Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht with particular reference to the 'epic Theatre'

Thesis for the degree of Ph.D.

University of Leicester

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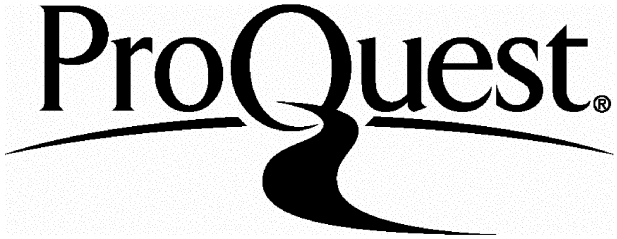

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Introduction

The major part of this thesis is concerned with Brecht's work between 1924-1948, the period during which he developed his ideas on the epic theatre both in his theoretical writings and his plays.

Brecht's four early plays (cf. Chapter I) are not properly speaking 'epic' plays, but they have features which foreshadow the epic theatre and I have considered them to be relevant as an introduction to Brecht's subsequent work.

I am indebted to the Bertolt Brecht Archiv in Berlin for allowing me to consult a number of unpublished fragments which have been dealt with more particularly in Chapter III.

In view of the amount of material which had to be treated in this thesis, particularly in connection with the number of plays Brecht wrote, I have confined my investigations to his imaginative or 'original' plays. Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg (1941-44), Die Antigone des Sophokles (1947), Der Hofmeister (1950), Coriolan (1952-53), Der Prozess der Jeanne d'Arc zu Rouen 1431 (1952), Don Juan (1952) and Pauken und Trompeten (1955) are all adaptations and, although they are interesting examples of Brecht's theatrical methods, I have not dealt with them because the

playwright's real contribution to the theatre derives from his more creative works.

This thesis follows a chronological pattern as far as the successive chapters are concerned, with one major exception: what I consider to be Brecht's most important plays have been treated together and not in the strictly chronological order of his work as a whole.

The chapters dealing with the plays have been sub-divided under different headings in order to mark development in various spheres.

I should like to acknowledge gratefully the assistance I have received from the University of Leicester, both through my appointment as a Research Student and by various grants towards my work in Berlin and towards cost of final preparation of the thesis. I should also like to record my sincere thanks to Professor Powell for his sustained interest in my work and for much valuable advice.

Chapter I

Brecht's Four Early Plays

Introduction.

Opinion is divided about the relevance of these works to the later theory and practice of Brecht's theatre[1]; it is certainly true that they were written before he had developed any very clear notion of the Epic Theatre (cf. Chapter II: the really significant theoretical writings do not begin until 1924). This lack of a firm theoretical background is apparent from the very diversity of the four plays, which makes it difficult to trace a pattern of systematic development. At this time Brecht was undoubtedly experimenting. He continued to do so throughout his career, but never again were his experiments to carry him so far and wide. Nevertheless they are not conducted in a vacuum: in the absence of an original aesthetic or a political creed, the lines on which he experiments are determined to a considerable extent by contemporary expressionist dramatists, and by dramatists of the past, with whom he senses an affinity.[2]

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1. Herbert Luthy sees a complete break between Brecht's early "expressionist" period and his work after 1926. cf. Of Poor Bert Brecht in Encounter, No.34, July 1956, p.40: All Brecht's lyric strength was abruptly buried

under the weight of the revelation that the poet's task is to 'change the world' and 'teach the people'. Ernst Schumacher endeavours to show the shortcomings of these plays in the light of dialectical materialism. His criticism of Trommeln in der Nacht in Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brecht 1918-1933, Berlin, 1955, p.56, will suffice to show the dogmatic rigidity of his approach: "Dass Brecht es viel eher gelang, das bürgerliche und kleinbürgerliche Element zu gestalten als die wirklich revolutionären Kräfte, ergibt sich aus seiner eigenen Klassenzugehörigkeit und dem Mangel an materialistischer Dialektik." Walther Jens detects a continuity of feeling linking the early and the later plays and considers the Marxism of the latter to be simply a kind of superstructure. cf. Statt einer Literaturgeschichte, 2nd edition, Pfullingen 1958, p.173 : "... Brechts spätere Stücke - und das gilt mit allem Nachdruck zu betonen - (sind) ... um keinen Deut marxistischer als seine ersten Dramen." Jürgen Rühle sees a link between the earlier and the Marxist plays in Brecht's awareness of contemporary political trends even in Baal: "Schon in seinem ersten Werk hat Brecht den seismographischen Sinn für das Zeitalter der Totalitarismen bewiesen"(cf. Das gefesselte Theater, Köln/Berlin, 1957, p.204). W. Berghahn conceives a thematic unity in what he calls "die Grundsituation des Bedrohtwerdens" and a change in Brecht's outlook which is initiated with Mann ist Mann is determined by the poet's realisation that escape from social pressure is impossible: "Brecht hat den Glauben an ein Entrinnenkönnen endgültig aufgeben müssen. Der Zwang der Verhältnisse war stärker als Baals Pathos der Ausschweifung (Bert Brecht und die Konsequenz, Frankfurter Hefte, IX, 5, May 1954, p.385).

2. cf. Chapter II, p.4.

In spite of the diversity of these early plays, a striking unity of feeling and expression runs through them. As an early reviewer once wrote, they are:

> ... vier grosse Dramen ... völlig einheitlich in Sprache und Guss, jedes ein echter Brecht, aber auch jedes so verschieden vom anderen.[1]

The first World War and the playwright's experiences as an orderly in a military hospital played a considerable part in turning the young poet into the anarchist he reveals himself to be in his early plays. The stages of Brecht's development from an "Augsburger Hausdichter" to a poet of protest may be traced in his contributions to Der Erzähler, from the glowing patriotism of the 16-year old boy[2] at the outbreak of the war to the dark tones of Tod im Walde[3] incorporated in Baal. Brecht is not unique in his bitter denunciation of convention and morality, that is, all that stood for the society which collapsed after the war and the revolution. Even if a writer like Unruh has otherwise very little in common with Brecht, his drama, Ein Geschlecht (written in the trenches 1915/1916), reveals in the figure of the Ältester Sohn

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1. Hans O. Münsterer in Der Erzähler (Augsburg), No.18, 18 March 1924.
2. Wir sind gerüstet, moralisch gerüstet. Der feste deutsche Charakter, an dem die deutschen Dichter seit zwei Jahrhunderten schafften ... bewährt sich nun ... Wir alle, alle Deutschen fürchten Gott und sonst nichts auf der Welt. Der Erzähler, No.90, 17 August 1914.
3. Der Erzähler, No.20, 12 March 1918.

and his boundless aggressiveness a post-war cynicism very akin to that of Brecht. In Unruh's drama, the over-developed sensuality of this figure - he threatens to rape his sister - is used to show up the rottenness and hypocrisy of the society which provoked the war. In his own protests, too, Brecht turns away from the bankrupt moral standards of civilized society to something more fundamental - the senses and the basic instincts. In Baal (1918) he ranges against the materialistic society represented in the play by Mech and Mjurk, Baal's atavism.[1]

Unlike Unruh - who does exactly this in his following play, Platz - Brecht does not seek to convey a message of reform through his protests against society: his only message is a kind of desperate sauve-qui-peut. He does not, however, fly from bourgeois smugness to the Romantic idealism of the literary Bohemian. The flight from this milieu is not upwards into the realm of intellectual genius, but downwards into the swamp of society, where instinct and sexual energy are dominant. In this there can be no doubt that Brecht is strongly influenced by

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1. cf. the opening scene of the play. Stücke I, pp.11-15.

Wedekind.[1] Perhaps, it might not be too far-fetched to see in Baal a portrait of Wedekind himself. It certainly is a eulogy on Wedekind's ideas of sexual freedom and ruthless vitality.[2] In Trommeln in der Nacht (1918/20) Kragler, too, returning to a society that has gone adrift from its moral moorings, refuses to be enlisted in the forces which are trying to build a new society on the basis of a humane rather than an egotistical materialism, and falls back upon the gratification of the senses as the surest guide.

Characteristic of the age - and of Expressionism in particular - is also the rejection of the claims of intellect.[3] In this aspect, Expressionism is a "back to

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1. In 1918 Brecht had published in the Augsburger Neueste Nachrichten, No.60, 12 March, a Nekrolog on Wedekind in which he reveals his deep admiration for the playwright. His practice of reciting his poems to the accompaniment of a guitar was, doubtless, in emulation of Wedekind. cf. Arnolt Bronnen: Tage mit Bertolt Brecht, München/ Wien/Basel 1960, p.13. "Irgend wer (i.e. Brecht) hatte die kleine feuchte Zigarre weggelegt, hatte die auf seinen Schenkeln liegende Gitarre gegen seinen hohlen Bauch gedrückt, hatte mit einer krächzenden, konzonantischen Stimme zu intonieren begonnen."
2. cf. Erdgeist, where Lulu's marital career might almost be called a model for Baal's libertinism. Lulu's indifference to the fate of her two husbands, Goll and Schwarz, is echoed in Baal's lack of concern about Johanna and Sophie. Lulu's murder of her third husband, Schön, is paralleled by Baal's murder of Ekart.
3. cf. Sokel: The Writer in Extremis, Stanford, California, 1959, p.88: "Expressionist vitalism reacts against an excessive cerebralism, and its intensity is proportionate to the degree to which the intellect is felt as an inhibition and disintegrating force in personality."

nature" movement - only it seeks to go much farther back than Rousseau ever did. It would be difficult to imagine a more earthy character than Baal.[1] As such, he is conceived in direct contrast to Grabbe in Hanns Johst's Der Einsame, of which Baal is a deliberate parody.[2] Johst's Grabbe is filled with a consciousness of his high destiny as poet and genius; his anti-social behaviour is a consequence of his efforts to realise that destiny. He is a typically Romantic instance of "le malheur d'être poète". Baal, on the other hand, is a primitive, who suffers no internal conflict, is bound by no ties, whose poetry flows from the same dark atavistic sources as his sexual vitality.

This same rejection of intellect is made clear in Eduard II in the conflict between the King and that shabby

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1. cf. Baal, Stücke I, p.44: "Jetzt hat der Regen aufgehört. Das Gras muss noch nass sein ... Durch unsere Blätter ging das Wasser nicht ... Das junge Laub trieft vor Nässe, aber hier in den Wurzeln ist es trocken. (Bös) Warum kann man nicht mit den Pflanzen schlafen?"

2. The story goes, according to Georg Pfanzelt - one of Brecht's friends -, that the play was written in four days as a furious refutation of Johst's false idealism. cf. M. Esslin: Brecht: A Choice of Evils, London, 1959, p. 9: The model, according to Brecht himself, was a local ne'er-do-well: "Die dramatische Biographie behandelt das Leben eines Mannes, der wirklich gelebt hat. Es war ein gewisser Joseph K., von dem mir Leute erzählten, die sich sowohl an seine Person als auch auf das Aufsehen, das er seinerzeit erregte, noch deutlich erinnern konnten ..." cf. Die Szene, Berlin 1926, No.I, p.26.

Machiavellian, Mortimer.[1] Here there is an unmistakable echo of the problem raised in Georg Kaiser's Der gerettete Alkibiades[2], a theme which evidently so impressed Brecht that he reproduced it in the form of a short story in his Kalendergeschichten.[3]

Under these varied forms, Brecht seems to be trying to state an agonising human problem - the problem of isolation. This is again a sensation which may have been induced in his generation by the loosening of social and political ties that had seemed indestructible. This is a feeling which is thoroughly characteristic of Büchner, for example[4], but which may also be found in Wedekind[5] and in Kaiser.[6] It is nowhere stated, however, with more intensity than in Im Dickicht der Städte:

> Shlink: Die unendliche Vereinzelung des Menschen macht eine Feindschaft zum unerreichbaren Ziel. Aber auch mit den Tieren ist eine Verständigung nicht möglich.
> Garga: Die Sprache reicht zur Verständigung nicht aus.
> Shlink: Ich habe Tiere beobachtet. Die Liebe, Wärme aus Körpernähe ist unsere einzige Gnade in der Finsternis! Aber dennoch die Vereinigung der Organe ist die einzige, sie überbrückt nicht die Entzweiung der Sprache. Dennoch vereinigen sie sich, Wesen zu erzeugen, die ihnen in ihrer trostlosen Vereinzelung beistehen möchten. Und die Generationen blicken sich kalt in die Augen.[7]

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.77. Ihr Mortimers rechnet
Stumpfäugig, seid in Büchern daheim
Wie Würmer. Doch in Büchern steht nichts
Von Eduard, der nichts liest, nicht rechnet
Nichts weiss,und der mit Natur verknüpft ist
Und von sehr andrer Speise sich nährt.

2. The cunning by which Sokrates wins the battle and saves Alkibiades turns out to be simply a forced virtue, springing from physical impediment, the thorn in his foot which prevents him from running away. cf. Sokel, op.cit., Chapter 4, where this thorn is taken as an emblem of the pathological nature of intellect.

3. Aufbau, Berlin 1955, Der verwundete Sokrates, p.151 ff.

4. cf. Büchner, Werke und Briefe, Insel Verlag, Leipzig 1949, p.9: "Wir wissen wenig von einander. Wir sind Dickhäuter, wir strecken die Hände nacheinander aus, aber es ist vergebliche Mühe, wir reiben nur das grobe Leder aneinander ab - wir sind sehr einsam." (Dantons Tod, Act I, Sc. I). A very similar metaphor is used by Shlink in Im Dickicht, Stücke I, p.237: "Die Menschenhaut im natürlichen Zustand ist zu dünn für diese Welt, deshalb sorgt der Mensch dafür, dass sie dicker wird. Die Methode wäre unanfechtbar, wenn man das Wachstum stoppen könnte. Ein Stück präpariertes Leder zum Beispiel bleibt, aber eine Haut wächst, sie wird dicker und dicker."

5. cf. Wedekind, Prosa, Dramen, Verse, München 1960, p.533. "Die Menschen kennen sich nicht - sie wissen nicht wie sie sind. Nur wer selber kein Mensch ist, der kennt sie. Jedes Wort, das sie sagen, ist unwahr, erlogen. Das wissen sie nicht, denn sie sind heute so und morgen so, je nachdem, ob sie gegessen, getrunken und geliebt haben oder nicht. Nur der Körper bleibt auf einige Zeit, was er ist, und nur die Kinder haben Vernunft. Die grossen sind wie die Tiere: keines weiss, was er tut." (Gräfin von Geschwitz in Die Büchse der Pandora, Act III.)

6. The Kassierer in Von Morgens bis Mitternachts (Berlin, 1930) feels himself trapped in a net of false social relationships. His attempts to achieve communion with nature or society only lead to the realisation of his isolation: "Hier stehe ich. Oben stehe ich. Zwei sind zuviel. Der Raum fasst nur einen. Einsamkeit ist Raum. Raum ist Einsamkeit", p.130.

7. cf. Stücke I, p.291 f.

At this stage Brecht is clearly under the spell of Expressionism - but that, as we have seen, is a very complex movement; what is significant is that Brecht chooses apparently in his models that atavistic strain of Expressionism which recoiled on the instincts as the only safe ground - not the more idealistic strain that sought to re-build society on the recognition of the supreme value of human personality (Sorge and Toller, for instance).

Theme and structure.

Under this heading the two earlier plays, Baal (1918) and Trommeln in der Nacht (1918/20), may, perhaps, be distinguished from the later two, Im Dickicht der Städte (1921/24) and Eduard II (1924), in that the former are largely dominated by one figure, that of the outlaw, or the outcast, and the latter revolve around a conflict between two men. The dynamics of Baal and Trommeln are determined by the almost unhesitating progress of the hero towards death or sexual fulfilment. This is particularly true of Baal, a work almost devoid of plot and situation and owing its unity simply to the figure of Baal: it is significant that he appears in every scene of the play. The way in which his career is pursued in a hectic series of episodes is reminiscent of the "Stationen" so popular with

Expressionist dramatists. This is a lyrical, existential work: the hero scarcely engages in the social matrix at all. His affinities are not with society, but with the forces of nature; in no other play does Brecht thus seek to represent the demonic power of nature. As Alfred Kerr said sarcastically[1]:

> Brecht arbeitet emsig mit Nacht, Luft, Mond. Wie zur Büchnerzeit; zur Sturm und Drangzeit.

The whole work is dominated by a sense of the natural cycle of birth and decay.[2] In Baal it would be difficult to detect features of the Epic Theatre: its only link with later developments is the implicit rejection of a capitalist society.[3]

Trommeln in der Nacht, on the other hand, offers on the face of it more affinity with epic themes. Kragler

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1. cf. Die Welt im Drama, Köln/Berlin, 1954, p.166.
2. This is synthesised in the Choral vom grossen Baal (cf. Stücke I, p.7 ff.) which acts as a prelude to the whole play. cf. also Jhering: Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.359: "Im Baal ergibt sich das Sinnbildliche unmittelbar aus dem Motiv. Baal wächst von selbst in die Natur: in die Wälder, in die Wiesen, in den Himmel, in die Erde. Fruchtbarkeit und Verwesung. Geniessen und Verfall ..."
3. For example, Baal's treatment of the Mech family in scene I and his quarrel with Mjurk in scene 7. This rejection, however, is not the central issue of the play. There is little or no justification for suggesting, as does Jürgen Rühle - (cf. Das Gefesselte Theater, Köln/Berlin 1957, p.196: "Es ist ja nicht wirklich Natur, Urwald, Wildnis, Fauna und Flora, was da im Baal so üppig wuchert und vegetiert. Das Dickicht der Tropen steht doch nur als Gleichnis für das Dickicht der Städte") - that Brecht's gaze, at this stage, was fixed on the jungle of society, rather than the natural one.

is not adrift in the world of nature, but in the world of society. He is placed in a specific locality and a topical situation[1]: Berlin with its middle-class war-profiteers where there is no room for "ghosts" like Kragler returning from the war. The one natural phenomenon which manages to put in an appearance - the moon - is satirically mechanised and tinged with the prevailing political complexion of the work. Kragler, like Baal, is an outsider, but an outsider by force of circumstance rather than by temperament. On the other hand, unlike Baal, he is forced to reflect on the courses of action open to him: to choose between loyalty to ideals and satisfaction of the senses. He finds himself in an ambiguous situation both as regards his emotional life and as regards the political situation: there is something rotten in his relationship with Anna as well as in the State. He escapes from his dilemma by the sure path of sexual instinct:

Ich bin ein Schwein und das Schwein geht heim.[2]

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1. This is quite different from Baal, where the Bavarian setting is only hinted at. It is conveyed only by the typical scenes in public houses and cabarets, as well as the typical activities of the wood-cutters, apart from the deliberately vague mention of 10° East of Greenwich. In Baal atmosphere - created by the orgiastic settings and stage-effects to convey a sense of the growth and restlessness of nature (rain, wind, various kinds of trees) - is more important than precise location.

