

## **Pragmatism and its representations in the American theatrical text**

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### **Abstract :**

There is no doubt that pragmatic philosophy has become one of the tributaries of human knowledge in the world in general and in America in particular, where this particularity came according to its origin in the United States of America, And it became an active presence in the cultural circles because of the concepts and propositions it contained within it that enriched the sciences, arts and literature with these concepts. Therefore, the American playwrights were able to comprehend its concepts, and this was later reflected in the writing of their theatrical texts during the stages of development that the American theater went through. This type of philosophy has contributed to enriching these texts in form and content because of the values, concepts and ideas they are rich in, in addition to the benefit they bear for man in particular and society in general. Search four chapters, The first chapter included (the methodological framework), in which the researcher identified the research problem, which is summarized in the following question, (How was the pragmatic philosophy represented in the American theatrical text?) and the importance of the research which indicated the importance of the pragmatic philosophy and represented it in the American theatrical text, As it is clear in this chapter, the aim of the research is to reveal how the concepts of pragmatism are represented in the American theatrical text. The second chapter, which is the theoretical framework, included two sections. The first topic was concerned with pragmatism, its roots and its philosophers, while the second topic was concerned on the pragmatic philosophy between the social and cultural foundation in the theatrical text, and also concerned on the emergence and development of American theater. And then the researcher mentioned previous studies as well as the indicators that resulted from the theoretical framework, and the

third chapter (procedural framework) included the research procedures that are distributed between

the research community, which consisted of (12) plays, and the sample that was analyzed and represented by three plays were intentionally taken from the research community (a cat on a hot tin roof, the American dream, a pillar of fire) and the approach that followed in the analysis of the sample, which is The descriptive (analytical) approach. the fourth chapter, it contains the results reached by the researcher in this research.

Keywords: (pragmatism, acting, American theatrical).

## **البراغماتية وتمثيلاتها في النص المسرحي الأمريكي**

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### **الملخص:**

لاشك أن الفلسفة البراغماتية أصبحت أحد روافد المعرفة الإنسانية في العالم بشكل عام وفي أمريكا بشكل خاص ، حيث أتت هذه الخصوصية حسب أصلها في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية ، وأصبحت حضوراً فاعلاً في الأوساط الثقافية لما تضمنته من مفاهيم ومقترحات أغنت العلوم والفنون والآداب بهذه المفاهيم. لذلك استطاع الكتاب المسرحيون الأمريكيون استيعاب مفاهيمها ، وانعكس ذلك لاحقاً في كتابة نصوصهم المسرحية في مراحل التطور التي مر بها المسرح الأمريكي. وقد ساهم هذا النوع من الفلسفة في إثراء هذه النصوص شكلاً ومضموناً لما تتميز به من قيم ومفاهيم وأفكار غنية ، بالإضافة إلى ما تجنيه من فائدة للإنسان بشكل خاص والمجتمع بشكل عام. البحث في أربعة فصول ، تضمن الفصل الأول (الإطار المنهجي) ، حيث حددت الباحثة مشكلة البحث والتي تتلخص في السؤال التالي (كيف تم تمثيل الفلسفة

البراغماتية في النص المسرحي الأمريكي؟) وأهمية ذلك. البحث الذي أشار إلى أهمية الفلسفة البراغماتية وتمثيلها في النص المسرحي الأمريكي ، وكما يتضح في هذا الفصل ، فإن الهدف من البحث هو الكشف عن كيفية تمثيل مفاهيم البراغماتية في النص المسرحي الأمريكي. أما الفصل الثاني وهو الإطار النظري فقد اشتمل على قسمين. تناول المبحث الأول البراغماتية وجذورها وفلاسفتها ، بينما تناول المبحث الثاني الفلسفة البراغماتية بين الأساس الاجتماعي والثقافي في النص المسرحي ، كما اهتم بظهور المسرح الأمريكي وتطوره. ثم ذكرت الباحثة الدراسات السابقة وكذلك المؤشرات التي نتجت عن الإطار النظري ، وتضمن الفصل الثالث (الإطار الإجرائي) إجراءات البحث الموزعة بين

