playwright to enter other new aesthetic worlds. For example, the playwright (Qasim Muhammad) and the plays he wrote and directed, invoking heritage through his imagination and giving it an aesthetic image that includes symbolism and imagination in a modern way, such as the play (Baghdad of Eternity Between Seriousness and Jest), which is a collection of stories inspired by what Baghdad was living through, and what its history carries of events and many tales of an imaginative nature, such as the tales of One Thousand and One Nights, and what it includes of historical figures that formed an image of old Baghdad, where the director's imagination had the greatest chance in producing those exciting images and enjoyable imagination until it included all the elements of the theatrical performance.

2.3: Previous Studies:

1- A study by Ali Abdul-Muhsin Ali, University of Babylon, College of Fine Arts, entitled "Employing Imagination in the Performance of the Iraqi Theatrical Actor." This study clarifies the concept of imagination and its impact on enhancing the actor's performance. It also cites numerous writers and philosophers who, in their writings and theories, have emphasized imagination as a crucial element in creation and innovation. The study yielded several findings, including:

- Imagination in poetry relies on embodying the poetic image.
- For philosophers, imagination is linked to the process of storing and creatively reproducing images.

2- A study by Al-Hussein Muhammad Fadhil and Muhammad Fadhil Shanawa, University of Babylon, College of Fine Arts, Department of Theater Arts, entitled "Parapsychology and its Applications in the Acting Performance of the Theatrical Actor."

This research explores the nature of the relationship between the concept of parapsychology and the acting performance of the

theatrical actor, and the actor's ability to express themselves artistically through the application of parapsychology. The concept of parapsychology focuses on studying unusual psychological phenomena that rely entirely on classical scientific analyses, and are often closely related to paranormal and non-sensory abilities. Some of the findings include:

- The role of parapsychology in the feedback process of actors.
- The role of parapsychology in the act of recalling archetypal characters, such as Hamlet in the play "Exile."

2.4: The theoretical framework yielded the following indicators:

1. Imagination is a source of human freedom, allowing individuals to freely explore worlds unconstrained by limitations or restrictions that limit their activity and abilities.
2. A nation whose members lack imagination cannot rise, progress, create, or innovate.
3. Imagination stimulates reflection on the human self and plays a significant role in recognizing and deeply understanding feelings and thoughts, thus contributing to the development of self-awareness.
4. Productive imagination enables individuals, especially artists and creators, to envision and invent what... It was not present. And it transcended tangible, sensory reality, not entirely, to create new worlds and productive ideas.
5. The childlike self is among the most eager to activate its imagination, driven by the desire to fulfill its dreams and achieve what it could not achieve through reality.
6. Imaginative play in children is an active element in stimulating their imagination through imitation and personifying objects.
7. Broad knowledge of science, societal culture, and the arts, along with a broad imagination among speakers and actors, are important elements in creating a response and excitement in the audience.
8. The content of a speech is embodied by a knowledgeable speaker who is proficient in their

tools and has the ability to effect change in societies striving for it.

9. Imagination and reality complement each other and are inseparable, as they both contribute to achieving renewed knowledge, images, and innovations in life. The actor, through their imagination, draws images from reality and works to renew and convey them in an aesthetically pleasing and surprising way.

Chapter Three: Research Procedures

3.1: Research Population:

The research population consisted of the play "Nuqtat Albidaya," written by Mohammed Al-Asadi and directed by Ahmed Khairy Al-Khattabi. Performance: A group of students from the Department of Theater Arts.

3.2: Research Sample:

The researcher used purposive sampling to analyze the sample, based on the following justifications:

- Viewing the play.
- The extensive use of imagination in the play, encompassing all elements of the theatrical performance.

3.3: Research Instrument:

The researcher relied on the following to analyze the sample:

- Direct observation.
- Indicators derived from the theoretical framework.

3.4: Research Methodology:

The researcher adopted a descriptive approach to analyze the sample.