2. Stücke I, p.188

This is an ironical gloss on the "Heimkehrer" theme - as Brecht says much later: "Die schäbigste aller möglichen Varianten".[1] Kragler nevertheless is the first of Brecht's anti-heroic figures.

Trommeln in der Nacht is the first of the Grosstadt plays, but it is only so in the superficial sense. In considering the setting and theme of the work, Brecht's alleged motive in writing it may not be without significance. He told Feuchtwanger that he wrote it "ausschliesslich um des Geldes wegen".[2] This may be regarded as a typical piece of bravura but, on the other hand, there seems no reason to doubt more than the qualification "ausschliesslich", and such a motive would help to explain the choice of a topical theme. The desire to have the work performed - it was, in fact, the first of Brecht's plays to be produced[3] - may also help to explain the relatively conventional structure: division into five acts and adherence to the unity of time. This division, however, is more apparent than real for it did not strike

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1. Stücke I, Aufbau, Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke, p.5.
2. cf. Die Weltbühne. Bertolt Brecht dargestellt für Engländer, 4 April 1928.
3. In Munich, 30 September 1922.

as organic either the critics[1] or Brecht himself, who nonchalantly recommended that the entire third act might be cut out[2] and who was later so dissatisfied with the last three acts that he considered suppressing the work altogether.[3]

Set as it is against a familiar contemporary background, Trommeln in der Nacht might seem at first sight to owe something to the naturalistic problem play. It is differentiated, however, by certain features that are significant for Brecht's later development. The methods of staging, as indicated by the stage-directions, point to a desire to disillusion. The naturalistic dialogue of the Balickes and Murk (more Bavarian, actually, than Berlin) is strangely set off by biblical reminiscences; and there are several points where we detect a tendency to Episierung.[4] The obvious attempt to shock and provoke can in itself hardly be described as an epic element.

Im Dickicht and Eduard II show a widening of the hero's range of experience to include emotional ties with another human being. In Im Dickicht the social factor is also brought further into prominence. In this play we find the paradox of modern mass living by which the inhabitants of the densely populated cities are more

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1. cf. Alfred Kerr: Die Welt im Drama, Köln/Berlin 1954, p.165: "Es ist ein altes Recht der dramatischen Dichter,

dass ihnen im fünften Akt nichts einfällt. Hier schon im drittletzten. (Der Dritte darf, nach Brechts Angabe, wegfallen: Suche der Braut nach dem Heimkehrer auf den Strassen.) Vierter Akt: der Heimkehrer im Schnapsladen; Wiederholungen. Lärm. Kein Vorwärts. Fünfter Akt: Begegnung mit der Braut ... Das könnte bis Weihnachten beliebig fortgehen; so dies an das geleimt."

2. cf. Stücke I, p.118. (Aufbau)

3. cf. Stücke I, (Aufbau), Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke, p.7.

4. At the end of Act II, the waiter Manke interrupts the action of the play at the dramatic moment when Anna informs Kragler that she cannot belong to him. In plain narrative form Manke produces a detached summary of the situation. cf. Stücke I, p.151: "Die Revolution in den Zeitungsvirteln spielt auch eine Rolle und dann ist da ein Geheimnis, dass die Braut hat, etwas das der Liebhaber aus Afrika, der vier Jahre gewartet hat, nicht weiss. Es ist ja noch ganz unentschieden." At the end of Act III both Manke and Babusch join in commenting on Anna's flight to the Zeitungsvierteln in search of Kragler and produce something of a choric effect. cf. Stücke I, p.162: "Babusch: Aber der Liebhaber wird die Geliebte in den Rinnstein hauen und die Höllenfahrt vorziehen. O Sie romantisches Institut, Sie! Manke: Schon entschwindet sie, die in die Zeitungsviertel eilt. Wie ein weisses Segel ist sie noch sichtbar, wie eine Idee, wie eine letzte Strophe, wie ein berauschter Schwan, der über die Gewässer fliegt ..."

isolated than they ever were in a primitive social organisation. From the contemplation of man's loneliness, Brecht is led on to the study of the urban jungle which henceforth fascinates him.[1] The jungle is no longer the natural one of Baal, but the man-made one of the city, where human appetites rage and devour each other with undiminished fury. Here we have the setting for Brecht's doctrinaire plays, but as yet it has merely the charm of the exotic, no significance as the lair of capitalism. Admittedly, economic factors are involved[2] because the tooth and claw of the urban jungle are economic measures of one kind and another. The two main characters, however, Garga and Shlink, are not moved by considerations of economic profit or loss[3]; their motives are, as far as that goes, idealistic. They are seeking to satisfy a cannibalistic urge to possess themselves of and be possessed by a fellow-man, to eat and be eaten. Brecht loudly disclaims any attempt at rational motivation.[4] The conflict is nothing more than an attempt to establish contact; for those involved it has a homosexual connotation, for those who watch it can best be judged like a boxing match.[5]

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1. cf. Jhering, op.cit. II, p.58: "Es gibt den Sumpf, das Dickicht der Grosstadt, wie das Dickicht des Urwaldes. Hier ist das Anfangsgefühl, das die naturfernste Weltstadt wie eine neue Natur, wie unwegsames,

unentdecktes Urland zeigt.

2. With almost mathematical precision Brecht maps out two contrasting situations for Garga and Shlink. Garga's poverty is associated with his respectable and badly paid job in a lending library and with a sense of responsibility towards his impoverished family and his fiancée Jane. Garga is essentially a person who 'belongs'. Shlink, on the other hand, does not. His wealth is associated with filth and corruption. He has a prosperous timber business, but no family, only a galaxy of uneducated and dubious acquaintances with whom he frequents the "Chinesisches Hotel", where love is bought.

3. The struggle engages when Shlink offers to buy Garga's opinion about a book. (There is a grotesque quality about Shlink's offer reminiscent of the one made by 'Der Herr im Zylinder' in I. Goll's play: Die Unsterblichen - Dichtungen, p.68 : "Ich bin Ihr Mäzen. Erkennen Sie mich? ... Ich kaufe Ihnen Ihr Genie ab.") By refusing to sell his opinion Garga asserts his incorruptibility and it is significant that when he takes up his struggle with Shlink, his first gesture is to ruin the timber-merchant - a gesture of contempt for material values.

4. cf. Stücke I (Aufbau), Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke, p.10: "Es war die Wildheit, die mich an diesem Kampf interessierte, und da in diesen Jahren (nach 1920) der Sport, besonders der Boxsport mir Spass bereitete, als einer der 'grossen mythischen Vergnügungen der Riesenstädte von jenseits des grossen Teichs', sollte in meinem neuen Stück ein 'Kampf an sich', ein Kampf ohne andere Ursache als den Spass am Kampf, mit keinem anderen Ziel als der Festlegung des 'besseren Mannes' ausgefochten werden."

5. Stücke I, Vorspruch zu Im Dickicht der Städte, p.194.

> Zerbrechen Sie sich nicht den Kopf über die Motive dieses Kampfes, sondern beteiligen Sie sich an den menschlichen Einsätzen, beurteilen Sie unparteiisch die Kampfform der Gegner und lenken Sie Ihr Interesse auf das Finish.

Here the audience is deliberately meant to react differently from the figures in the play. This commentary on the part of the author is a kind of antecedent to the direct addresses to the audience in Brecht's later plays.[1]

The structure of Im Dickicht is determined by the successive encounters of Garga and Shlink. Their struggle has a spasmodic character: a period of acute and strenuous exertion, followed by a period of exhausted calm. In this it is hardly possible to talk of a succession of dramatic moments because the interludes are not used to build up dramatic tension anymore than the intervals between the rounds of a boxing match are so used. What we have is a series of spasms, actually diminishing in their violence towards the end of the play. Again, in the first part of the play the antagonists meet against their respective social and economic backgrounds (Garga's characteristic background is his family, that of Shlink is his business). In their struggle we see how each

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1. cf. Andrzej Wirth in Sinn und Form, Sonderheft, Berlin 1957: Über die stereometrische Struktur der Brechtschen Stücke, p.348. "Es handelt sich hier um eine gewöhnliche Introduktion, die in die Zeit und den Ort der Handlung einführt und die Haltung bestimmt, die nach der Meinung des Verfassers, der Zuschauer gegenüber dem sich auf der Bühne abspielenden Geschehen einnehmen müsste."

destroys the milieu of the other, like two drunken men wrecking a house in the course of their fight. In the second part of the play, the combat is resumed three years later, as it were, in the street outside. The two antagonists are brought increasingly face to face with each other on neutral ground and realise more and more that there can be no spiritual bond between them. As in Baal, the line of dramatic action is a descending one; the ending, however, is more inconclusive. This lack of final resolution represents a step away from closed dramatic form and possibly a step towards the technique of the Epic Theatre, which often enough leaves the solution to the audience.[1]

The theme of Eduard II is, of course, largely prescribed by Marlowe's original which Brecht was merely adapting.[2] The adaptation, however, is a very drastic one. Apart from suggesting a different approach to the chronicle play, it shifts the emphasis from the historical struggle to the homosexual obsession of Eduard and the

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1. One need only mention Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, as the most obvious instance of Brecht's inconclusive plays.

2. In 1924 Brecht was drawing a salary from the Münchener Kammerspiele and part of his duty was to produce an Elizabethan play within the year. cf. A Note on Bertolt Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II, The Modern Language Review, April 1959, Vol.LIV, No.2, p.214.

ferocious struggle with Mortimer, which follows from it.[1] As in the case of Baal, Brecht chooses a model with the deliberate intention of criticising it and what it stands for. His adaptation of Marlowe's play was a protest against a prevailing style in the theatre.

> Wir (i.e. Brecht and Feuchtwanger) wollten eine Aufführung ermöglichen, die mit der Shakespeare-tradition der deutschen Bühnen brechen sollte, jenem gipsig monumentalen Stil, der den Spiessbürgern so teuer ist.[2]

To this end Brecht turns Marlowe's grandiose history into a Moritat, in "open form" with a series of rapid, unemphatic scenes that speed towards the end with the deliberate avoidance of dramatic climax. There is in all this a deliberate element of showmanship and a growing confidence in the bold handling of an audience.

Comparing the structure of these four works, one might imagine that Brecht, after trying out the more or less conventional pattern in Trommeln in der Nacht, turned away from it again and began to explore forms less indigent

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1. The king's homosexual attachment to Gaveston leads to events which soon lack any causal relationship to this attachment. The battle of Killingworth - which is fictitious - fills the king with a sense of animal superiority over Mortimer whom he, misguidedly, considers to be responsible for Gaveston's death. Eduard releases Mortimer after the battle as a gesture of contempt for the latter's so-called intellectual superiority. The ensuing struggle is conducted on the level of instinctive self-preservation.
2. Stücke I (Aufbau), Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke, p.14.

to the theatre: those of sport and the "Schaubude" (peep-show).

Characterisation.

It might well be said that characterisation in the sense of idiosyncrasy was never a main concern of Brecht. Concerned as he usually is to communicate fundamental emotions, concepts of universal application, or typical social situations, he can afford to deal largely in typical figures. This is not to detract, of course, from the masterly characterisation of the main figures in the works of his maturity, but the very fact that he can deal in 'split personalities' - like Shen Te Shui Ta or Puntila - seems to show that his approach to character is systematic rather than empirical.

Certainly, in these early plays we are not struck by any great subtlety of character. Baal is simply the personification of natural reproductive forces. His companion Ekart, although a life-like study of the degenerate artist, is hardly a subtle portrait. The various women whom Baal encounters have little opportunity to play anything but a passive role. While there is much truth to life in the incidental figures such as Mech, Mjurk and the inhabitants of the Poor-house (strongly reminiscent of Hauptmann's Hanneles Himmelsfahrt), none

of them could be said to be developed characters, nor in the nature of the theme need they be.

It is possibly in Trommeln in der Nacht that most care is spent upon characterisation - which is in keeping with the rather more naturalistic tone of this work. Kragler is, at least, a man with a conflict, someone whose self-disgust gives evidence of a residue of moral scruples. It is clear, however, that Brecht was not primarily concerned to give a totally consistent account of characters: for all that he is a more sensitive soul than Balike or Glubb, a man of Kragler's presumed background and upbringing would hardly be capable of the poetic descriptions which Brecht occasionally puts into his mouth.[1] The intention may be, of course, to heighten the contrast with characters like Balicke or Glubb who are described in convincingly down-to-earth fashion.[2]

With Im Dickicht and Eduard II Brecht returns to a

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1. cf. Stücke I, p.145 f.: "Anna! Anna! Was tue ich? Schwindelnd über dem Meer voll Leichen: mich ersäuft es nicht. Rollend in den dunklen Viehwägen südlich: mir kann nichts geschehen. Brennend im feurigen Ofen: ich selbst brenne heisser. Einer wird irr in der Sonne: ich bin's nicht ... Ich bin ein Gespenst."

2. cf. Stücke I, p.140 f.: "Balicke: Sehen Sie, das ist es, worauf's ankommt. Hier liegt der Hase im Pfeffer. Das ist keine Oper. Das ist Realpolitik. Daran fehlt's in Deutschland. Es ist ganz einfach: Haben Sie Mittel, eine Frau zu unterhalten?" cf. also p.177, where Glubb says to Kragler: "Kannst du dich nicht morgen aufhängen und jetzt mit in die Zeitungen gehen?"

more schematic system of characterisation, setting up in particular opposed couples: the man of cunning or skill on the one hand, like Shlink and Mortimer, against the man of naked vitality on the other, like Garga and Eduard. Shlink and Mortimer, it may be observed, have a leaning towards the intellectual which in Brecht's eyes constitutes a weakness at this time. But this intellectual bent is in no case pure. In Mortimer it is, in itself, an obsession for he is "kalt mit Passion".[1] In Shlink it is, in fact, little more than innate business acumen.[2] Garga and Eduard are more rebellious characters. The first strives after an existence unhampered by ties of any sort:

> Wir sind nicht frei. Mit Kaffee am Morgen fängt es an und mit Schlägen, wenn man ein Affe ist, und die Tränen der Mutter salzen den Kindern die Mahlzeit, und ihr Schweiss wäscht ihnen das Hemd, und man ist gesichert bis in die Eiszeit, und die Wurzel sitzt im Herz. Und ist er ausgewachsen und will etwas tun mit Haut und Haar, dann ist er bezahlt, eingeweiht, abgestempelt, verkauft zu hohem Preis, und er hat nicht einmal die Freiheit unterzugehen.[3]

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.25.
2. cf. Stücke I, p.236, where Pavian says of Shlink: "Einem Mann wie ihm gibt man Kredit. Wenn der Bursche (i.e. Garga) verschwunden bleibt, ist er in drei Monaten wieder der erste Mann im Holzhandel."
3. Stücke I, p.226 f. Garga expresses feelings similar to those of the Kassierer in Von Morgens bis Mitternachts, who also rejects the hampering rhythm of domesticity: "Morgens Kaffee, mittags Koteletts. Schlafkammer - Betten hinein - hinaus ..." op.cit., p.67 f.

He sacrifices his whole family for the preservation of life for life's sake: "Das nackte Leben ist besser als jedes andere Leben".[1] Eduard's naked vitality dominates all the issues raised in the play. In freedom he raises a whole country against himself, in captivity the wave of public sympathy in his favour does not alter the course of the king's masochistic delight in his own physical suffering.

All the other characters in these two plays tend to be either merely furniture or pawns in the game. Thus Shlink's associates and Garga's family[2] are never given a chance to participate actively in the struggle between Garga and Shlink. The same is true of Gaveston and Queen Anna, for example, in Eduard II. The first is a mere bone of contention, the second is incapable of influencing the whims of her husband. Joining hands with Mortimer to oppose the king she soon degenerates to the level of a helpless alcoholic.

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1. Stücke I, p.294. These words recall Agenor's conclusion in Kaiser's Europa, Berlin 1915, p.126: "Kämpft um das Leben, das allein besteht: echtes Leben ist starkes Leben - und das stärkste ist das beste."

2. cf. Julius Bab: Die Chronik V, Berlin 1926, p.212: "Weder der Vater, phantastisch stark in seiner alkoholischen Verwüstung, noch die Mutter, von stumm leidender Haltung, nicht einmal die unglückliche Schwester - ein hilflos schwankendes und erlöschendes Geschöpf - nicht sie alle stehen im Mittelpunkt des Interesses. Sie werden nur umgerannt, weil sie bei der Jagd im Wege stehen."

Comparing the main figures of these plays one is struck by the fact that they are all male - the figure of the mother has not yet begun to bulk large on Brecht's horizon. All these male figures are characterised by their tenacious hold on life and, with the possible exception of Kragler, by the dogged pursuit of sensual gratification - even where, as with Shlink and Eduard, this can take a perverse turn into masochism. One might further subdivide this group of characters into two distinct types. On the one hand, the Baal figure, self-centered, self-indulgent and brutal, on the other, the Kragler figure, dogged, less self-assertive and less self-sufficient. To the former dominant type belong Garga and Eduard, to the latter the more parasitic type, Shlink and Mortimer.