مجتمع البحث المكون من (١٢) مسرحية ، والعينة التي تم تحليلها وتمثيلها بثلاث مسرحيات تم أخذها عن قصد من مجتمع البحث (قطعة على سطح من الصفيح الساخن ، الحلم الأمريكي ، عمود النار) و المنهج الذي اتبع في تحليل العينة وهو المنهج الوصفي (التحليلي). أما الفصل الرابع فقد احتوى على النتائج التي توصل إليها الباحث في هذا البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: (البراغماتية، التمثيل، المسرحي الأمريكي).

## Chapter one

### Research problem:

The emergence of theater is due to a set of philosophical, social and psychological factors, Where his upbringing was linked to the human need to express his pains, hopes and struggles with all the things around him. The theater provided an opportunity for man to think about what is going on around him, explaining things and

revealing its components in a sensual and aesthetic way. This provides the appropriate conditions for feeling a problem that can be summarized in the following question: (How were the concepts of pragmatism represented in the American theatrical text?)

### **Research importance:**

The importance of the current research is to shed light on the concepts of pragmatic philosophy and its representation in the American theatrical text.

### **Search aim:**

The current research aims to:

(Recognizing pragmatism and its representations in the American theatrical text)

### **Search limits :**

Time limit: 1945-1975

Place boundary: United States of America

The objective limit: a study of the concepts of pragmatism and how it is represented in the American theatrical text.

### **Define terms:**

**Pragmatism:** It is a philosophy based on the principle of benefit obtained as a result of a logical, practical (experimental) interpretation of ideas or facts in order to reach successful and valid results, provided that knowledge is a tool for those results.

**Representations:** It is the process of transferring the concepts, ideas and knowledge that the mind absorbs into the space of the

theatrical text according to its style related to the direction of the writer himself.

## **Chapter two:**

### **The first topic: the roots of pragmatic philosophy**

The roots of pragmatic philosophy extend to several philosophies that preceded it in its inception at the level of time and place, and these philosophies varied with their intellectual, scientific and experimental . The roots of pragmatic philosophy go back to the proposals of the Greek philosopher (Heraclitus) and his principle of change. As he sees that things remain the same and that the world is constantly changing and there is nothing left at all (Harbi Abbas, 1999, p. 125. )

the change according to (Heraclitus) ((It is a relative word and that what we call stillness is a slow change or a change in an invisible garment. And that every compound dissolves gradually, everything comes and goes and this happens in different proportions) (- Harbi Abbas p. 126.)

, That is why the researcher believes that pragmatic philosophy does not know stability, but rather is in permanent change because it is. (Philosophy that does not have any certain or affirmative beliefs, or any principles, except for its style and method) (William James, 2008, p. 75. )

As for the Sophistic philosophy, it contributed to laying the foundation stone in building pragmatic philosophy through what it emphasized by making (man is the measure of everything, the measure of the existence of existing things and the measure of the non-existence of things that do not exist) as he carries the mind that distinguishes him from other creatures, as this creature is the

one who gives Things are their reality and distinguish between them what is good and what is evil. (Amira Helmy Matar, , 1998), p. 131.4)

(Knowing the soul according to Socrates is also a knowledge of goodness and the realization of virtue, because he who knows himself knows what suits her and what does not suit her, that is, he knows the good that is specific to her. And since the ultimate good or the ultimate goal that a person should turn to throughout his life is happiness, then the wise man should strive to achieve it with action and proper planning). (Amira Helmy Matar, 1998 p. 150 )

Proper planning helps to acquire knowledge that ultimately leads to organizing the life of the individual and directing him to a certain behavior that achieves happiness. Where thought has become the means to reach the ends, right thought finally leads to satisfactory results, and this is what William James sought in his philosophy of pragmatism, where he states that (The right thought is the first discoverer of scientific methods of success, And the means of shaping life and the tool of controlling it and directing it to everything that is beneficial and beneficial to man) (Samah Rafi' Muhammad, , 1973, p. 596).