3.5: Sample Analysis:

- The play "Nuqtat Albidaya"
- Directed by Ahmed Khairy Al-Khattabi
- Year of performance: 2023

The theatrical performance "Nuqtat Albidaya" is a work in which imagination creates a vast space, through characters that do not belong directly to

reality, but rather are products of the author's imagination and directorial vision. These characters represent abstract existential states: the fetus, the human being in life, and a person living in a grave. This calls upon the actor to activate the machinery of his imagination to create and bring the character to life, as he represents the active element and instrument in constructing the character.

This trio of characters and diverse settings, lacking familiar behaviors in terms of voice, body movement, and emotions, presents the actor with a challenging task: how to summon their imagination to express the character's physical and vocal actions and emotions. How does the fetus imagine



itself in the womb, experiencing its feelings and emotions? The same applies to the character in life, and the character in the grave—to convey distress, pressure, and stillness. All of this stems from the workings of the imagination, which the actor invokes in their performance to achieve a connection with the character and provide enjoyment for the audience. Therefore, the theatrical performance serves as a powerful model for the work of imagination as a force for creation and innovation within the actor's performance.

The use of imagination in this play was not limited to the actor's performance of the character and how he built his role, but imagination worked and intervened even in the rhythm, the psychological state and its vocal, kinetic and spatial transformations, as well as its relationship with the

external space. Therefore, the theatrical work becomes an innovative and creative work in which imagination played a major role in producing and embodying those abstract philosophical ideas in a tangible physical form, as each character represents a philosophical idea in itself.



In the theatrical performance "Nuqtat Albidaya," symbolism was strongly present, conveyed through philosophical ideas. The play is based on three states, reflecting and embodying the successive journey of human existence, including the structural transformations that occur, encompassing beliefs, psychological states, worldview, the meaning of existence in this vast universe, and inevitable end. It's important to note that these states and places do not belong to reality, but rather are psychological realms that reflect the power of imagination to transform abstract states into tangible ones, in which the audience participates in producing meaning.

The conflict in the play "Nuqtat Albidaya" is a struggle for survival between three distinct states. Each character lives according to a different stage in the human journey. The fetus symbolizes the beginning of humanity, representing the blank page upon which nothing has been written—innocence, the desire to know, aspire, and discover. The human being, on the other hand, throws himself into the embrace of life, enduring its pain, cruelty, and bitter experiences. This tragedy leads him to wish for death and escape. The human being in the

grave lives a life contemplating his fate. The fetus and the grave are similar; both exist in darkness, each seeking to know their destiny. The human being in the grave advises the fetus to abandon its



desire to emerge and explore, for what it will discover is something hideous, cruel, and painful. The human being in the grave advises the fetus to abandon its desire to emerge and explore, because what it will discover is something ugly, cruel, and painful. The conflict here is an existential one. From this, we deduce the play's central idea: life is merely a bridge between two darknesses—the darkness of the womb and the fleeting light of life itself, and the darkness of the grave. In this performance, humanity is governed by the philosophical concept of the absurdity of life, by an inescapable and inevitable existential cycle that must be traversed.

The theatrical performance (Nuqtat Albidaya) reveals characters that have no relation to reality, but rather represent distinctive features. The character of the fetus is a special case representing the human being before human consciousness, and the character of the grave man represents a state that the human being has reached after the life experience. Therefore, the actor's performance must be convincing in portraying and embodying those states. The performance here takes a large space of symbolism, expressionism, and realism,

through the body expressing psychological states in a more realistic way. The horse imposes itself on the acting performance. In the fetus, where the body is in a state of being curled up on itself and twisted, and the movement is characterized by limitations, according to a space that has been defined for it, the imagination in the expressive aspect is physical and vocal for the actor, relying on physical gesture. The performance here refers us to the expressionist theater, while the work of imagination for the life character is a tired physical performance that represents the state of pain, fatigue, and the weight of worries. The actor's movement is continuous, and the voice is broken and tense, with a large aspect of irony on what the human being lives through in life. The significance of the performance here lies in the nature of the conflict and the pain. Imagination played a role in helping the actor achieve an internal, psychological performance, imbued with actions that conveyed genuine emotion, aligning with the school of psychological realism.