These figures, although they may be schematic, are not the bearers of ideas, but incarnations of wild animal lust.[1] When Baal cries out: "Man muss das Tier

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1. With the exception of Im Dickicht the early plays abound in animal metaphors. The animals with which Baal is associated range from hedgehogs (Stücke I, p.12) to Orang-Utans (p.39), from dogs (p.49) to elephants (p.56 ff.), from bulls (p.64) to cocks (p.98). Kragler is called a wolf (p.127), a bull (p.159), an elephant (p.142), a swine (pp.142 and 145) and a hyena (p.147). In Eduard II the king is referred to as tiger (Stücke II, pp.71, 78, 103), the queen as a bitch (pp.82, 93) and then a she-wolf (pp.82, 122), Mortimer as an eel (pp.143, 145, 146, 147, 163).

herauslocken! In die Sonne mit dem Tier",[1] his words are taken up by Kragler who tells Anna: "Ich bin wie ein altes Tier zu dir gekommen".[2] In Im Dickicht, Shlink sums up the position as follows: "Der Wald! Von hier kommt die Menschheit. Haarig mit Affengebissen, gute Tiere, die zu leben wussten ...".[3] This insistence on the physical texture of existence relates, perhaps, more clearly than anything else to Brecht's concern at this time for "Vitales, unliterarisches Theater".[4] A reviewer writing in the Augsburg Erzähler saw Brecht's aim as:

> uns dazu zu bringen, dass wir uns in unserer Körperlichkeit bewusst tiefer fühlen, als es bisher möglich war.[5]

Brecht never lost this sense of the concrete, even when he sought refuge from the destructive forces of instinct in a glorification of the senses.

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1. Stücke I, p.28. cf. also the prologue to Wedekind's Erdgeist, op.cit., p.382:
   Das WAHRE, das WILDE, SCHÖNE Tier,
   Das - meine Damen - sehen Sie bei mir.
2. Stücke I, p.132.
3. Stücke I, p.292.
4. cf. Chapter II, p.42(note 1). Here Brecht echoes the words of Alwa in Wedekind's Die Büchse der Pandora, op. cit., p.477: "Das ist der Fluch der auf unserer jungen Literature lastet, dass wir zu literarisch sind ... Um wieder auf die Fährte einer grossen gewaltigen Kunst zu gelangen, müssten wir uns möglichst viel unter Menschen bewegen, die nie in ihrem Leben ein Buch gelesen haben, denen die einfachsten animalischen Instinkte bei ihren Handlungen massgebend sind."
5. No. 42, 9 June 1923.

Language.

The language of Brecht's early plays follows closely the exigencies of each work and appears to differ considerably from one play to another. The striking quality of the language in Baal is its poetic overtones: the sustained projection of human experience onto the level of a natural, ever-fluctuating macrocosm. Rotting vegetation, turbulent waters, wind, the sky with its colours ranging from violet to yellow, from black to white, the clouds, form the basis for most of the metaphors and similes in the play. Even before Baal takes to a kind of vegetative existence with Ekart, his language is coloured with references to this wild macrocosm. His thoughts fly "gleich wie Tauben über das schwarze Gewässer";[1] the paper on which he writes his verse is "voll mit rotem Sommer: wild, bleich, gefrässig ...";[2] to Sophie whom he seduces he says: "Und jetzt gehöhrst du dem Wind, weisse Wolke".[3]

In Trommeln in der Nacht the lyricism of the first play gives way to a much harsher, naturalistic idiom, particularly in the cases of Balicke, Mjurk, Babusch and Glubb. Yet, this language does more than seek to copy

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1. Stücke I, p.30.
2. Stücke I, p.37.
3. Stücke I, p.40.

every-day speech. It has a provocative, satirical impact in the sense that it is used not only to characterise but to debunk. When Balicke claims: "Richtig betrachtet war der Krieg ein Glück für uns",[1] he is not only stating his allegiance to the war-profiteers, but provoking a wider judgment on the evils of war, very similar to the one called forth in Mutter Courage, when the Feldwebel says: "Erst der Krieg schafft Ordnung".[2]

The language of Im Dickicht lacks the rich imagery of Baal and the satirical intent of Trommeln in der Nacht. Here we find a curious juxtaposition of vocabulary from the boxing-ring[3] and auction sales[4] - "Es ist eine Masse Holz da, und einige Pfund Fleisch sind jetzt auf der Auktion! Und Jiu-Jitsu heisst die leichte, die fröhliche Kunst, nicht?[5] - which underlines the brutality of the struggle between Garga and Shlink. In contrast to this, however, the mode of address between the antagonists

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1. Stücke I, p.115.
2. Stücke VII, p.64.
3. Stücke I, p.286: "Garga: In der Stadt wachen ... die Autochauffeure darüber, dass er sich im Ring nicht mehr blicken lassen kann zur Stunde, wo sein Knockout ohne vorhergegangenen Kampf einfach als erfolgt angenommen wird. Chicago wirft das Handtuch für ihn."
4. Stücke I, p.246, where Garga says to Shlink: "Wollten Sie, Ihre blatternarbige Seele hier versteigern?"
5. Stücke I, p.219.

remains the polite form "Sie" until the last scene of the play. This adumbrates the conclusion of the play: that human isolation is too great for even a struggle to take place between two individuals.

The free verse of Eduard II, which shows a high degree of syntactical complexity, differs greatly from the relative simplicity of Brecht's prose plays. This complexity of style is found mainly in monologues and asides and applies to most of the main characters. It does not therefore serve to underline complicated arguments about affairs of state (public debates and duologues, on the contrary, are brief, violent and simple in style) but to stress the characters' perplexity about their own motives.[1]

In Eduard II language has almost ceased to be a means of communication and this could be equally said of the other early plays. Quite apart from the talking at cross purposes[2] which is characteristic of all these plays,

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1. As, for example, when Gaveston writes his testament for no definite reason (cf. Stücke II, p.31 f.) or when the king (cf. p.105 f.) and Mortimer (cf. p.123) brood inconclusively about themselves.

2. Striking examples of this can be found in Baal's conversations with Ekart where both follow their own train of thought (cf. scene 8, p.50). In Trommeln in der Nacht Kragler is never 'in tune' with his environment. The antagonists in the last two plays never achieve communion of thought (cf. Stücke I, p.245 and Stücke II, p. 148 ff. for example).

language itself is seen to be inadequate for overcoming the problem of isolation. This is particularly true of Im Dickicht, where Garga says as much: "Die Sprache reicht zur Verständigung nicht aus".[1] One can argue that he does not try to overcome the limitations of language in so far as he quotes Rimbaud[2] instead of formulating his own reactions to Shlink's attacks on him. But this device seems more likely to reflect Garga's inability to engage completely in the struggle. He turns to quotations at moments when an emotional outburst would be expected. This inability to give voice to inner feelings is also characteristic of Kragler. When left alone with Anna there is no gush of emotionalism on his part. He literally does not comprehend her words[3], his loss of memory - "es ist alles wie weggewischt in meinem Kopf"[4] - is nothing but an expression of a sort of emotional frigidity. Physical contact alone is capable of stirring

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1. The quotations on pp.207 f. and 294 f. (Stücke I) may be found in the French original in Rimbaud, Une Saison en Enfer, Paris 1937 on respectively pp.26 f. and 20 f.
2. When Shlink provokes Garga to the limit of endurance and the latter gives up his job, throws off his clothes and runs away in the first scene (p.207 f.); also when Garga grows annoyed during his last conversation with Shlink and abandons him altogether (p.294).
3. cf. Stücke I, p.132 f.: "Ich weiss nicht, was du meinst ... Ich kann dich nicht verstehen ... Ich weiss nicht was du sagst."
4. cf. Stücke I, p.131.

Kragler out of his apathy.[1] In Baal, too, communication is limited to physical intercourse. Language can give expression to Baal's lyricism but its underlying experience never provokes anything more than a "Heimweh ohne Erinnerung".[2]

Emotional reserve, which is one of the fundamental elements of Brecht's Epic Theatre is clearly foreshadowed here. It gives the language of these plays a hard, precise, sinewy and unsentimental character. Perhaps, at this stage, it does no more than emphasise the isolation of these figures - an isolation which in the language of all these plays finds an echo in the extraordinary prevalence of the word Haut (skin). For Baal[3], Kragler[4] and Shlink[5] skin refers to the presence or growth of a layer of toughness which they are unable to shake off.

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1. cf. Stücke I, p.134: "Gib sie mir (i.e. deine Hand). Jetzt bin ich kein Gespenst mehr." A similar and far more violent reaction is provoked in the Kassierer of Von Morgens bis Mitternachts when he feels the 'naked hand' - (cf. op.cit., p.46: "Sie senkten Ihre nackte Hand in meine.") - of the Italian lady who has come to the bank to draw money. From this contact the Kassierer changes from an automaton into a living person.
2. Stücke I, p.91.
3. Stücke I, p.67: "Ich bin ein Lamm von Geduld, aber aus meiner Haut kann ich nicht."
4. Stücke I, p.132: "Ich habe eine Haut wie Hai, schwarz ... und bin gewesen wie Milch und Blut."
5. Stücke I, p.237: Quoted in note 4, p.6a of this chapter.

For Garga[1] and Mortimer[2] it can be thrown off and replaced by another. Here it becomes an expression of adaptability. In all cases skin is fundamentally an expression of indifference, which although it isolates does not differentiate between one man and another. Faces, for example, have little or no distinguishing features: they can change, fall off, disintegrate. They are masks behind which nothing is permanent.[3]

The language of these early plays reveals, perhaps, more profoundly than anything else that Brecht's figures are inscrutable in that they do not use language to express the inner workings of their minds. It tends to emphasise

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1. Stücke I, p.212: "Sie haben mir die Haut abgezogen aus Liebhaberei. Durch eine neue ersetzen Sie nichts."
2. Stücke II, p.53: "Ein Mann reicht aus, den abzutun / Der Tausend abtun könnt. Darum wickle ich mich / Gescheut wie ein Verbannter in eines andern / Haut, nämlich in die Haut dieses Schlächtersohns."
3. cf. what Baal says of Ekart (Stücke I, p.66): "Du hast ein Gesicht in dem viel Wind Platz hat. Konkav. Du hast gar kein Gesicht. Du bist gar nichts." Also Murk's question to Kragler (p.150): "Haben Sie kein Gesicht mehr?" cf. Garga to Shlink (p.267): "Endlich sehe ich einiges, wenn ich die Augen halb zumache, in einem kalten Licht. Ihr Gesicht nicht, Mister Shlink. Vielleicht haben Sie keines." Also Shlink to Garga (p.189): "... Richtig, das alles war in Ihrem Gesicht - (i.e. Die Ölfelder mit dem blauen Raps. Der Iltis in den Schluchten und die leichten Wasserschnellen) - Jetzt ist es hart wie Bernstein, man findet mitunter Tierleichen in ihm, der durchsichtig ist." cf. Eduard's comment to Winchester (Stücke II, p.112): "Ich hab Euch ein Gesicht doch schon einmal / Abschlagen lassen, Winchester, Gesichter dieser Art / Vermehren sich in einer Weise, so uns peinlich ist ..."

the way they behave rather than what they are and this stress on behaviour rather than character is a pointer towards the Epic Theatre.[1]

Theatrical Practice.

The first of Brecht's plays to be produced was - as we have said (cf. p.10) - Trommeln in der Nacht. It is not without significance that Otto Falckenberg, a well-known practitioner in the technique of disillusion[2], was the chosen producer. The poet's stage directions indicate a determination to disrupt the normal relation between auditorium and stage. In the actual performance the use of placards[3], the rudimentary scenery and expressionistic back-cloths[4] were in strong contrast to the naturalistic

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1. With regard to Brecht's much later theatrical practice Käthe Rülicke comments: "Tatsächlich sprach Brecht auf den Proben fast nie über den Charakter einer Figur, sondern über ihre Art, sich zu verhalten; er sagte beinahe nie, was ein Mensch ist, sondern was er tut". cf. Sinn und Form, op.cit., Leben des Galilei / Schlusszene, p.282.
2. cf. Diebold, Anarchie im Drama, Berlin 1928, p.450: "Falckenberg in München brachte in seinen Strindberg Aufführungen wohl die ersten 'desillusionierenden' Strassenbilder."
3. These were displayed in the theatre and advised the audience 'not to gape in that romantic fashion'. "Glotzt nicht so romantisch" or "Jeder Mann ist der beste in seiner Haut".
4. In the Glosse für die Bühne Brecht describes the scenery for the play: "Dieses Drama wurde in München vor folgenden Kulissen gespielt: Hinter den etwa zwei Meter hohen Pappschirmen, die Zimmerwände darstellten, war die grosse Stadt in kindlicher Weise aufgemalt." Quoted by E. Schuhmacher, Die Dramatischen Versuche B.B. 1918-1933, Berlin 1955, p.60.

stage. The climax of disillusionment is reached when Kragler tears down the moon and exclaims:

> Es ist gewöhnliches Theater. Es sind Bretter und ein Papiermond und dahinter die Fleischbank, die allein ist leibhaftig.[1]

There is a trend towards didacticism in such devices which is enhanced by a cabarettist element introduced not only with the Ballade vom toten Soldaten, sung by Glubb, but also with the song in the fourth act which a "besoffener Mensch" and Kragler recite intermittently. This is something endemic to Brecht and in a sense an anti-traditional element in the theatre for these songs disrupt the action of the play.

This cabarettist element is inherent in the theme of Baal, who is the de-romantisˆed equivalent of the poet of bourgeois tradition. Baal was first produced in Leipzig (1923), but although it provoked a public scandal and had to be withdrawn[2], this seems to have been due more to its sentiments than its technique of production. The play was later produced - in 1926 - by Erich Engel, a producer who seems to have been from the beginning in harmony with Brecht. It is clear that this production was affected

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1. Stücke I, p.187.
2. cf. Jhering, Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit. I, p.363: "Bert Brechts Drama Baal musste nach seiner Uraufführung am Alten Theater in Leipzig auf Intervention des Oberbürgermeisters vom Spielplan abgesetzt werden."

by the shift in Brecht's interest towards the problems of the urban age as shown Im Dickicht. The scenes were apparently introduced by announcements spoken from the stage and scenic indications were given to suggest the emergence of the city jungle.[1] It is hard to visualise how Baal can be interpreted in terms of the urban jungle, but this might be taken as an indication of the extent to which the interpretation of Brecht's work may depend on modes of production.

Critics could not fail to be perplexed by the enigmatic nature of Im Dickicht, which Erich Engel produced in Munich in 1923 and in Berlin in the following year. They were, however, fascinated by the creation of the claustrophobic atmosphere of the great city. The reviewer in Die Weltbühne[2] was struck by the grey-green colour, the "Lemurencharakter" of Chicago which he saw as "immer ein unsichtbares Reich hinter dem Sichtbaren". Julius Bab[3] is more explicit in his description of the setting to suggest the pervasive quality of the city:

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1. cf. Jhering, Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit. II, p.176: "Es ist jetzt eine dramatische Biographie geworden, durch Szenenansagen auf Tatsachengehalt gestellt. Personen sind durchgeführt, die früher nur Nebenbedeutung hatten, wie Emilie Mech. Kontraste sind hineingebracht, die sonst kaum angedeutet waren, wie das Auftauchen der Riesenstädte, das Nahen einer eisernen, steinernen, mathematischen Zeit hinter der versinkenden Naturwelt des Baal."
2. XX, 11 November 1924, No. 46, p.740.
3. Die Chronik V, Berlin 1926, p.211.

> Unheimliche, schmutzig graue Steindschungel - Räume, von denen man nicht so recht weiss, ob sie eigentlich Innenräume oder Strassen sind. Himmel und Luft sind doch mit Steinen zugebaut und diese bröcklichen Wände sind doch nicht stark genug, um den Menschen wie eine Heimat von der Aussenwelt abzuschneiden - es ist alles nur Strasse.

If these descriptions suggest some involvement in the spell cast by the city, the creation of atmosphere seems to have been counterbalanced by the style of acting. In Munich Jhering described it - at its best in the actor taking the part of "der Wurm" - as "Varieténah, amerikanisch, grotesk".[1] In Berlin it seems to have become highly formalised if we are to judge by the comment of the Weltbühne critic[2] who talks of the actors in terms of "Marionetten, die zum Takt von Orchestrionmusik bewegt werden".

This same reviewer was one of the first to feel a curtailment of emotions in his reaction to both the productions of Trommeln in der Nacht and Im Dickicht. In the case of the former he talks in terms of a simple presentation of events which made empathy impossible[3],

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1. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit. II, p.61.
2. XX, 11 November 1924, No. 46, p.740.
3. Die Weltbühne, XVIII, 28 Dezember 1922, No. 52, p.681: "Ein Volksstück, das von der Ballade den Kunstgriff übernommen hat, Tatsachen aneinander zu reihen, so schlicht und scheinbar zweckfrei wie möglich, also nicht mit ihnen auf Rührung auszugehen, sondern jedem Betrachter zu überlassen, ob er schmelzen will oder nicht ..."

in the case of the latter he felt that the affinities of the play with sport and the music-hall excluded tragic implications:

> Dickicht verschafft mir die Emotionen nicht der Tragödie, sondern der Rennbahn, des Sportplatzes, des Varietés, des Films. Die traurigen Geschicke dieser Leute rühren mich nicht, weil hier nur zum Schein geköpft wird.[1]

The emotional reserve felt by this reviewer with regard to Trommeln in der Nacht and Im Dickicht provides a striking antecedent to the way in which Jhering was subsequently - in 1926 - to evaluate the importance of Brecht's own production of Eduard II (Munich 1924) for the German theatre as a whole. For Jhering the real merit of Eduard II lay in its new interpretation of traditional classical drama[2] and in the creation of distance between events on the stage and the audience:

> (Es musste) für Grösse ein anderer Begriff gesetzt werden. Brecht setzte für Grösse: Distanz. Das ist seine theatergeschichtliche Tat. Er verkleinerte die Menschen nicht. Er atomisierte die Figuren nicht. Er entfernte sie. Er nahm dem Schauspieler die "Gemütlichkeit", die sich temperamentvoll anbiedert. Er forderte Rechenschaft über die Vorgänge. Er verlangte einfache Gesten. Er zwang zu klarem kühlem Sprechen. Keine Gefühlsmogelei wurde geduldet.[3]

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1. Die Weltbühne, XX, 11 November 1924, No. 46, p.740.
2. cf. Die Zwanziger Jahre, Aufbau 1948, p.165: "Der Dreh- und Wendepunkt des klassischen Theaters war die Aufführung von Brechts Eduard II in München. Hier war ein Beispiel geschaffen, wie man ein altes Werk als Drama umdichtet, indem man es auskältet; wie man es näherbringt, indem man es entfernt."
3. Die Zwanziger Jahre, op.cit., p.166.