(The purpose that Socrates sought was to know good and evil and the behavior that results from it, Through thought, action and this is what is found in pragmatic philosophy, based on its reliance on scientific behavior that is directed by thought Youssef Karam, History of Greek Philosophy.

Through science, the future can be predicted, because the scientist is the researcher who follows the path of experiment to reach the truth that he expected to happen or that he thought would happen,

Because conjecture is one of the means that leads to knowledge, as Epicurus stressed (the necessity of clarity in comprehending the concepts and words used) (Majid Fakhry, 1991, pg. 167

that clarity in words leads to lack of confusion in concepts, and thus achieves the knowledge that the speaker hopes.

Where (Epicurean) linked knowledge with science, meaning that the knowledge obtained to man comes through experience using scientific formulas to obtain knowledge. And happiness depends on this knowledge and this is what the pragmatic philosophy followed later on. (Epicureus) points out that (obtaining correct knowledge of the causes of things is within the competence of natural science and that happiness depends on this knowledge) (Majid Fakhry, pg. 167)

. Another principle that Stoic philosophy followed is its belief that nature consists of different elements in terms of form and matter because nature (a principle of sympathy between all cosmic phenomena that take from the lowest assets to minerals, plants and animals to the divine world and is dominated by the care that emanates from the universal mind or God ).( Majid Fakhry, pg. 175)

The concept of philosophy for the Stoics is a practical philosophy, that is, it can be adopted to serve man, organize his life and know what is going on around him so that he can control or avoid it.

This is what the pragmatists later sought regarding the concept of philosophy, and thus the ideas of the pragmatists coincided with the Stoics in their view of man. Especially the mind, where the Stoics see that all knowledge of man is acquired, not instinctive, and comes through learning and watching ((They depicted the

mind as a white page, with sensory impressions coming from outside, and engraved in it like a seal on wax, so that imaginations or imaginations occur)). Amira Helmy, a previously mentioned source, pg. 377

. The teachings of Stoicism are based on the principle that (life according to nature) means (life according to reason and the law that applies to the natural universe and human life alike. It requires the necessary interdependence of beings with each other so that they do not give the most trivial things a value for the whole).( Majed Fakhry, , pg. 38412). This is to some extent consistent with the principle of pragmatism, as for the philosophy of Nicholas Micah Veli (1469-1527). Who is considered one of the philosophers who looked at state policy and its management mechanisms, Because he considers the state , and the ruler must preserve its pride and prestige internally and externally, and that (the prince uses every means, good or evil, to preserve his position, as necessary) (Karim Matti, 2001, p. 17). As for the philosopher (Francis Bacon 1561-1626), he turned philosophical thought into a tool for serving humanity while before philosophy was in the service of religion, and thus, his philosophy was characterized by a practical nature (Philosophy is no longer a matter of pure contemplation, but has become concerned with the future of the human race and the forces working in nature. .( Karim Matti, , p. 38), This practical view has been accepted by pragmatists, as it has become one of the important propositions in pragmatic philosophy, especially its philosopher John Dewey, who considered pragmatism a philosophy (to re-arrange and create the world and to create the future. Without the trouble of searching for any correct knowledge of the present or the past, while denying the rigidity of ideas related to the past ) (Morris Cornforth, 1960,p76)

## **The second topic / pragmatic philosophy between the social and cultural foundation in the theatrical text**

After the researcher reviewed in the previous section the roots and the most important philosophers of pragmatism in God is goodness, then happiness is the result of goodness, as Dewey explains this by saying that happiness does not constitute the thousandth success. Obstacles and remove sources of deficiency. – (John Dewey, 1963), p. 318

### **Richard Rorty and the New Pragmatism:**

The pragmatic thought, which was founded by (Pearce, James and Dewey) in the United States of America in the 1930s, declined due to the growth of European-born philosophies such as analytical philosophy as well as logical positivism and achieved a wide spread that reduced the direct impact of pragmatic philosophy. However, these philosophies did not last long, due to the emergence of a new pragmatism by a number of American philosophers, namely (Queen, Codman, Yotnam, Davidson, as well as Rorty himself (Muhammad Jadidi, , (Beirut: Al-Kifar, 2008), p. 53).