The performance of the person in the grave also relied on the actor's imagination. The way the person is portrayed within the grave is dictated by the imagination, characterized by stillness and slow, deliberate movements. This slowness suggests that life in the grave offers limited space and restricted movement, akin to the movement of a fetus in the womb. The voice is distinct from the natural voice, subdued and filled with sorrow, confusion, and hope. The play's imaginative approach dictated the creation of multiple, symbolic spaces corresponding to the three characters' states (the womb, the grave, and life), with each character possessing their own distinct space. This required a vast imagination, which the director skillfully translated onto the stage, resulting in spatial imagery that both captivated and astonished the audience. The imaginative elements extended to the visual world, represented by the use of red and pink hues and contrasting lighting, symbolizing the characters' psychological

states, alongside muted colors and the presence of sounds and noise.

The space of life, with its contrasting colors and elements, oscillates between realism and near-realism, reflecting the absurdity and chaos of life. In contrast, the space of the grave remains dark and opaque.

Finally, the imaginative elements in the play "Nuqtat Albidaya" move between movement, sound, scenography, and the varying rhythms used to portray and embody the actors' states.

Chapter Four

4.1: Results and Discussion:

1- Imagination in this play is considered a crucial and active element in the process of creating the event. It was a structural necessity in the theatrical performance, creating worlds such as the world of the womb, the world of the grave, and the world of life. These are all real worlds because we witness them, but the nature of the events contains an element of absurdity in terms of the ideas presented in these worlds.

2- Imagination contributes to stimulating the imagination of the audience and makes them a partner in the event and in the production of meaning. The absence of some details prompts the audience to ask many questions, engage in debate, and fill in the gaps using their own cultural knowledge.

3- Symbolism was present in the imagination in a way that occupied a large space in the theatrical work through the transformations in the acting performance. The actor's use of imagination gave an aesthetic image to the theatrical performance by showcasing human life from birth to its final journey, and the world of the grave and death. All of this motivated the actor to possess a high degree of imaginative and physical flexibility.

4- The theatrical artist's imagination is engaged through dialogue, transforming their words into vivid images that materialize for the audience through their imagination, delivery, and the

diversity of their performance. Therefore, the actor must be a skilled performer, employing voice, imagination, and imagery through vocal inflection and intonation to present the audience with images that materialize through dramatic dialogue.

4.2: Conclusions:

1- Philosophers have emphasized the partnership and intimate relationship between the mind and imagination, where there is no ambiguity. This has been affirmed by many philosophers, including Plato, Aristotle, and Immanuel Kant, each viewing imagination from their own perspective. Plato believed that imagination does not reveal the true nature of things, while Aristotle considered it the mediator between the body and mind. Kant, on the other hand, viewed imagination as a powerful force connecting human sensory perceptions with intellectual concepts.

2- For philosophers, imagination is not a denial, withdrawal, or complete detachment from reality, but rather an effective means and tool for shaping reality into an aesthetic form so that humanity can perceive and understand it; this is their ultimate goal.

3- Imagination in the art of acting allows the unseen and the metaphysical to be vividly embodied. It gives form to ideas, bestowing upon them a physical body, voice, and image. This reveals the actor's role in their performance and their capacity for creation and innovation. For example, when an actor is required to portray a specific human condition, such as oppression, tyranny, or injustice, the actor's imagination intervenes. They don't present these conditions as mere concepts through words, but rather embody them through a withdrawn or contracted body, a voice with a tone of pain and brokenness, and gazes imbued with pity and fear. In other words, the actor's imagination transforms abstract concepts into tangible ones, ideas into actions, and meanings into images. This is where the power and breadth of imagination in acting lies, particularly in the actor's conscious performance. The more

conscious the actor, the greater the scope of their imagination.

4- If not The theatrical artist possesses a broad and influential imagination, but becomes unable to achieve the goal of influencing and responding, or the art of portraying the idea, and moving the feelings, conscience, and emotions of the recipient. This characteristic is one of the main goals of the theater, as dialogue is not words that are thrown into people's ears in a traditional way, but rather it is a craft and art that is well perfected, to create mental images in the recipient.

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