In Marieluise Fleisser's account of the production[1] it seems clear that the play was presented in crude formalistic idiom and that as much as possible was reduced to gesture. The fear of the soldiers in battle, which Brecht felt to be characteristic, was not conveyed in so many words but by making them run across a high plank in suicidal fashion and simply painting their faces white. In the same way the hunger of the imprisoned king and his privation was made to grate on the ears of the audience by the scraping of the spoon in the empty bowl. In these devices which turn emotions and needs into concrete visual images or auditory impressions Brecht uses a technique of demonstration rather than explanation. The commentaries and captions to the scenes which are couched in the brazen tones of a circus show-man allow for this intrusion of a demonstrative element. The review of the play in Die Weltbühne emphasises a quality of remoteness which is inherent in this demonstrative technique:

> Nur durch ein Fernglas, wie von weitem, sieht man blutrünstige Vorgänge all ihre Schrecknisse verlieren ... Ein Schleiervorhang hilft die Distanz schaffen, die der Jahrmarktsbudenausrufer Brecht mit seinem unsichtbaren Zeigestock braucht.[2]

The term "epic" which Jhering attributes to the style

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1. Süddeutsche Zeitung, München, 8 Juni 1951, p.2. Quoted by E. Schuhmacher, op.cit., p.90 f.
2. Die Weltbühne, XX, 16 Dezember 1924, No. 51, p.907.

of presentation of Eduard II - "Das ergab den objektiven, den epischen Stil"[1] - corresponds to the impersonal, detached way in which the events were presented. It relates to the similarities which critics felt that the early plays had with the ballad form,[2] which in presentation is also epic. It would, however, be misleading to conclude from this evidence that the early plays contain all the implications which Brecht, himself, was later to attribute to the term epic. At this stage Brecht's theatrical practice does show - particularly in the case of Im Dickicht and Eduard II - a straining away from the conventional theatre towards other forms of display: Im Dickicht towards the boxing-ring, in Eduard II towards the peep-show. In both cases there is a trend towards violence and away from subtlety, towards event and away

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1. Die Zwanziger Jahre, op.cit., p.166.
2. cf. Jhering who calls Baal "Brechts genialische, szenische Ballade" (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit. I, p.356). Trommeln in der Nacht has been called "eine ergreifende Bänkelballade" (Emmel, Das Ekstatische Theater, Prien 1924, p.300). In the 1928 production of Im Dickicht Marta, Maria Gehrke misses this element: Brechts Bestes, das Balladeske, ist diesmal im Untertitel steckengeblieben." (Die Literarische Welt, Nr.I, 4 Jhg., 6 Januar 1928, p.7.) As far as Eduard II is concerned Marieluise Fleisser summarises her comments on the production of the play as follows: "Es war Balladeskes Theater" (cf. op.cit., note 1, p.33). Jhering feels this to be an inherent quality of the play: "... der König (wirkt) zuletzt mehr durch die balladenhaften Situationen durch die er geführt wird, als durch den eigenen Reichtum". (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit. II, p.21.)

from characterisation. It is not idiosyncrasy which interests him but the situation of men which he sees progressively in a widening social context. But there is as yet no critical analysis of society and consequently nothing which could be called didactic in his method of production. What is important for the later development of the Epic Theatre is a fundamental anti-emotional attitude in Brecht himself. This is reflected on the one hand in the emotional frigidity of the early figures, on the other in the beginnings of a style of acting which was cool and detached and which Brecht sought to base on concrete and significant gestures.

Chapter II

The Way to the Epic Theatre

1. The Critic, 1919-1921.

As far as German letters and the theatre were concerned, Brecht could hardly have made his entry in a more turbulent situation. Literature was passing through one of its storm and stress phases: of these years immediately following the war and the revolution Kasimir Edschmid writes: "Heutige Dichtung der Deutschen ist eine sehr klüftreiche Sache ... Es geht alles toll durcheinander!"[1] He goes on to single out as typical "das Expressionistische", but this term itself denotes a movement of great complexity - not much more than an intellectual climate. The Expressionist writers, whose vision of doomed or redeemed mankind radiates in the direction of all kinds of ethical and political creeds, are characterised by one of their leaders, Franz Werfel:

> Eucharistisch und thomistisch,
> Doch daneben auch marxistisch,
> Theosophisch, kommunistisch,
> Gotisch kleinstadt - dombau - mystisch,
> Aktivistisch, erzbuddhistisch,
> Überöstlich taoistisch,
> Rettung aus der Zeit-Schlamastik
> Suchend in der Negerplastik,
> Wort- und Barrikaden wälzend,
> Gott und Foxtrott fesch verschmelzend.[2]

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1. Die Doppelköpfige Nymphe, Berlin 1920, p.11.
2. Spiegelmensch, München 1920, p.130.

This complexity was nowhere more evident than in the theatre - not only in the variety of idiom and experiment practised by dramatists of the period, but also in theorising about the function of the theatre itself. The theatre in Germany has always been a highly-developed and highly sensitive organ of the body politic - in fact, it has been suggested that it registers public feeling so well that it has acted as a substitute for political action.[1] The conception of the theatre as a cultural - even a cultic - institution survived the impact of defeat and revolution[2], indeed, it was precisely in these circumstances that some of the Expressionist writers looked to the theatre as the source of spiritual regeneration. Felix Emmel writes:

> Unser neues Ziel ist also: das ekstatische Theater ... Ekstase ist ... ein kultisches Gefühl ... Selbst in unserer Zeit jedoch, die keine Einheit religiösen Glaubens mehr kennt, kann das Drama seinen religiösen

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1. cf. Friedrich Wolf: Aufsätze über Theater, Berlin 1957, p.57 f. - Das Theater - ein Ersatz der politischen Wirklichkeit.

2. cf. Julius Bab: Chronik des deutschen Dramas, Bd.5, Berlin 1926, p.104 f. Discussing a comedy by Schmidtbonn called Die Schauspieler, Bab testifies to the perennial fascination which the theatre exercised on the Germans: "Hier spricht ein Dichter aus, dass tiefe Theaterleidenschaft im Kern unseres Volkes noch mächtig ist, wie sehr auch die leidige Furcht, sentimental zu scheinen, in der Regel solche Bekenntnis hindert. (Aber es gibt stumme Taten, wie der Aufschwung des deutschen Volksbühnenbewegung, die nicht minder deutlich diese Tatsache bekräftigen.) In Schmidtbonns Komödie ist das Theater keine gesellschaftliche Angelegenheit, von pikantem Beigeschmack, sondern ein heiliger Hain der Sehnsüchtigen, ein Stück neuer Gottesdienst, wie zu Wilhelm Meisters Zeiten.

> Mutterboden nicht verleugnen. Zwar sind alle rein konfessionellen Bindungen unwiederbringlich dahin. Aber die Bindung an das Geheimnis des menschlichen Schicksals bleibt. Der Mensch empfindet heute weniger als je sein Schicksal allein als sein Werk. Gerade das Geschlecht, das durch den Weltkrieg ging, weiss, dass ausser dem menschlichen Willen und der menschlichen Erkenntnis noch andere Mächte sein Dasein formen ... Deshalb glaubt er wieder an den dramatischen Dichter in seiner ursprünglichen Wesenheit: an den Seher, an den überlogischen Deuter und Gestalter menschlichen Geschicks. Das Theater ist uns wieder kultische Zuflucht ... [1]

On the other hand, there are those who detect - and approve of - a "profanation" of the theatre through the influence of sport. As early as 1921 Herbert Ihering claims to detect a change of attitude in the theatre-going public, a change which was to play an important part in Brecht's subsequent theorising.

> Noch eins ist zu erkennen: die Art, wie das Publikum mitgeht, ist heute im tiefsten Grunde verschieden von der Art, wie es früher dem Schauspieler und dem Dichter folgte. Auch das Publikum - nicht das schlechte, sondern das gute - reagiert heute auf Energien, auf Bewegung, auf Spannung, auf Rhythmus. Dieses Mitgehen mit den Variationen der Intensität ist aber auch wieder verwandt mit der Art, wie stumpfe Zuschauermassen etwa auf das Radrennen reagierten. Die unstofflichen Spannungsreize des neuen Theaters ragen mit ihrer vergrabensten Wurzel in die stofflichen Spannungen von Sportveranstaltungen hinab. (Und man braucht nur an die Erregung zu denken, die sich aller Ränge des Grossen Schauspielhauses bemächtigte, als der Shylock von Werner Krauss über die Brücke jagte und durch die Arena fegte, um diese Zusammenhänge zu verstehen.)[2]

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1. Das ekstatische Theater, Leipzig 1924, p.25 f.
2. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, Berlin 1958, Bd. I, p.185 f. (19. 3. 1921)

It says much for the effective tyranny of Greece over Germany that Ihering seeks to render these revolutionary remarks respectable by relating them to the classical drama:

> Das neue Theater hat, auch von hier gesehen, alle Möglichkeiten, sich hinauf- und hinabzuentwickeln - wie das antike, das zu einer Zeit entstand, als Kulthandlung und Sportkultur dieselbe volkstümliche Bedeutung hatten.[1]

This rapprochement between sport and the theatre is part of the general realisation that what takes place in a theatre is not necessarily drama in the accepted sense. Julius Bab notes disapprovingly this divorce of "Drama" and "Theater":

> Es ist im höchsten Masse charakteristisch, dass man von dem deutschen Drama in den letzten sieben Jahren (1919-1926) nicht sprechen kann, ohne zunächst einmal von Theater zu sprechen. Was sich auf den deutschen Bühnen ... in diesen Jahren zutrug, stand ganz wesentlich nicht unter dem Zeichen der dramatischen Dichtung, sondern der Theaterkräfte in des Wortes engerer Bedeutung. Taten der Regie und der Schauspielkunst ... beschäftigten die Gemüter zweifellos mehr, als die Leistungen der dramatischen Dichtung.[2]

Bernhard Diebold blames this shift of emphasis, which he terms "Theatrarchie", on the hegemony of "great" producers like Erwin Piscator.[3] But a retreat from the conventional drama of the preceding years is evident even on the part of the dramatists themselves - both those of Expressionism,

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1. ibid.
2. op. cit., p.7.
3. Anarchie im Drama, 4. Auflage, Berlin 1928, p.455.

with its fundamentally lyrical mood[1] and those of the succeeding "Neue Sachlichkeit", with their fondness for the sports arena or the court-room. Critics and writers, in fact, not uncommonly predicted the demise of the dramatic form altogether.[2]

The sphere of the great producers and the centre of the debate on the function of the theatre was undoubtedly in Berlin, and Augsburg, where Brecht began his career as a critic, was probably too remote for him to have more than an inkling of the issues involved. In any case, his appointment as dramatic critic to the local Socialist paper, Augsburger Volkswille, allowed him little scope for theorising, so that it might be misleading to refer to his work in this capacity as "theoretical writing". His contributions to the Volkswille are chiefly remarkable for their ill-tempered tone and pugnacity. One thing of interest that does emerge, however, is his concern with production, as opposed to the dramatic text itself, i.e.

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1. cf. Bab, op.cit., p.143: "... diese ganze expressionistische Bewegung (war) nichts, als die Verdrängung des Bühnenwerkes aus dem dramatischen auf das lyrische Gebiet."

2. cf. Iwan Goll in Die neue Schaubühne, IV, 1, 1922: "Es kann heute kein Drama geben! Die Menschen stehen viel zu tief dazu, sind viel zu unmoralisch, zu weich, zu verantwortungslos, zu schnell zum Kompromiss bereit ..." In Die Weltbühne (I, p.213, 1920) Carl Meinhard prophesies Das Ende des Bühnendramas and argues for a kind of pantomime.

with the theatre as opposed to the drama. How far this is inspired by the prevailing "Theatrarchie" and how far it is a matter of temperament is impossible to say.

Although Brecht rarely discusses the merits of the repertoire, he does naturally show certain preferences. He has a partiality, in keeping with the political complexion of his paper, for works with some social significance - Kabale und Liebe, Pygmalion and Rose Berndt.[1] There is, however, little sign of a positive political creed: at most there is a concern with contemporary distresses which accounts for an angry outburst against Don Karlos:

> Ich habe Don Carlos, weiss Gott, je und je geliebt. Aber in diesen Tagen lese ich in Sinclairs Sumpf die Geschichte eines Arbeiters, der in den Schlachthöfen Chicagos zu Tod gehungert wird. Es handelt sich um einfachen Hunger, Kälte, Krankheit, die einen Mann unterkriegen, so sicher, als ob sie von Gott eingesetzt seien. Dieser Mann hat einmal eine kleine Vision von Freiheit, wird dann mit Gummiknüppel niedergeschlagen. Seine Freiheit hat mit Carlos' Freiheit nicht das mindeste zu tun, ich weiss es: aber ich kann Carlos' Knechtschaft nicht mehr recht ernst nehmen. [2]

Discussion of the underlying philosophy of plays themselves is comparatively rare.[3] Brecht is mainly

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1. On Rose Berndt: "Prinzessinnen singen nicht darin, es kommt kein Lohengrin zu dieser Beschimpften, aber wir müssen hineingehen, es ist unsere Sache, die in dem Stück verhandelt wird, unser Elend, das gezeigt wird. Es ist ein revolutionäres Spiel. - Volkswille, No.226, 23.10.1920.
2. Volkswille, No.85, 15.4.1920.
3. Another example is the furious attack on Meier-Förster's sentimental Alt-Heidelberg, Volkswille, No.219, 15.10.1920.

interested in the technique of production and acting, and it is characteristic that one of his most enthusiastic reviews is devoted to a farce (author not mentioned, literary merit apparently small) called Zwangseinquartierung. Here the preference for the living theatre over the book-drama emerges clearly. It is in the farce, claims Brecht, that the theatre is most itself -"man hat keinen Dichter in Schutz zu nehmen." It is in the farce that the actor can have his head and play his part with real gusto. Of the lead in this play Brecht writes, "(dass er) auf das Was pfiff und Theater machte". The essence of the performance was "Vitalität" - "vitales, unliterarisches Theater".[1]

It is not surprising that one aspect of acting in which Brecht shows particular interest is the use of mime and gesture.[2] This emphasis on the physical presence of the

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1. Volkswille, No.246, 17.11.1920. The quality of "vitality" is highly esteemed at this time by Brecht (and by his friend Arnolt Bronnen). It is a notion popular with some Expressionist writers, and, in the form of pugnacity and sexual excess, it plays a large part in Brecht's plays from Baal to Mann ist Mann. It is a leading characteristic of "der Bürgerschreck", and the quality which Brecht most admired in Frank Wedekind, in whose obituary he wrote: "Seine Vitalität war das Schönste an ihm ... Er stand da, hässlich, brutal, gefährlich, mit kurzgeschorenen roten Haaren, die Hände in den Hosentaschen, und man fühlte: den bringt kein Teufel weg." (Augsburger Neueste Nachrichten, No.60, 12.3.1918.)

2. cf. "Das Beste ist das Mimische, die bleiche, aufgeschwemmte Völlerphysiognomie an der Tafel." (Volkswille, 6.11.1920.) "Sie hatte und hat noch gute Momente im körperlichen Ausdruck, leichte und wie zufällige körperliche." (Volkswille, 30.10.1920.)

actor, which is of central importance to Brecht with his ideas of "das Gestische" and of "Zeigeszenen", is seen by Julius Bab as characteristic of the period:

> ... Aber diese allzu hochgemute Verachtung des Körpers im Lager des Expressionismus führte nun auf erstaunlich kurzem Wege zu einer gewaltigen Übermacht des Körperlichen, d.h. im Bereich der Bühne zur Macht des Schauspielerischen über das Dramatische.[1]

It may well be, of course, that the advent of the (silent) film had a good deal to do with the flourishing of mimic elements in acting about this time.

In spite of this forceful interest in methods of production and acting, the vocabulary of Brecht's criticisms shows that he is still thinking on orthodox lines as far as the aim of the drama and its effect on the audience are concerned. He speaks of "Innerlichkeit"[2], of "das Fehlen der vierten Wand"[3], he describes performances as "zu wenig beseelt"[4], or as "packend", "ergreifend" and "erschütternd".[5] He refers to an actor's performance in Zwangseinquartierung as having "Natürlichkeit und Wärme".[6] He also refers - approvingly - to "Pathologie" in what appears to be the

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1. op.cit., p.12.
2. Volkswille, 27.4.1920.
3. " 29.9.1920.
4. " 21.10.1919.
5. " 13.10.1920.
6. " 17.11.1920.

special sense of "the technique of representing emotion".[1] In short, he is clearly still thinking in terms of illusion and identification, concepts which he is later to condemn.