Pragmatism took a new name at the hands of these philosophers, and it did not remain as it was at the hands of the first founders, but rather became a new pragmatism in its content and even being called as it is now by (Rorty) (The new, updated or neo-pragmatism is the name given to a philosophical current that has emerged) (Gerard Deludal, 2009), pg. 17 The United States of America and getting acquainted with the nature of thought and its most important features and concepts. It became clear that the supreme goal of pragmatic philosophy is how to find appropriate ways to create conditions and create the appropriate atmosphere to

help man survive by achieving optimal compatibility with the variables around him. And pragmatism realized that man is the only creature concerned with creating these conditions, through the use of the mind to produce ideas and translate them into beneficial behavior. Since the theatrical text is based on several elements that formed its aesthetic space, namely (personality, idea and dialogue), and in these elements, the concepts of pragmatism are represented within the structure of the text. As the theatrical character is central to the structure of the theatrical text because it is the carrier of ideas and the language through which these ideas are transmitted in the form of dialogue between characters or through internal monologues. and evolution. The American theater became important and had an active presence in the international theater scene in the twentieth century, but this appearance is considered late in relation to the development of theater in the cities of Europe. This delay is due to a number of reasons:-

1 - America was subjected to colonialism, which was represented by the British, as they were among the Protestant religious sects who were hostile to the theater.

2- The belief of those sects that the theater is a place which does not present anything good, but only vices, in which the laws of the state and the laws of God are not applied, and in which sexual, social and religious violations can be practiced with complete impunity. (Marie Elias., p. 177)The researcher believes that the reason for the delay in the emergence of theater in the United States of America is due to political, economic, religious and social factors. That is why the society remained unaware of anything about the dramatic arts throughout the period before the War of Independence. The undermining of the freedoms practiced

on the adherents of dramatic art increased their resentment, so the theater workers began to demand a license to practice the profession of acting and the opening of theaters. This happened after the War of Independence ( Barnard Hoyt, pp. 14-15)

### **Previous studies:**

The researcher did not find previous studies.

### **The indicators that resulted from the theoretical framework through the following:**

1- Pragmatism goes back to different origins, and this difference gave it the flexibility to be suitable for expressing the reality that is characterized by continuous change due to scientific and technological development.

2- Pragmatism makes the active human being the supreme value. In this sense, it abolished societal stratification and therefore it does not believe in centralism.

### **Chapter Three / Research Procedures**

The research procedures that are distributed between the mention of the research community, which consisted of [3] plays [a cat on a hot tin roof, the American dream, a pillar of fire] and the sample that was analyzed and represented by three plays that were intentionally taken from the research community, which is (Acat on a hot tin roof ) and the approach that he followed in Sample analysis, which is the descriptive [analytical] method.

**Author: Tennessee Williams**

**Play / cat on a hot tin roof ,/year /**

The play (Cat on a Hot Tin Roof) revolves around a family living in the American South, consisting of a father, a mother, and two married sons. And his wife (Margaret), but (Burke) suffers from a deterioration in his personality due to problems he went through, and he saw himself unable to understand the circumstances of the surrounding society and adapt to them, and he failed to reach any level of understanding even with the closest people to him, his wife and father ,Then the result was his loss and resorting to alcohol, so he became addicted to his drink and no longer found pleasure in life except drinking wine, after that he resigned from his job as he worked as a broadcaster for sports programs, and then his wife tried to prevent him from drinking alcohol and sharing the bed with her until she carried a child from him to be able to share the inheritance that the older brother and his wife want to control and deprive (Barak) and his wife of it or seize the largest share of it because of the presence of the five children and the inheritance is (28 thousand acres) of the finest land and a few million dollars , , owned by their father after spending his whole life working with all his strength and activity until he was finally able to accumulate that wealth. The father is an honest model for the self-made man who started his life from nothing and then ended up with all this wealth, and that his cancer is the incentive that made From (Jobar), the eldest son, to plot plans and conspiracies to seize all the family's property, As for the mother's character, her role was secondary, as Williams drew it in a caricature, and in some scenes it was an area for ridicule by the father. They only have to wear jewelry, but she is the greatest love

for (Barak) because she knows what Jobar and his wife are thinking.

The character (Margaret) is the main axis of the play and has the largest space to take over the three chapters, so that she ends up convincing her husband to give up alcohol and share her bed with him until the news of her pregnancy comes true , because she invented the issue of pregnancy at the end of the play in order to gain the consent and acceptance of the father and mother and be They both have a share in the inheritance, so the lie broke against the family and achieved what it wanted, as (Margaret) possessed confidence, strength of character, courage and steadfastness, and was not afraid to speak the truth and did not hide behind a mask of falsehood. Because she does not suffer from repression or complexity, but she knows what she wants in order to reach her goal. As this family is characterized by disintegration, lack of harmony and understanding due to the problems that each one of them suffers from and the nature of the goals that each one of them aspires to achieve. Thus, family members are separated from each other Each of them involves himself and the language of dialogue is absent between them. The author tries hard to reach the reality of the motives that drive the behavior of individuals, as he sees that realizing the truth , The constancy of the character that Maggie possesses.

And the strong will and her insistence on confrontation is the reason for achieving what she wants, for frankness and openness was one of the means that Maggie used with her husband to help him get rid of drinking alcohol and return to his normal life and practice what he should practice in the actual reality in which he lives In , therefore, the character of Margaret was distinguished by intelligence and intelligence, and this is what pragmatic

philosophy searched for, which made it to be this character central in Williams' text, as it is pragmatically oriented. Intelligent person has a great interest in pragmatists.

**Margaret:** I will tell you what their goal is, my dear man, their goal is to deprive you of your father's farms and we know that Papa will die of cancer.

**Margaret:** (The blind rolls down the window and casts a golden shadow on the room) Yes....the report arrived...but it didn't surprise me....

the symptoms showed as soon as we got here last spring, and I bet you your brother and his wife were sure of that too. That explains their postponement of their trip Margaret: but the laws of silence don't help. When something occupies your memory or in your mind, and the laws of silence do not work, as if you lock the door with the key in a house on fire, hoping that you will forget that the house is burning. But escaping from facing the fire does not extinguish the fire. Silence about something embodies this thing. It grows and festers in silence and becomes little by little. Come on, wear your clothes (Barnard Hoytpp. 14-15)

Margaret seeks to reach a higher good, by eliminating the manifestations of evil that surrounded her, represented by (Joeber) and his wife, and she is ready to take the difficult paths and has the ability to endure in order to reach her goals, as well as that she She does not commit any of the things that morals have rejected because she does not allow herself to turn into an adulteress or something like that because of her husband's desertion from her. Rather, she insisted on facing troubles and difficulties.

#### **the fourth chapter:**

It contains the results , including:

- 1- The theatrical text contained characters with pragmatic action and other non-pragmatic characters, which led to the creation of a conflict between those characters, and the character with pragmatic behavior was always the superior.
- 2- The search for the self is the factor that all pragmatic characters seek in the theatrical text. Self-affirmation is a product of the pragmatic behavior of a character

#### **Conclusions:**

- 1- The plurality of the American race was the reason for the public proposition that characterized the pragmatic text.
- 2- The commitment to the three units of the pragmatic theatrical text was a motive for the American writer to clarify the general social issue while staying away from the ornate language.

#### **Resource**

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