The young critic is at his most scathing when he comes to discuss costume and sets. He complains of the financial policy which lavishes money on the opera and stints the dramatic productions.[2] He even goes so far as to suggest that female leads are chosen according to their willingness to pay for their own costumes.[3] He writes contemptuously of the all too familiar battered furniture and properties:

> Ein chambre garnie mit rotem Plüsch und gemalten Möbeln und unserer Uhr.[4]

It is important to note, however, that his ideal is not realism, not elaborate, three-dimensional stage-sets: "Die Kritik hat nie die Forderung nach plastischer Dekoration aufgestellt". He criticizes the "Schmierendekoration" not because it is unrealistic but because it distracts the audience and impedes the operation of their imaginations.[5] Here already there are glimmerings of the

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1. Volkswille, 15.4.1920.
2. " 14.5.1920.
3. Weibliche Rollen werden nicht nach Talent oder Eignung, sondern nach der finanziellen Bereitwilligkeit der Schauspielerinnen sich Kostüme, die niemand sehen will, zu kaufen, ausgeteilt. (Volkswille, No.225, 27.11.1920.) This is incidentally an example of the careless and inelegant style which Brecht occasionally permitted himself in these reviews.
4. Volkswille, 13.10.1920.
5. " 27.11.1920.

principle which Brecht was shortly to employ as producer at the Münchener Kammerspiele, and which he largely adhered to throughout his career: the middle way between abstraction and realism represented in the contrast between austere sets and authentic, carefully selected properties.[1] Bernhard Reich, chief producer at the Kammerspiele at the time when Brecht was employed there, casts an interesting light on this principle as Brecht applied it to the historical play:

> Beide einander gegensätzliche dekorative Prinzipien lehnte Brecht ab - unter der Requisitenmasse ersticke der Geist des Kunstwerks, das ein fragiles Gebilde sei, im entwirklichten Raum (i.e. with the Expressionists) entschwebe, zerstreue sich der Wirklichkeitsgehalt der Dichtung, die ihrem Charakter nach beweglich und schwer fassbar sei. Brecht primitivisierte die Dekoration, Saal war Saal, Königsstuhl war Stuhl, aber Säle und Stühle waren mit ihrer einfachen, bloss andeutenden Grösse im Stil alter deutscher Meister gehalten.[2]

A further hint of the unconventional technique which Brecht was to use in his Munich productions is contained in the last of the Augsburg articles, Dramatisches Papier und anderes.[3] Here, while condemning the work of Expressionist

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1. cf. the poem, written many years later, Die Requisiten der Weigel (Versuche 19, p.117):
   Ausgesucht nach Alter, Zweck und Schönheit
   Mit den Augen der Wissenden
   Und den Händen der brotbackenden, netzestrickenden
   Suppenkochenden
   Kennerin der Wirklichkeit.
2. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, Berlin 1957, p.433.
3. Volkswille, 14.12.1920.

playwrights as too abstract, too metaphysical ("Proklamationen des Menschen ohne Menschen und dramatischen Willen ohne Drama"), Brecht praises the surrealistic farces of Iwan Goll because of the "Emanzipation der Regie" which the latter demands. There is no doubt that Goll's "vollkommen neue Dramatik" with its combination of "Zeitung, Bänkelsängerlyrik, Photographie" represents an attitude congenial to the rebellious young man described by Lion Feuchtwanger under the name of Kaspar Pröckl.[1] Here we have the attack on convention, the destruction of illusion in every sense:

> Zunächst wird alle äussere Form zu zerschlagen sein. Die vernünftige Haltung, das Konventionelle, das Moralische, unseres ganzen Lebens Formalitäten. [2]

Here, too, we have the analytical approach: "Der Mensch und die Dinge werden möglichst nackt gezeigt werden, und zur besseren Wirkung immer durch das Vergrösserungsglas."[3] Goll, like Brecht, wishes to shock his audience, to shatter their complacency:

> Man hat ganz vergessen, dass erstes Sinnbild des Theaters die Maske ist ... Die Kinder haben Angst vor ihr und schreien. Der Mensch soll wieder schreien lernen, dazu ist die Bühne da ... Das einfachste Mittel ist die Maske, aber ohne dass sie zum Lachen reize.[4]

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1. Erfolg - Drei Jahre Geschichte einer Provinz, first published 1929, reprinted Berlin 1957.
2. Die Unsterblichen, 2 Possen, Potsdam 1920 (Bd.5 der Reihe "Der dramatische Wille"), reprinted in Goll: Dichtungen, 1960, p.64.
3. ibid.
4. Dichtungen, p.64 f.

All the technical resources of the modern theatre are to be exploited to produce the effect of the "mask" (which might almost be considered the emblem of alienation):

> Das neue Drama wird darum alle technischen Mittel zur Hilfe ziehen, die heute die Wirkung der Maske auslösen. Da ist zum Beispiel das Grammophon, die Maske der Stimme, das elektrische Plakat, oder das Sprachrohr.[1]

In this preface, and in a later one[2], Goll goes so far as to preach a kind of "Verfremdung" ("Alogik" he calls it in the later preface) which is even more iconoclastic, certainly more impassioned than Brecht's. It would, however, be far-fetched to imagine that Goll set Brecht thinking on the lines of "Verfremdung"[3]; it is more a case of certain kindred elements in the thinking of the two men. On the other hand, it seems entirely plausible that Goll's work had some influence on some of Brecht's plays. One need only compare Das Elefantenkalb, Mann ist Mann itself, or the Clown interlude from the Badener Lehrstück with Der Unsterbliche and Der Ungestorbene.[4]

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1. Dichtungen, p.65.
2. To Methuselam, first published 1922, Dichtungen, p.85 f.
3. Brecht does not seem to use the term at all before 1935.
4. Dichtungen, p.67 ff., 75 ff. The grotesque soldiers in Mann ist Mann appeared only in Brecht's "epic" production (Berlin Staatstheater, 1931), and may well have been suggested by the puppet actors of Piscator's production of Schwejk (1928), in which Brecht had collaborated. What is reminiscent of Goll in Mann ist Mann is the mock execution of Galy Gay and the amputation of his personality.

2. Brecht's Fun and Games: Berlin, 1924-1930.

It was not until he was established in Berlin that Brecht resumed publication of his views on the theatre. In the interval he had acquired experience and a considerable degree of notoriety as a playwright and producer (in the Münchener Kammerspiele). The Berlin critic, Herbert Jhering, had awarded him the Kleistpreis for 1922 and hailed him as a genius of the German drama:

> Der vierundzwanzigjährige Dichter Bert Brecht hat über Nacht das dichterische Antlitz Deutschlands verändert. Mit Bert Brecht ist ein neuer Ton, eine neue Melodie, eine neue Vision in der Zeit.[1]

Jhering was the advocate of the liberal avant-garde movement in the theatre in Berlin, and it was for him, as literary editor of the Berliner Börsen-Courier, that most of Brecht's articles on the theatre during the next few years were written, and Jhering's influence may be detected in Brecht's theories.

The prevailing literary mode which Brecht found at that time in Berlin was the so-called Neue Sachlichkeit. In some ways a development from Expressionism[2], in others

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1. Der Dramatiker Bertolt Brecht in Berliner Börsen-Courier, 5.10.1922; reprinted in Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, I p.272.
2. cf. Walter Sokel: The Writer in Extremis, p.158: "This new non-Romantic humility arises at the outset of Expressionism to develop gradually toward the Neue Sachlichkeit ... which was to supersede Expressionism."

a reaction against it, the Neue Sachlichkeit demanded the destruction of illusion, an unsentimental, objective approach to life, the abandonment of all pretensions in art, a return to primitive forms, the whole-hearted appreciation of technology and of sport as significant expressions of human aspiration.[1] A. Bettex writes:

> Diese Literatur fing mit dem Misstrauen gegen alle wahren und vermeintlichen Illusionen des Geistes und des Gefühls an. Man sah keinen anderen Weg, als völlig illusionslos mit den elementarsten Themen zu beginnen und ohne jede künstlerische Zier schriftstellerische Rapporte über die ausgeräumte, in ihrer unheimlichen Leere gespenstisch wirkende alltägliche Welt zu schreiben.[2]

One of its adherents defines the movement as follows:

> Der Name Sachlichkeit enthält viel mehr, als die meisten ahnen. Er ist nicht mehr, wie seine Urheber am Anfang meinten, eine einfache Übersetzung des Namens 'Realismus'. Er besagt: An die Stelle des Kunstwerks will sich die 'Sache' selbst schieben: Das Ding selbst, das Leben selbst, der authentische Gegenstand. Der Schein ist kompromittiert, sein Zauber verloschen ... Die technische Leistung, das 'Ding selbst' (soweit es vom Menschen geschaffen wird), ist so sehr Muster aller Menschenleistung geworden, dass sie die Kunst zurückdrängt und ihr Raum abgewinnt. [3]

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1. cf. F. Wolf, op.cit., p.69: Speaking of the historical dramas popular at the time, Wolf writes: "Sie trommelten nicht mehr auf den Ohren und Nerven herum wie die expressionistischen Stücke. Im Gegenteil: sie haben die Methode der Distanzierung gewählt, der Ironie oder des Analogismus. Sie wollten durch analoge Ereignisse der fernen Vergangenheit dieser tobenden Gegenwart einen kühlen und klaren Spiegel vorhalten. Ihre Inhalte waren Revolten der Vergangenheit, ihre Form die 'neue Sachlichkeit' (wie man es in der Architektur nannte)."
2. Deutsche Literatur in Grundzügen, Bern 1946, p.347.
3. Wilhelm Michel: Physiognomie der Zeit und Theater der Zeit in Masken, Vol.XXII, p.6 f.

As far as human psychology went, the popular theory was Behaviourism, the analysis of human conduct in terms of drive and instinct. A similar view of the 'brutality' of human life had been not unknown amongst the expressionists, who liked to call it vitalism.[1] Where human endeavour is reduced to this level the appropriate form of public display, the communal experience, is not so much the drama as the sports meeting. And, in fact, sport acquired unprecedented popularity in the middle twenties. The enthusiasm for record-breaking, particularly, knew no bounds. Lion Feuchtwanger, reviewing this period in his novel Erfolg, wrote:

> Sehr angesehen waren Leibesübungen. Ihr Hauptziel war der Rekord. Man bemühte sich, jede Art körperlicher Fähigkeit zu spezialisieren. Am meisten interessierte das Boxen, wobei überzüchtet kräftige Männer nach gewissen Regeln aufeinander einschlugen. Beliebt waren auch sogenannte Sechstagerennen, Veranstaltungen, wo einzelne Menschen sechs Tage hindurch auf ziemlich primitiven Maschinen, die durch die Kraft der Füsse fortbewegt wurden, in einer Arena möglichst lange Strecken zurücklegten.[2]

The cult of sport affected a wide range of writers from the rollicking Joachim Ringelnatz[3] to Georg Kaiser[4]

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1. cf. Herwart Walden, Zirkus, Monatsbericht, September 1924: "Die Sinne sind das Wesen des Menschen. Die organische Gestaltung sinnlicher Erlebnisse ist Kunst. Geist ist ein Hilfsmittel und kein Trieb. Nur aus Trieben entsteht das Leben. Nur aus Trieben entsteht das Kunstwerk."
2. Lion Feuchtwanger: Erfolg. Drei Jahre Geschichte einer Provinz, published 1929, reprinted Aufbau Verlag, Berlin 1957, p.215.
3. see, for instance, the poems Wettlauf, Boxkampf and Ringkampf in Ringelnatz in kleiner Auswahl, Berlin 1955, pp.8 ff., 13, 14.
4. cf. Six-day cycle race in Von Morgens bis Mitternachts.

and Kasimir Edschmid, in whom it assumes a typically snobbish tinge.[1] It seems to be a typical part of the naive, hectic way of life which the Germans, rightly or wrongly, termed Amerikanismus. America, however, was not only the home of jazz and professional boxing: it represented to the war-shocked youth of Europe the benevolent aspect of science and technology:

> Wir bestanden darauf, die Gegenwart ehrlich zu machen; und sympatisierten mit der Zukunft. Wir hielten uns an Amerika. Amerika war eine gute Idee: war das Land der Zukunft. Es war in seinem Jahrzehnt zu Hause. Wir waren zu jung, um es zu kennen; unterdessen liebten wir es. Lang genug war bei uns die glorreiche Disziplin der Technik nur in der Form von Tank, Mine, Blaukreuz zum Vorschein gekommen und zwecks Vernichtung von Menschenleben. In Amerika stand sie im Dienst des Menschenlebens. Die Sympathie, die man für Lift, Funkturm, Jazz äusserte, war demonstrativ ... Wie wir zu Amerika standen, zeigte, wo wir standen.

So wrote Hans Joachim, looking back on the nineteen-twenties.[2] Among the arts, jazz represented a liberation from an unhappy past, the entry into a vital, pulsating future. Kurt Tucholsky sees this symbolised in a jazz parody of Wagner:

> Auf einmal ist alles nicht mehr wahr: die Eierkuchen-sentimentalität nicht und nicht jene butterweiche Rührsamkeit, mit der dieses Gedudel angemacht ist; fort ist das Pathos aus Sachsen und der trutz'ge Krach, der sich als Rassenstolz ausgegeben hat (eine der Kriegsursachen); geblieben ist etwas andres. Geblieben ist eine luftige, lustige und nette Melodie, von der man nur wünschen könnte, der Meister hätte sie so

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1. cf. Sport um Gagali, Berlin/Wien/Leipzig 1928.
2. Die Neue Rundschau, II, p.398 (Berlin 1930).

> geschrieben, wie sie da gespielt wird: unerbittlich rhythmisch wie eine Nähmaschine und sehr hopp-hopp...[1]

For many Germans like Lion Feuchtwanger, George Gross, Walter Mehring - and Brecht (of whom it was said about this time:"Brecht hat nun einmal den Amerika-Teufel im Leibe"[2]) - the Anglo-Saxon world, although the home of technology, had, paradoxically enough, the appeal of the exotic and the primitive.[3] With his admiration of 'vitality', Brecht was inevitably attracted by sport and its implications for his art. His interest in boxing and wrestling, in particular, colours all his creative work during his years in Munich and his first years in Berlin.[4] As is well-known, he formed a friendship with the German middleweight champion, Paul Samson-Körner, and collaborated with him in

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1. Panter, Tiger und Co., Hamburg 1957, p.58 (originally published in 1928).
2. Die Literatur. Forum der Jugend, Dezember 1929, p.352.
3. cf. Brecht's Verschollener Ruhm der Riesenstadt New York (1929) in Hundert Gedichte, Berlin 1955, p.127 ff. Melchior Vischer ingeniously combined the craze for sport with Wild West romanticism in a play entitled Fussballspieler und Indianer; cf. Bab: Chronik, V, p.320: "... eine endlose Szenenfolge: Fussballspieler und Indianer, die wohl die neue realistische Sportsromantik gegen die alte Indianerromantik zu dramatischem Kampf ausspielen will, bleibt überall in breiten Einzelszenen stecken, die vielfach freilich amüsant und lebendig sind."
4. cf. Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke, Stücke I, p.10: "... da in diesen Jahren der Sport, besonders der Boxsport mir Spass bereitete."

an unfinished work entitled Die menschliche Kampfmaschine.[1] The vocabulary of his works and of his conversation at this period is heavily larded with boxing terms and similes.[2] This interest in prize-fighting is most obviously related to his drama in the brief preface to Im Dickicht der Städte, where the playwright exhorts the audience to judge the dramatic conflict as they would a wrestling-match - "den unerklärlichen Ringkampf zweier Menschen".

> Zerbrechen Sie nicht den Kopf über die Motive dieses Kampfes (he writes), sondern beteiligen Sie sich an den menschlichen Einsätzen, beurteilen Sie unparteiisch die Kampfform der Gegner und lenken Sie Ihr Interesse auf das Finish.[3]

It is precisely this reduction of dramatic conflict to the level of physical combat that represents for Julius Bab a grave threat to the theatre:

> ... das Theaterinteresse (erscheint) sehr ernstlich gefährdet durch den ungeheuren Aufschwung, den die sportlichen Darbietungen seit dem Krieg in Deutschland genommen haben. ... Ganz ohne Zusammenhang ist ja das

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1. To quote only a few examples: a boxing match features in Mahagonny (cf. also Erstens, vergesst nicht, kommt das Fressen/Zweitens kommt der Liebesakt/Drittens das Boxen nicht vergessen... - Stücke III, p.212) as well as in Der Brotladen (AN. 135 3/49); Happy End has a Johnny Flint, 'der Exweltmeister im Halbschwergewicht'. To this period, too, belongs the short story about a boxer, Der Kinnhaken (Scherls Magazin, II, L. Januar 1926).

2. cf. Mann ist Mann (AN. 150/93, 150/188); Sinn und Form, Sonderheft, 1957, p.241, etc. It is known that Brecht wrote a poem on the Dempsey-Tunney fight of 1926 and that this poem was read by Fritz Kortner to the audience in a Berlin cinema before the showing of the film of the fight (cf. PEM, Heimweh nach dem Kurfürstendamm, Berlin 1952).

3. Stücke I, p.209.

> Theater mit der Sportarena nicht. Im Material des lebendigen Körpers arbeiten sie beide. Nur hat das Theater versucht, den Körper mehr und mehr als seelisches Ausdrucksmittel zu behandeln, während es im Sport ja darum geht, die rein physische Leistungskraft aufs äusserste zu steigern... [1]

The traditional values of the German drama are, Bab feels, endangered:

> Und so konnte die mehr als bedenkliche Formel aufkommen, das neue Drama müsse sich den Boxkampf zum Vorbild nehmen. Als ob das machtvolle gegeneinander klarer Gegensätze, das allerdings die rhythmische Voraussetzung für jede dramatische Bewegung ist, in den leisen, unphysischen, ja vielfach im Innern ein und desselben Menschen spielenden Vorgängen der Goetheschen Iphigenie schwächer wäre, als in dem Aufeinanderpauken zweier moderner Gladiatoren.[2]

Not every critic felt impelled to defend thus the traditions of idealism. Others were seized by the sense of change in the theatre, and sought to encourage revolutionary trends amongst dramatists and producers. We have noted how Jhering, as long ago as 1921, had detected the influence of sport on the theatre, with particular reference to Reinhardt's productions in the Grosses Schauspielhaus.[3] Jhering is very conscious of the chaos produced in every sphere of intellectual life by the world-war and the revolution, and of the discrepancy between technical and cultural advance. He visualises a re-adjustment of the

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1. Julius Bab: Theater der Gegenwart, Leipzig 1928, p.164.
2. Bab: Chronik, V, p.13.
3. See above p.38.

theatre to match the changes in the public: alongside the firmly established Staatstheater and the flourishing Volksbühne, he envisages the foundation of a 'topical theatre', a 'Zeittheater', drawing its audience from the former operetta public on the one hand, from the sports fans on the other.[1] At the moment, Jhering argues, the theatre is groping in the dark. He compares apathetic audiences with the expert, enthusiastic spectators at sports meetings:

> Das Publikum einer Sportveranstaltung ist leidenschaftlicher an den Vorgängen beteiligt als das Publikum einer Theateraufführung. Es wäre unsinnig, diese Tatsache abzuleugnen oder zu bejammern. Wesentlich ist, sie fruchtbar für die Entwicklung zu machen.
>
> Bei Boxkämpfen erkennt das Publikum das Entscheidende der Kampfphasen. Jedes Umschlagen wird sofort von der Menge aufgenommen. Jeder Wechsel im ersten Moment erkannt. Die Masse in den Sportpalästen ist roh, grausam, vielleicht ungerecht. Aber ungerecht nur aus Hingebung an die Sache. Grausam aus leidenschaftlicher Mitgenommenheit. Roh aus Übermass an Beteiligung.[2]

Such 'immediacy' and relevance, characteristic of our living theatre is precisely what is demanded by the writers of the Neue Sachlichkeit.[3]

Brecht, not surprisingly, joins the party of the revolutionaries, and his first contributions to the Berliner Börsen-Courier state even more strongly the views of Jhering.

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1. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.92 f. (15 Februar 1925): "Das Zeittheater aber hat weder literarisch noch gesellschaftlich exklusiv zu sein. Es wird viel eher vom

Operettenpublikum, viel eher vom Sportpublikum Massen einfangen. Es wird das Theater entfeierlichen und neben dem Staatstheater, neben der Volksbühne die dritte berechtigte Theaterform schaffen.

2. Ibid. Jhering (op.cit. II, p.9) encourages dramatists to satisfy the public's thirst for action: writing of the opening performance of Die Empörung des Lucius (4 Februar 1924), he says: "Wer nur eine Nacht des Sechstagerennens und diese Première mitgemacht hat, der ahnt, wie das Publikum zu bezwingen ist. Die Masse ist gieriger als jemals auf das Erlebnis. Durch Kriegs- und Revolutionsjahre durchgegangen, fühlt sie sich plötzlich mattgesetzt, wenn in ihrem Alltag nichts mehr 'passiert'. Das Publikum ist deshalb in einem Zustand vor der Explosion. Die Strasse bietet ihm nur noch selten Gelegenheit, sich zu entfesseln - also entfesselt es sich im Kino, im Sportpalast, im Theater.

3. cf. Wilhelm Michel: loc. cit.: "Was heisst Wirklichkeit, was heisst die 'Sache selbst' für das Theater? Es heisst unmittelbares Erscheinen der Zeit auf der Bühne, unmittelbares Auftreten des heutigen Lebens und seiner Kräfte, unvermenschlicht, ohne kunstgewerbliche Fassung und Harmonisierung ... Gerade eine problematische Zeit braucht direktes Theater; Theater der Aussage und der tatsächlichen Wirkung; Theater der Situationserfüllung und der radikalen Geschöpflichkeit. Sie braucht ein Theater, das nicht in der Annahme lebt, die Werte, die Ordnungen, die lebensbedeutenden Normen ständen schon fest und es handle sich nur darum, sie dem Volke zu vermitteln. Sie braucht ein Theater, das bereit ist, einstweilige, diskutierende, stoffhäufende Arbeit zu tun ... auch in der Darstellung jener grossen Werke der Vergangenheit, in denen der Mensch sicherer und stolzer auf der Erde stand als wir."

Like the latter, he believes the theatre to be out of touch with the masses:

> Ein Theater ohne Kontakt mit dem Publikum ist ein Nonsens. Unser Theater ist also ein Nonsens. Dass das Theater heute noch keinen Kontakt mit dem Publikum hat, das kommt daher, dass es nicht weiss, was man von ihm will. Das, was es einmal gekonnt hat, kann es nicht mehr, und wenn es das noch könnte, würde man es nicht mehr wollen. Aber das Theater macht immer unentwegt, was es nicht mehr kann und was man nicht mehr will.[1]

Brecht calls even more forcefully on the sporting public to resurrect the theatre:

> Unsere Hoffnung gründet sich auf das Sportpublikum ... das klügste und fairste Publikum der Welt. [2]

The relationship between spectators and performers is direct and unambiguous:

> In den Sportpalästen wissen die Leute, wenn sie ihre Billette einkaufen, genau, was sich begeben wird; und genau das begibt sich dann, wenn sie auf ihren Plätzen sitzen; nämlich dass trainierte Leute mit feinstem Verantwortungsgefühl, aber doch so, dass man glauben muss, sie machten es hauptsächlich zu ihrem eigenen Spass, in der ihnen angenehmsten Weise ihre besonderen Kräfte entfalten.[3]

That is, deliberate virtuosity and <u>apparent</u> spontaneity on the part of the performers. The attitude of the audience is similarly paradoxical: on the one hand they are connoisseurs, witnessing the characteristic struggle of

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1. <u>Mehr guten Sport</u>, <u>Berliner Börsen-Courier</u>, No.61 (6 Februar 1926).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

modern life, even betting on the outcome[1], coolly judging the events before them, the techniques employed by the protagonists.[2] On the other hand, the fan is passionately involved in the course of the game or fight, following its every move with bated breath, as Jhering had pointed out. A characteristic thing, however, about such fluctuations of enthusiasm and despair is that they are immediate, unreflective, instinctive reactions, totally devoid of sentiment. There are no higher motives, the fight itself is senseless, the reaction in the spectator a sort of psychological jerks:

> Sie legen darauf Wert, an gewissen sinnlosen Begeisterungs- und Entmutigungsgefühlen beteiligt zu werden, die zum Spass am Leben gehören.[3]

The aim of the dramatist, then, is twofold: to 'denystify' the theatre (what Jhering calls "Entfeierlichen"[4]), and yet to provoke intermittent emotional responses in the spectator. Brecht describes his aim ironically as follows:

> Sollte ich es soweit bringen, dass Sie Lust bekommen eine Zigarre zu rauchen und mich selbst dadurch übertreffen, dass Sie Ihnen an bestimmten, von mir vorgesehenen Punkten ausgeht, werden ich und Sie mit mir zufrieden sein.[5]

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1. An den Herrn im Parkett, Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.603 (25 Dez. 1925): "Sie wollen ruhig unten sitzen und Ihr Urteil über die Welt abgeben, sowie Ihr Menschenkenntnis dadurch kontrollieren, dass Sie auf diesen oder jenen oben setzen."

2. Ibid.: "Sie wollen die Menschen dieses Jahrhunderts in Sicht kriegen ... deren Massregeln gegen ihren Nebenmenschen, ihre Aussprüche in den Stunden der Gefahr, ihre Ansichten und ihre Spässe. Sie wollen teilnehmen an ihrem Aufstieg und Sie wollen Ihren Profit davon von ihrem Untergang."

3. Ibid.

4. See note 1, p.55 above. This is in direct contrast to the programme for an 'Ecstatic Theatre' put forward by certain Expressionists; cf. Felix Emmel: Das Ekstatische Theater, Leipzig 1924, p.17 f.: "Jedoch sowohl der theatralische wie der literarische Regisseur verkennen das Wesen des Theaters. Denn die Kunst der Bühne ist weder autonom, noch ist sie blosse Interpretation. Eine autonome Kunst des Theaters hat es nie gegeben. Das Theater war in seinem Ursprung eine kultische Angelegenheit. Gewiss konnte sich die kultische Ekstase, solange sie noch lebendig war, auch tänzerisch auswirken, und hat dies reichlich getan. Heute, wo die religiösen Bindungen gelockert sind, gibt es nur noch einen kultischen Lebensnerv für die Bühne: die Verbindung mit dem Dichter. Durch sein Sehertum, das eine Vertiefung des religiösen zum Schicksalshaften bedeutet, bleibt das Theater kultisch bestimmt und profaniert sich selbst, wenn es diesen Nerv durchschneidet. Die tiefste magische Wirkung wäre dadurch preisgegeben, zugunsten einer rein mimischen Bereicherung unserer Sinne."

5. cf. Jhering: Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.176 (15 Feb. 1926): "Brecht hatte schon seit Jahren die Idee eines Rauchtheaters. Eines einfachen Theaters, wo die Zuschauer rauchen und trinken wie im Variété. Für dieses Theater passt die Technik der Szenenansage. Man ist anders eingestellt. Man lässt sich nicht seelische Komplikationen, sondern dramatische Tatbestände vorführen, einfach, naiv und primitiv. Es kann ein Weg sein, unter vielen anderen, die das Publikum, die ein anderes Publikum ins Theater führen." It is interesting to note that Karl Zuckmayer, who worked for Reinhardt together with Brecht at this time, links the 'smoking theatre' with the term 'epic': He (Brecht) demanded what might be termed a complete seizure of power, exclusive control of the repertory according to his theories, the change of name of all the group of stages to the 'Epic Smoking Theatres', because he was a proponent of the thesis that people would go to see even the most complicated plays if they were allowed to smoke during the performance ... (Karl Zuckmayer: Second Wind, London 1941, p.192.)

It would be as well, perhaps, not to take these theories of the Sporttheater and Rauchtheater too seriously: the very language in which they are composed, slipshod as it often is, seems to indicate that Brecht's main purpose was simply to shock the critics and to debunk the traditional stage. Even if we accept his theories about the sporting type of audience, Brecht is obviously still a long way from the reflective, highly critical and consciously political attitude which he later demands of his audience in the Epic Theatre. However, there is, in his appreciation of expertise in actors and onlookers, and in the banishing of the so-called 'higher emotions' fairly clearly something of the 'epic' attitude as he later understands it.

This element of detachment is summed up for Brecht in the notion of 'Spass', an element which Brecht considers the theatre to have lost. The stage is given over to the turgid and the pompous, it lacks urbanity, whimsicality, 'fun':

> In den ganzen gut heizbaren, hübsch beleuchteten, eine Menge Geld verschlingenden, imposant aussehenden Häusern und in dem ganzen Zeug, das darinnen angestellt wird, ist nicht mehr für fünf Pfennig Spass.[1]

As far as acting is concerned, Brecht attacks the contemporary style - which is recognisably the traditional style

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1. Mehr guten Sport: loc. cit.

of German acting - as turgid and convulsive - "einfacher Krampf".[1] 'Spass', as it affects the actor, seems to imply a laconic, unemphatic, although elegant style ('Eleganz, Leichtigkeit, Trockenheit') - anything but what Brecht terms 'unnatürlichen Schwung'. There must be no sense of strain which might impart itself to the audience.[1] Brecht is seeking to lower the emotional temperature of the theatre, to foster a disengagement on the part of actors and audience. It seems to be in connection with a style of acting, in fact, that Brecht first speaks of 'Epic Theatre' (as opposed to 'Epic Drama'): he talks to Elizabeth Hauptmann on the 23rd March 1926 of 'Zeigeszenen' and 'aus dem Gedächtnis spielen' ('Gesten, Haltungen zitieren') - in other words, of a demonstrative style of acting.[2] Three years later, he develops these ideas in a Dialog über Schauspielkunst[3], where he specifically compares the accepted style of acting with his proposed new style. In the former the actors "versetzen sich selber und das Publikum in Trance". For example, Brecht continues:

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1. Mehr guten Sport: loc.cit. cf. Martin Esslin: Brecht: A Choice of Evils, London 1959, p.116: "... the cramped and convulsive style of acting which is still widely prevalent in the German theatre, where actors still tend to be rated according to the violence, the frenetic intensity of the emotions they portray."
2. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, Berlin 1957, p.243.
3. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.81 (17 Feb. 1929).

> Sie haben etwa den Abschied darzustellen. Was machen sie? Sie versetzen sich in Abschiedsstimmung. Sie wollen, dass das Publikum in Abschiedsstimmung gerät. Niemand sieht zuletzt, wenn die Séance glückt, mehr etwas, niemand lernt etwas kennen, im besten Fall erinnert sich jedermann, kurz: jedermann fühlt.[1]

In what follows Brecht shows that he has somewhat changed his ground - he discards the analogy of the sports arena in favour of that of the laboratory. The communion of actor and audience is outmoded in an age where science determines - or has replaced - aesthetics. The actor must reckon with "ein Publikum des wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters"[2], and what he must impart is not feeling but knowledge:

> (Wissen) der menschlichen Beziehungen. Der menschlichen Handlungen. Der menschlichen Kräfte.[3]

This is done most properly in the style of a demonstration - "bewusst darbietend, schildernd" - with a gulf between actor and audience that is deliberately contrived: "nicht nahekommen sollten sich Zuschauer und Schauspieler, sondern entfernen sollten sie sich voneinander". This requirement Brecht enlarges, characteristically perhaps, into a general

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid. The trend towards a more scientific attitude was mentioned in a radio discussion of about 1926 in which Brecht, Ernst Hardt, Jhering and Fritz Sternberg took part; it is ascribed to the influence of Georg Kaiser: "Kaiser habe jene ganz neue Haltung des Publikums ermöglicht, jene kühle, forschende, interessierte Haltung des Publikums des wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters". (Quoted in Werner Hecht: Theater der Zeit, Beilage zu Heft 3, 1959, No.10, p.4.)
3. Dialog über Schauspielkunst: loc. cit.

psychological truth, suggesting that his theory of acting springs from ~~the~~ a subjective need of his own: "Jeder sollte sich von sich selber entfernen".

The product of the estrangement between actor and audience is 'terror' (Schrecken). This term may well be chosen provocatively by Brecht with implicit reference to Aristotle: he certainly means by it something quite different from the Aristotelian terror. He means by it a startling disorientation of the spectator which is necessary for the comprehension of unfamiliar truths - "Der Schrecken, der zum Erkennen nötig ist".[1] The 'terror' is a form of shock therapy administered to the audience, by which their accepted ideas are made to seem odd and their eyes opened to the inner nature of human society in our age. For it is not the function of the actor to depict character: as a scientific practitioner, he elucidates events, phenomena:

> Also soll der Schauspieler nicht versuchen, den Menschen, den er darstellt, verständlich zu machen? Nicht so sehr den Menschen, mehr vielleicht die Vorgänge. Ich meine, wenn ich den 3. Richard sehen will, will ich mich nicht als 3. Richard fühlen, sondern ich will dieses Phenomen in seiner ganzen Fremdheit und Unverständlichkeit erblicken.[2]

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1. This is reminiscent of Brecht's description of Bernard Shaw as a 'Terrorist' (Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.341 (25 Jul. 1926)).

2. Dialog über Schauspielkunst: loc. cit.

Here we have in effect a form of alienation - the audience must become conscious of phenomena as enigmatic before they can begin to understand the causes which produced them.

In this article Brecht involves himself in a contradiction which might be considered an indication that his theory is to some extent a rationalisation of his own feelings about the stage. He claims, in the first place, that the theatre now has for its audience "den wissenschaftlichen Typus" - "richtet sich aber nicht danach". Hence the necessity for the new style, "spirituell, zeremoniell, rituell", designed to show events in their strangeness. On the other hand, he admits the difficulty of persuading actors to adopt this style, because the latter feel that it will not be understood - a view which Brecht himself is forced to share. He insists on the absolutely revolutionary nature of his innovations:

> "Denn dies ist keine Verbesserung qualitativer Art, sondern es erfüllt einen anderen Zweck, meinetwegen am Anfang sogar schlecht. [1]

Any attempt to introduce the new style gradually is doomed to failure, for it will be interpreted simply as a degeneration. The revolution must be accomplished at one blow. These difficulties seem strange if public taste is, as Brecht suggests, ripe for a scientific theatre, if, in fact,

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1. Dialog über Schauspielkunst: loc. cit.

his innovations are prompted by an observable change in the attitude of the public. Where Brecht spoke initially of the 'scientific type', which is characteristic of the contemporary public, he concluded by noting the comparative failure of Helene Weigel as the servant in Ödipus to make an impression with the new style of acting on a public who were, apart from a few 'Kenner' (damning admission!), "vertieft in das Sicheinfühlen in die Gefühle der dramatischen Personen".[1]

3. 'Episches Theater' and 'Politisches Theater'.

The producer who, more than any other, propagated the style of acting which Brecht visualises was Erich Engel, of whom Jhering wrote:

> Erich Engel vertrieb als Regisseur jede Sentimentalität aus Drama und Schauspielkunst. Er liess vernunftgemäss kühl und klar spielen, fast bis zur Einfrostung, wie Strawinsky es für sein Ödipus Rex gefordert hatte. [2]

It was Jhering, too, who noted the affinity between Brecht and Engel on the one hand, and Piscator and Brecht on the other:

> Brecht gehört zu der Theaterbewegung, die auf der einen Seite von Piscator, auf der anderen von Erich Engel geführt wird. Auch er zapft Gefühl ab usw. Auch er geht an gegen die individualistische Empfindsamkeit. Auch er wird immer mehr zu einer direkten Gestaltung der Zeit kommen.[3]

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1. Ibid. cf. Jhering's description of the production: "Der Ton wird unaufgeregt, der Chor berichtet, die

Szenen zwischen Jokaste und Ödipus werden einfacher, an die Stelle der krampfingen Auslösung tritt epische Ruhe und Zusammenfassung. Beispiele: der sprachlich darlegende Stil, die mächtig strömende und doch gehärtete Kraft Kortners; die mitleidslose, unschmerzliche, durch ihre berichtende Energie wirkende Magd von H. Weigel." (Die Zwanziger Jahre, Berlin 1948, p.158.)

2. Berliner Dramaturgie, Berlin 1947, p.20 f. Engel's style of production evolved from his attempts to transpose the classics into a modern idiom, and were first demonstrated in his production of Coriolanus. cf. Jhering, Die Zwanziger Jahre, Berlin 1948, p.164: "(die Krise des klassischen Dramas und der klassischen Darstellungsform) wurde erkannt und methodisch zu lösen versucht schon einige Jahre vorher durch die 'Coriolan-'inszenierung von Erich Engel ... Das Thema hiess nicht mehr: der heroische Mensch. Der Konflikt war aus dem Heldischen ins Geistige verlegt worden ... Erich Engel nahm dem Coriolan alle Grösse, alle Leidenschaft ... (er war) ein erkennender Politiker. Die Problemstellung hiess nicht mehr Egoismus und Masse, sondern Erkenntnis und Masse ... Kortner gab einen sparsamen, fast schweigsamen Coriolan, eine Darstellung, die sich nicht mehr mit einem heldischen Vorbild identifizierte, sondern die Rolle von sich abstellte, beinahe unbeteiligt von ihr erzählte, von ihr berichtete.

3. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.306 (5 Jan. 1928).

It is in the years between his comments on the art of acting (1926-1929) that Brecht developed his idea of the epic theatre and the epic drama. However much these concepts may be suggested by his subjective attitude or inspired by Engel's ideas on production, it is difficult, at any rate, to conceive these developments without the theatrical experiments of Piscator.[1] These experiments formed a focal point for the discussion conducted between 1924 and 1930 on 'epic' elements in the theatre.[2] The trend towards an epic idiom derives in part from the prevalent belief that life had now reached such a degree of political and economic complexity that it could no longer be adequately represented in the traditional dramatic form. As Jhering says in reference to Piscator's production of

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1. cf. P. Kupke: Piscator und sein Politisches Theater in Theater der Zeit, 1957, Beilage zu Heft 11, p.7 ff. Walter Minck: Dramaturgie des Späten Brecht, Göttingen 1959, p.130, points quite rightly to the impossibility of determining priority as between Brecht and Piscator: "Aber die Frage der Priorität ist letztlich wenig von Belang. Denn was bei Piscator Reportage blieb, wird bei Brecht Dichtung. Während Piscator seiner Bühne nur die Etiquette eines neuen Theaters aufdrückte, strukturiert Brecht das Theater systematisch um."

2. Jhering characterised the era itself as one of epic rather than dramatic mood: "... Dass es eine Zeit mehr noch der epischen als der dramatischen Begabung sei, und die Epoche selbst eher durch Romane als durch das Drama gestaltet werden könne. Dieser Vorrang des Epischen ist also eine Tatsache, aus der die richtigen Folgerungen gezogen werden müssen ... Das heisst, die Bedeutung des Epos für das Drama fruchtbar zu machen und es in Beziehung zum Drama zu setzen... Wir müssen also das Epos wieder als festes Fundament des Dramas erkennen, als den Untergrund, auf dem es sich erhebt, als die Stoffzufuhr, die es nötig hat." (Berliner Dramaturgie, p.62 f.)

Sturmflut:

> Neue Stoffkomplexe kommen herauf, die eine andere Art der Verdeutlichung verlangen. Die Bereicherung der Bühnenmittel dient einer Bereicherung der Anschauung, die mechanische Vervollkommnung einer Erweiterung des Erlebnisbezirks.[1]

At almost the same moment Brecht reaches a similar conclusion, and this conviction forms the basis of his 'Episches Drama'. The 'Episches Drama', as distinct from the 'Episches Theater', refers apparently to the structure and dynamics of the work, rather than to the methods and style of its production. Brecht remarked to Elizabeth Hauptmann (26 July 1926):

> Diese Dinge (i.e. the economic factors governing modern society) sind nicht dramatisch in unserem Sinn, und wenn man sie 'umdichtet', dann sind sie nicht mehr wahr, und das Drama ist überhaupt keine solche Sache mehr, und wenn man sieht, dass unsere heutige Welt nicht mehr ins Drama passt, dann passt das Drama eben nicht mehr in die Welt.[2]

"Im Verlaufe dieser Studien", remarks Elizabeth Hauptmann, "stellte Brecht seine Theorie des epischen Dramas auf."

As Brecht had attempted to show in Mann ist Mann, the era of the individual has passed, and this fact is bound to affect the dynamics of the drama. He explains this with reference to the Shakespearean model in a discussion broadcast by Cologne radio, characterising the monolinear structure of the classical drama:

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1. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.182 (23 Feb. 1926).
2. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft, 1957, p.243.

> Die grossen Einzelnen waren der Stoff, und dieser Stoff ergab die Form dieser Dramen. Es war die sogenannte dramatische Form, und dramatische bedeutet dabei: wildbewegt, leidenschaftlich, kontradiktorisch, dynamisch. Wie war diese dramatische Form? Was war ihr Zweck? Bei Shakespeare sehen Sie es genau. Shakespeare treibt durch vier Akte den grossen Einzelnen, den Lear, den Othello, den Macbeth aus allen seinen menschlichen Bindungen mit der Familie und mit dem Staat heraus auf die Heide, in die vollständige Vereinsamung, wo er im Untergang sich gross zu zeigen hat. Dies ergibt die Form - sagen wir - eines Haberfeldtreibens. Der erste Satz der Tragödie ist nur da für den zweiten, und alle Sätze sind nur da für den letzten Satz. Die Leidenschaft ist es, die dieses Getriebe in Gang hält, und der Zweck des Getriebes ist das grosse individuelle Erlebnis.[1]

The sense of all Brecht's theoretical and dramatic writing in the next few years is, as we shall see, to deny the relevance of individual experience. He is not alone in this view: the age itself is 'political' in Piscator's sense of 'Alle angehend'.[2] Art, for Piscator, is simply

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1. W. Hecht: Die Entwicklung von Brechts Theorie des epischen Theaters 1918-1933 in Theater der Zeit, Beilage zu Heft III, 1959, No.10, p.14.
2. In his polemic against Bab's idealistic approach, Jhering writes: "In einer politisch aufgewühlten Epoche kann man nicht anders als 'politisch' Theater spielen ... In erregten Zeiten denkt der Zuschauer 'öffentlich' ... Der Zuschauer erlebt nicht mehr isoliert, sondern beziehungsreich, nicht mehr privat, sondern öffentlich. (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.255 f.(20 Feb. 1927).) Similar statements were made by L. Jessner (Vorwärts, 24 Jun. 1927 - Politisches Theater): "Von jeher war das Theater ein Glied des Kulturganzen, ein prägnanter Zug im Gesicht der Zeit. Die Zeit hat ein politisches Gesicht!" - and by F. Wolf (op.cit., p.60): "Wir hatten in dem Deutschland von 1918 bis 1931 ein politisches Theater auch in dem Sinn, dass es haarscharf die politische Situation des Tages widerspiegelte ..." (written in 1934).

"ein politisches Mittel. Ein Propagandisches. Ein Erzieherisches".[1] His theatre is simply a professional extension of the 'Agitpropspiele'[2], its aim: "die Propagierung und Vertiefung des kommunistischen Gedankens".[3] Dealing as it does with the dialectic of history, with mass movements, the communist doctrine cannot - so it seems to Piscator - be propagated in an idiom designed to analyse the individual soul:

> Nicht mehr das Individuum mit seinem privaten, persönlichen Schicksal, sondern die Zeit selber, das Schicksal der Masse ist der heroische Faktor der neuen Dramatik. ... Er (der einzelne Mensch) ist untrennbar verbunden mit den grossen politischen und ökonomischen Faktoren seiner Zeit oder, wie Brecht einmal pointierte: 'Jeder chinesische Kuli ist, um sein Mittagsbrot zu verdienen, gezwungen, Weltpolitik zu treiben.[4]

In developing an epic idiom to match the scale of his themes, Piscator is following the experiments of the Russian producers Meyerhold[5] and Tairow (the latter visited Berlin

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1. Das Politische Theater, Berlin 1929, p.25.
2. cf. F. Wolf: op.cit., p.23, p.34.
3. Das Politische Theater, p.38.
4. Das Politische Theater, p.131.
5. cf. Ernst Schuhmacher: Die Dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933, Berlin 1955, p.135; also H. Hieber: Theater in Moskau (Die Weltbühne, Berlin 1927, I Halbjahr, "Der Herold der neuen Zeit ist Meyerhold ... Er hat den Konstruktivismus rücksichtslos durchgeführt und alles von der Bühne entfernt, was an die höfisch-bürgerliche Epoche erinnerte: Vorhänge, Rampe, Dekoration, Kulissen, Hintergrund ... der Kinematograph wird herangezogen zur Unterbrechung der körperlichen Bilder ... Dynamik ist alles: die Mauern der Stadt bewegen sich ... die Bühne rollt, dreht sich, arbeitet wie eine Maschine.

in 1923 and 1925). Before the days of 'Socialist Realism', and in the first fervour of revolution, the theatre in Russia had set out to eliminate the barrier between audience and actors, in fact, to eliminate the barrier between reality and play. Often enough the triumphs of the revolution were re-enacted on a scale which was more akin to a pageant, or even to military manoeuvres. P.M. Kerschenjey speaks of "eine Tragödie in der die Masse die handelnde Person ist".[1] J.R. Becher's Arbeiter, Bauern, Soldaten, described as "ein Entwurf zu einem revolutionären Kampfdrama", is an attempt of this kind to turn the audience from observers into active revolutionaries - the stage-directions at the end of this 'play' call for arms to be distributed amongst the actors and the audience.[2]

Although Piscator does not go to these lengths in his epic drama, and although he claims to be appealing

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1. Das Schöpferische Theater, Hamburg 1922, p.195. cf. also Karl Heinz Martin, of whom F. Wolf (op.cit., p.263) says: "(er setzte) in seiner Konzeption der Raumbühne in grandiosen Massenszenen das Volk als agierenden Revolutionären, Helden in Bewegung ..."

2. Julius Bab describes it as: "ein Theater, das wieder die Grenzen zwischen Schauspieler und Zuschauer einreisst, das überhaupt nur ein Stück leicht umrissener Massenaktion vorstellt ... Es sind Anleitungen und ein paar Solo Stimmen für ein Festspiel, das von der handelnden Masse erst richtig ausgestaltet werden soll. Der Unterschied zwischen Zuschauern und Spielern ist nicht mehr gemeint, und die Menge soll nicht nur innerlich in Bewegung gesetzt werden. Diese Phantasien ... stellen nicht bloss Aktionen dar, sie sollen Aktionen sein." (Chronik des Deutschen Dramas, V, p.61.)

to reason[1], he lays the emphasis on the emotional involvement of the audience, their complete absorption in the events on the stage.[2] It is sufficient, Piscator argues, for historical facts to be presented in their true perspective[3]: there is no need for embellishment by art. "Wir wollen nicht Theater", he writes, "sondern Wirklichkeit".[4] Commenting on his production of Trotz Alledem (Grosse Schauspielhaus, 12 July 1925), Piscator writes:

> Zum erstenmal waren wir konfrontiert mit der absoluten, von uns selbst erlebten Wirklichkeit. Und sie hatte genau solche Spannungsmomente und dramatischen Höhepunkte wie das gedichtete Drama, und von ihr gingen genau so starke Erschütterungen aus.[5]

The ideal is achieved if the performance ultimately acquires the character of a political meeting:

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1. cf. Das Politische Theater, p.41: "Das Theater sollte nicht mehr allein gefühlsmässig auf die Zuschauer wirken, nicht mehr auf seine emotionale Bereitschaft spekulieren - es wendete sich ganz bewusst an seine Vernunft. Nicht nur Aufschwung, Begeisterung, Hingerissenheit, sondern Aufklärung, Wissen, Erkenntnis sollte es vermitteln."
2. F. Wolf (op.cit., p.32) comments on the union, in the Agitpropspiel, of intellectual and emotional elements: "eine zwingende Vereinigung der emotionalen und erkenntniserregenden Elemente."
3. Das Politische Theater, p.55: "Die nackten Tatsachen für sich sprechen zu lassen." This is where Piscator claims to have advanced on Büchner and Hauptmann - although it will be remembered that the former also asserts that he is presenting the bare historical facts.
4. Letter to Die Weltbühne, 1928, I Halbjahr, p.386.
5. Das Politische Theater, p.68.

> Die Masse übernahm die Regie ... Das Theater war für sie Wirklichkeit geworden und sehr bald war es nicht mehr: Bühne gegen Zuschauerraum, sondern ein einziger grosser Versammlungssaal, ein einziges grosses Schlachtfeld, eine einzige grosse Demonstration.[1]

This appeal to the audience was, of course, a typical feature of the Agitproptheater, the aim of which Friedrich Wolf describes as "Die Einheit Bühne - Zuschauerraum mit allen Mitteln herzustellen".[2]

Another feature of the Agitpropspiel - its topicality - is equally characteristic of Piscator's method. In pursuit of topicality he does not scruple to adapt the classics with the boldness for which he was famed:

> Es wird nicht immer nötig, die Tendenz des Autors an erste Stelle zu setzen ... Unter Umständen kann man an den Stücken Veränderungen vornehmen ... durch Streichungen, Verstärkerungen gewisser Stellen, evtl. durch Hinzufügung eines Vor- und Nachspiels, das dem ganzen zur Eindeutigkeit verhilft. Auf diese Weise kann ein grosser Teil der Weltliteratur der revolutionär-proletarischen Sache dienstbar gemacht werden.[3]

His revolutionary production of Die Räuber, with the proletarian Spiegelberg as the hero, was described by Diebold simply as: 'ein Bolschewistenstück'.[4]

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1. Op. cit., p.69 f.
2. Op. cit., p.250.
3. Das Politische Theater, p.37.
4. Jhering, with more sympathy for the producer's methods, wrote: "Man hat hier im Grunde nicht die Inszenierung eines Klassikers, kein Regieproblem vor sich, sondern die Aufführung eines neuen Revolutionsschauspiels nach den Räubern, weil moderne Revolutionsstücke fehlen." (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.223 - 13 Sep. 1926.) cf. Diebold, op.cit., p.455.

It was to create the effect of topicality, and particularly to stress the historical parallels which play such a large part in Marxism, that Piscator employed aids such as films, lantern-slides, pictures, charts, choruses and masks.[1] Jhering welcomed the employment of the film in this way in Trotz Alledem[2], but criticized the use of lantern-slides as captions in Paquet's Fahnen.[3] Music, Piscator used in the traditional manner - as a means of heightening the dramatic and emotional tension and pointing climaxes. He aimed, above all, to coordinate all these devices in such a way as to give impetus to the dramatic action and to achieve a massive impact on the audience.

Brecht was associated with Piscator in three productions - Rasputin, Die Abenteuer des braven Soldaten Schweyk and Konjunktur.[4] He is, in the circumstances, surprisingly reticent about Piscator's work, and the latter, for his part, never actually produced any of Brecht's plays.

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1. Piscator distinguished between three types of film: the 'Lehrfilm', which supplied the evidence to support the ideas of the play, the 'dramatischer Film', designed to fill in the historical background, and the 'Kommentarfilm', which acted as a chorus and was addressed directly to the audience.
2. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.179: "Ungeheuere Wirkung, wenn die Ereignisse auf den Film übersprangen ... Der Film ist dramaturgische Funktion."
3. Ibid. II, p.44: "Ein Irrtum waren die ansagenden, die szenentitulierenden, teils erklärenden, teils verstärkenden Lichtbilder zu seiten der Bühne."
4. cf. Das Politische Theater, p.88.

While Brecht may well have borrowed the term 'epic' from Piscator[1], he does not seem to have meant the same thing by it. Piscator himself pointed to its ambiguity - "Da jeder, der es vertritt, von einem anderen Ausgangspunkt kommt, versteht jeder etwas anderes darunter".[2] As we have seen, Brecht initially makes a distinction between 'episches Drama' and 'episches Theater' (cf. p.65): this distinction might conceivably correspond to two interpretations of the term 'epic'. As used in reference to drama it seems to mean a complex narrative style exceeding in time and space the traditional limits of the drama; this is essentially Piscator's meaning. It is perhaps significant that the term 'episches Drama' quickly vanishes from Brecht's vocabulary, in favour of 'episches Theater', a concept denoting primarily an intellectual attitude, a style of production and acting. Here, Brecht would seem to be thinking of a different aspect of the epic genre: its traditional objectivity, its rationality, its detachment. If this is not what he is thinking of, it is difficult to see how he can talk, as he does, of 'epic' acting. Again, it is possible to imagine the adoption of the term in this

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1. It seems to have been first used in reference to Paquet's Fahnen, produced in 1924, although Arnolt Bronnen claims that the word was used of his Excesse and Katalaunische Schlacht as early as 1922 or 1923 (cf. Arnolt Bronnen gibt zu Protokoll, Hamburg 1954, p.144).

2. Das Politische Theater, p.58.

sense as a development from the notions of 'Sport' and 'Spass'. In thus interpreting the epic genre, Brecht has the august support of Goethe and Schiller.[1] This interpretation, incidentally, would meet the complaint of Willett that Brecht uses 'Verfremdung' and 'Episierung' in the same sense[2]: this would not be surprising if, in fact, 'episch'

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1. cf. Goethe to Schiller, 19 April 1797: "Einen Gedanken über das epische Gedicht will ich doch gleich mitteilen. Da es in der grössten Ruhe und Behaglichkeit angehört werden soll, so macht der Verstand vielleicht mehr als anderen Dichtarten seine Forderungen, und mich wunderte diesmal bei Durchlesung der Odyssee, gerade dieses Verstandesforderung so vollständig befriedigt zu sehen."
   Schiller to Goethe, 21 April 1797: "Es wird mir aus allem, was Sie sagen, immer klarer, dass die Selbstständigkeit seiner Teile einen Hauptcharakter des epischen Gedichtes ausmacht. Die blosse, aus dem Innersten herausgeholte Wahrheit ist der Zweck des epischen Dichters; er schildert uns bloss das ruhige Dasein und Wirken der Dinge nach ihren Naturen; sein Zweck liegt schon in jedem Punkt seiner Bewegung, darum eilen wir nicht ungeduldig zu einem Ziele, sondern verweilen wir uns mit Liebe bei jedem Schritte. Er erhält uns die Freiheit des Gemüts... Ganz im Gegenteil raubt uns der tragische Dichter unsere Gemütsfreiheit."
   Goethe to Schiller, 26 April 1797: "Im Trauerspiel kann und soll das Schicksal oder, welches einerlei ist, die entschiedne Natur des Menschen... walten und herrschen; ... der Verstand darf gar nicht in die Tragödie entrieren als bei Nebenpersonen zur Desavantage des Hauptthelden usw.
   Im Epos ist es gerade umgekehrt; bloss der Verstand, wie in der Odyssee, oder eine zweckmässige Leidenschaft, wie in der Ilias, sind epische Agentien."
   To quote briefly only one modern opinion on this topic: "Wir stellen zunächst nur fest, dass Gleichmass zum Wesen der epischen Dichtung gehört. Das Gleichmass bedeutet den Gleichmut des Dichters, der keiner Stimmung verfällt. ... Indem der Dichter so gegenübertritt, wird alles Geschehen zum Gegenstand. (Emil Staiger: Grundbegriffe der Poetik, Zürich 1946, p.89 f.)
2. John Willett: The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, London 1959, p.179. -

meant 'objective, detached, sober'. It might even be argued that Brecht, with his successive terms, 'Sport', 'Spass', 'episch' and 'Verfremdung', is simply seeking to rationalise a fundamental feeling about poetry and the theatre. In short, as Fritz Sternberg was to say to him later with considerable acuteness: "Episches Theater, das sind Sie, lieber Herr Brecht".[1]

It is interesting to note that Jhering, after talking of the 'epic basis' of the drama in the sense of what he calls 'Stoffzufuhr' (that is, in what we have deduced to be Piscator's sense), links it with the psychological aspect by reference to the style of acting:

> Ebenso (i.e. by the introduction of an epic factor) gewinnt die Schauspielkunst an Ruhe, Klarheit, Einfachheit, Selbstverständlichkeit, und wir gewinnen vielleicht auch einen anderen Zugang zu dem epischen Theater Bertolt Brechts und eine Klärung des Widerspruchs zwischen seiner Theorie und seiner Praxis. [2]

In the same way, Brecht comments[3] that Piscator, by his innovations, has done more to solve the 'Stoffrage' than the 'Formfrage'. That the producer should affect the content, the poet the theatrical style, is a paradox on which Jhering remarks elsewhere:

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1. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.253, 2 June 1927.
2. Berliner Dramaturgie, Berlin 1947, p.63.
3. Letzte Etappe Ödipus, Berliner Börsen-Courier, 1 Feb. 1929.

> Es ist erstaunlich, dass der Dichter mehr den Theaterstil, und der Regisseur mehr das Drama beeinflusst hat. Die meisten Versuche, sich mit der politischen und sozialen Gegenwart auseinanderzusetzen gehen auf Piscator zurück. Die meisten Versuche, eine neue Form zu schaffen, auf Brecht.1

Certainly, in Brecht's first published statements on the 'epic theatre', in which he states categorically, "Ich bin für das epische Theater", there is practically nothing reminiscent of Piscator. This statement is in the form of an interview with Bernard Guillemin, published in Die Literarische Welt.[2] Piscator's name is not mentioned, there is no talk of particular techniques of production, much less of political engagement: Brecht concerns himself with the psychological factor, with his attitude to his work, and with the reaction he expects from his public. He claims, above all, that his plays (as opposed to his lyric) are utterly impersonal and objective:

> Im Drama ... gebe ich nicht meine private Stimmung, sondern gleichsam die Stimmung der Welt ... Ich lasse mein Gefühl in die dramatische Gestaltung nicht hineinfliessen. Es würde die Welt verfälschen.

His work is entirely rational - he is guided by his reason, and he appeals to the reason of his audience:

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1. Die Zwanziger Jahre, Berlin 1948, p.172.

2. Die literarische Welt, No.31, 30 Juli 1926.

> Ich gehe auf einen möglichst klassischen, kalten, sehr vom Verstand herkommenden Darstellungsstil aus ... Ich appelliere an den Verstand.[1]

He insists that his plays must be produced in this spirit: 'nüchtern, ... sachlich'. The figures in the plays "müssten, entgegen der bisherigen Gepflogenheit, ganz kalt, objektiv, klassisch vor dem Zuschauer hingestellt werden".

The claim to rationality may seem odd in the light of the apparently irrational nature of Baal, Eduard II and Im Dickicht der Städte, whose characters are driven by impulse and obsession. Indeed, Brecht subsequently admitted, in reference to Im Dickicht, that the rational factor of motivation was deliberately neglected. He declared that this was a policy designed to acclimatize the public to new forms of motivation appropriate to our complex economic life:

> Wir haben uns (provisorisch) damit geholfen, die Motive überhaupt nicht zu untersuchen ... um wenigstens nicht falsche anzugeben, und haben die Handlungen als blosse Phenomene dargestellt ...[2]

From this, it seems that Brecht, under the influence of Behaviourism, limits the operation of reason to the

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1. This sweeping statement is somewhat modified later: cf. Betrachtungen über die Schwierigkeiten des epischen Theaters (Frankfurter Zeitung, Literaturblatt, 27 Nov. 1927): "Dabei wäre es ganz und gar unrichtig, diesem Theater das Gefühl absprechen zu wollen. (See below p.)

2. Über Stoffe und Form, Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.151, 31 März 1929.

registering of individual actions; interpretation he leaves to the audience:

> Ich gebe die blossen Vorgänge, um das Publikum selbst denken zu lassen ... Der Zuschauer sollte Psycholog genug sein, den Stoff, den ich ihm biete, selber zu durchdringen.[1]

There is an echo of the 'Sporttheater', when he continues:

> Ich verbürge mich nur für die absolute Echtheit und Richtigkeit dessen, was in meinen Dramen geschieht - ich gehe Wetten auf Menschenkenntnis ein.

The only principle of order is concentration on types:

> Ich beschränke mich zwar in meinen Dramen auf den reinen Stoff, aber ich gestalte nur das Typische, ich wähle aus - das ist die Ordnung.

This is the only measure of order which the dramatist may introduce into the chaos of the world: it is meant to be an initial aid to the audience to pursue their own analysis - if they fail to do so, it is because the traditional theatre actually values vagueness and obscurity, and identifies the irrational with the mystic.[2] The audience must be provoked and trained to use the analytical power of the intellect, because, although the world may be a chaos, this chaos is not immanent in phenomena; it simply represents the limitations of our customary thought.[3] The chaos does

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1. Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.
2. "... die Schuld (trifft) das heutige Theater, das alles, was die Erforschung lohnen würde, unklar auf Mystik spielt." (Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.)
3. "Und selbst das Chaos gibt es nur, weil unser Kopf kein vollkommener ist. Was draussen bleibt, nennen wir das Irrationale." (Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.)

have a pattern, but it is enormously complex, and the reason it seems complex to Brecht is that he takes an atomistic view of the world. There is no such thing as 'character'. Brecht avoids the word, and speaks of 'Gestalten'. There is not even proper continuity of personality.[1] People perform contradictory actions because they are at the mercy of circumstances which never cease to change.[2] Social behaviour, chaotic as it may seem, is in the last analysis rational, for every act is based on assessment of a situation.[3] Apart from the succession of acts dictated by circumstances, there are only 'opinions' (Ansichten), and agglomerations of these form the nearest approach to personality which Brecht is prepared to admit. Opinions are certainly more fundamental than emotions:

> Die Ansichten der Leute interessieren mich überhaupt mehr als ihre Gefühle. Die Gefühle werden meist von den Ansichten hervorgerufen. Sie laufen mit. Die Ansichten hingegen sind entscheidend. Nur die Erfahrung ist zuweilen in höheren Grade primär.

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1. "Der Mensch ist ein immerwährend zerfallendes und neu sich bildendes Atom." (Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.)
2. "Auch wenn sich eine meiner Personen in Widersprüchen bewegt, so nur darum, weil der Mensch in zwei ungleichen Augenblicken niemals der gleiche sein kann. Das wechselnde Aussen veranlasst ihn beständig zu einer inneren Umgruppierung." (Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.)
3. "Jede Handlung entspringt einer Erkenntnis. Impulshandlung im eigentlichen Sinne gibt es nicht. Auch dahinter verbirgt sich der Verstand." (Die literarische Welt, loc.cit.)

> Aber man weiss, dass nicht jede Ansicht ihre Quelle in der Erfahrung hat.[1]

4. Aesthetics and sociology.

From his interview with Guillemin, as well as from his early works, it is fairly clear that Brecht is primarily concerned with individuals, although these may be, for him, little more than shadowy collections of actions and opinions. It is, perhaps, his thinking on the insubstantiality of human personality which leads him to consider the phenomenology and dynamics of the social organism, in particular, the absorption of the individual into this organism. The crucial work in this connection is Mann ist Mann, written between 1924 and 1926, first produced (in Darmstadt) on 26th September 1926. From his labours on this play, Brecht emerged with a vision of a 'new man', the denizen of a complex society, and he set about examining

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1. In an "Ovation" to Bernard Shaw, published at almost exactly the same time as this interview (Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.341, 25 Juli 1926), Brecht praises Shaw's rationalism and his representation of 'opinions' in dramatic form: Shaw's works are so effective, he says, "weil sie an den Verstand appellieren. Seine Welt ist eine Welt, die durch Ansichten zustande kommt: die Schicksale seiner Figuren sind ihre Ansichten". Another intriguing point in Brecht's appreciation of Shaw is the latter's fondness for upsetting conventional ways of thought: "Wahrscheinlich verdanken alle seine Figuren ihre sämtlichen Züge Shaws Vergnügen, unsere Gewohnheitsassoziationen in Unordnung zu bringen." It is perhaps not too fanciful to see here some relevance to the subsequent theory of Verfremdung.

the structure and mechanism of this society. It is not surprising to learn from Elizabeth Hauptmann[1] that Brecht plunged himself into the study of economics, particularly Socialism and Marxism, immediately after the production of Mann ist Mann. His next works, begun around this time, show him struggling to put into dramatic form the mechanism of capitalist society (Der Brotladen, Fleischhacker, Fatzer, Dreigroschenoper, Mahagonny, Happy End). How far Piscator may have helped to bring about this development must be a matter for conjecture, but it is likely enough that, along with many stage techniques, the young playwright adopted something of Piscator's political views. This does not mean that he took over Piscator's creed lock, stock and barrel; some time was to elapse before Brecht professed the communist philosophy openly. In 1926/27 he is still largely uncommitted, and his analysis of society is apparently undertaken, as much as anything, for the clarification of his own ideas. His attitude is much more detached than that of Piscator; he clings to his obsessive rationality, his approach is highly cerebral and abstract. His account of society is parabolic, algebraic, as it were, compared with Piscator's picturesque rendering. The central feature of the epic theatre is its

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1. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft, Berlin 1957, p.243.

rationality:

> Dass es nicht so sehr an das Gefühl, sondern mehr an die Ratio des Zuschauers appelliert. Dabei wäre es ganz und gar unrichtig, diesem Theater das Gefühl absprechen zu wollen. [1]

In a preface to the radio version of Mann ist Mann[2], and in his open correspondence with the sociologist, Fritz Sternberg, published in the Börsen-Courier[3], Brecht propounds his new sociological point of view. He claims to show in Mann ist Mann the evolution of a new type of man: the most striking thing about this preface is the way in which Brecht confines himself to a sociological concept, steering clear of political terminology or ethical ideas. He writes in what must be deliberately generalised terms of 'alte gewohnte Dinge' and 'neue Dinge' and of 'eine breite Schicht Menschen ... im Niedergehen begriffen'. This latter idea Schumacher[4] glibly misrepresents as Bürgertum, but the whole point of Brecht's description of the sociological change is that he does not visualise it in the conventional way of Marxism or any other political doctrine, familiar as he must have been with such jargon. He does not see his new type of man in the current fashion as an industrial helot (cf. Toller's Masse-Mensch or

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1. Frankfurter Zeitung, Literaturblatt, 27 Nov. 1927.
2. Published in Die Scene, xvii, pp.111-113 (April 1927).
3. No.219 and 253, June 1927.
4. Die dramatischen Versuch Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933, p.106.

Kaiser's Gas plays). The technical monuments of the dying culture are not emblems of the coming age or a significant factor in the new civilisation:

> Dieser neue Typus Mensch wird nicht so sein, wie ihn der alte Typus Mensch sich gedacht hat. Ich glaube: er wird sich nicht durch die Maschinen verändern lassen, sondern er wird die Maschinen verändern, und wie immer er aussehen wird, vor allem wird er wie ein Mensch aussehen. [1]

Brecht then proceeds to examine Galy Gay - "vielleicht eben einen Vorfahren dieses neuen Typus Mensch ..." Clearly, he is an anti-hero, and in some ways akin to the Schwejk figure. His qualities are, however, less attractive:

> ... unter anderem ein grosser Lügner ... und ein unverbesserlicher Opportunist, er kann sich allem anpassen, fast ohne Schwierigkeiten. Er ist anscheinend sehr vieles zu ertragen gewohnt. Er kann sich sogar nur selten eine eigene Meinung gestatten. [2]

The inversion of values implied here is accomplished by Brecht in his enthusiasm for sociology: in the new sociological situation, in which the individual is absorbed by the mass, weakness becomes strength, the loss of personality is not a tragedy, but a gain:

> Es ist eine lustige Sache. Denn dieser Galy Gay nimmt eben keinen Schaden, sondern er gewinnt.[3]

In Brecht's view, the sociologist can afford to drop the old categories of 'gut' and 'schlecht' and substitute

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1. Die Scene, as above, p.112.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.113.

for them 'richtig' and 'falsch'.[1] For this reason he invokes the aid of the sociologist in overturning the old standards of the drama. Here, again, Herbert Jhering supplies a striking pre-echo to Brecht's thought when he writes in a review of the revised version of Dickicht:

> Das neue Dickicht kann nur ein Übergangswerk sein, hinweisend auf grosse Städte- und Industrieschauspiele, langsam die Sinnlosigkeit der rein ästhetischen Wertung aufdeckend und ein anderes Urteil herausfordernd als 'gut' oder 'schlecht'.[2]

By 'richtig' Brecht means appropriate to the sociological situation, for he sees the theatre, now, essentially as a function of society. Changes in the social structure of society have rendered irrelevant the dramatic tradition that began with Shakespeare and no amount of effort can revive this tradition. Conversely, critical and aesthetic principles derived from it and the society it represents are inadequate to describe the drama of the new school. The new generation of dramatists is absolutely revolutionary:

> Diese Generation hat weder den Willen noch die Möglichkeit, das Theater mit seinem Publikum zu erobern und auf diesem Theater und vor diesem Publikum bessere oder nur zeitgemässere Stücke vorzuführen, sondern sie hat die Verpflichtung und die Möglichkeit, das Theater einem anderen Publikum zu erobern. Die neue Produktion, die mehr und mehr das grosse epische Theater heraufführt, das der soziologischen Situation

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1. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.253 (2 Juni 1927): "Die Skala seiner Schätzungen liegt nicht zwischen 'gut' und 'schlecht', sondern zwischen 'richtig' und 'falsch'."
2. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.264 f.

> entspricht, kann zunächst ihrem Inhalt wie ihrer Form nach nur von denjenigen verstanden werden, die diese Situation verstehen. Sie wird die alte Ästhetik nicht befriedigen, sondern sie wird sie vernichten.[1]

In Sternberg's contributions to the correspondence Brecht gets perhaps more than he had bargained for: the Marxist sociologist, summing up in his first letter previous discussions with the playwright, foresees the development of a collective, which will put an end to the classical tradition of the drama, which began with Shakespeare and never developed beyond the latter's view of the conflict between individuals.[2] Now that the individual is increasingly absorbed into the mass - or into his class - in the final stages of Capitalism, drama of this pattern is no longer feasible.[3] So far, judging by the evidence of Mann ist Mann, Brecht would agree. Sternberg goes on, however, to deny the possibility of drama of any kind:

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1. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.253 (2 Juni 1927) - Sollten wir nicht die Ästhetik liquidieren?
2. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.219 (12 Mai 1927): "Der erste Erlebniskreis des Bürgers dreht sich - im Drama! - im wesentlichen um die Beziehungen Mann, Frau; Mann, Frau - natürlich nicht als Kollektivwesen, sondern um die Beziehungen eines bestimmten Mannes zu einer bestimmten Frau. Sämtliche Möglichkeiten, die sich aus dem Problem des 'Dritten' ergeben, sind einmal bürgerliches Drama geworden."
3. Ibid.: "Was ist zu tun? Da doch nun einmal in der Wirklichkeit das Individuum als Individuum, als Individualität, als Unteilbares, als Unvertauschbares immer mehr schwindet, da im Ausgang des kapitalistischen Zeitalters wieder das Kollektiv bestimmend ist, da die Maschinen herrschend sind und nur die Millionen Geschichte bestimmen?"

the decline of the drama of individual conflict is tantamount to the decline of the drama as such. Dramas attempting to show the conflict of classes (Sternberg quotes the examples of Goethe's Natürliche Tochter and Kaiser's work) are unsatisfactory. By thus denying the regeneration, in the communist society, of a 'total individual' and by equating the collective with an undifferentiated mass, Sternberg subsequently earned the condemnation of orthodox Marxists.[1] Brecht's letter seems to have induced Sternberg to modify his attitude, in so far as he is, now, prepared to leave open the question of a new form of drama, provided it involves "gleichzeitig eine Inhalts- und Formänderung".[2] On the other hand, he can see no evidence in Marx for Brecht's Epic Theatre and is inclined, as we have seen, to dismiss it as a personal whim on Brecht's part.

Brecht was not discouraged by Sternberg's drastic arguments: he continued to argue that the theatre must play its part as "den 'ideologischen Überbau' für die effektiven realen Umschichtungen in der Lebensweise unserer Zeit!".[3] He stresses that the changes he proposes are

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1. cf. Werner Hecht in Theater der Zeit etc., p.8.
2. Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.253 (2 Juni 1927).
3. Betrachtungen über die Schwierigkeiten des epischen Theaters in Frankfurter Zeitung, Literaturblatt, 27 Nov. 1927.

objective and correspond to objective sociological changes.[1] In a situation where the public itself is confused, it is the duty of sociologically skilled producers and playwrights to impose, even where works of the classical repertoire are concerned, a style corresponding to their interpretation of the sociological situation.[2] This style is described as "das grosse epische und dokumentarische Theater"... das unserer Zeit gemäss ist",[3] or simply as 'das epische Theater'.[4] At this stage the concept is not defined closely, but it is obvious that it employs certain special techniques of production and that its attitude is rational, indeed, scientific. Brecht makes it clear on several occasions that the Epic Theatre does not dispense entirely with emotion - "Dies käme nur darauf hinaus, heute noch etwa der Wissenschaft das Gefühl absprechen zu wollen".[5] What he rejects is confused, mystic or empathetic emotion. In an article, Über Musik für ein episches Theater, quoted by Schumacher[6], Brecht makes this point clear:

1. Ibid.: "Die totale Umstellung des Theaters darf nicht einer artistischen Laune folgen, sie muss einfach der totalen geistigen Umstellung unserer Zeit entsprechen."
2. Theatersituation 1917-1927 in Der neue Weg, Berlin, No.10 (16 Mai 1927), p.182.
3. Ibid.
4. Betrachtungen über die Schwierigkeiten des epischen Theaters.
5. Ibid.
6. Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933, p.49.

> Tatsächlich sind (die) Emotionen (der epischen Bearbeitung) nur geklärt, vermeiden als Quelle das Unterbewusstsein und haben nichts mit Rausch zu tun.

A summary of Brecht's theory is given about this time by his friend Feuchtwanger:

> Es kommt nach Brecht darauf an, dass der Zuschauer um Gottes willen sich nicht einfühlt. Das Schmarotzen-wollen am Schicksal und am Leben eines anderen muss nach Brecht dem Publikum ausgetrieben werden ... Es kommt vielmehr nach Brecht darauf an, dass der Mann im Zuschauerraum sich die Ereignisse auf der Bühne lediglich betrachtend, wissbegierig, lern-begierig anschaut. Anschauen soll der Zuschauer den Ablauf eines Lebens, seine Schlüsse daraus ziehen, ablehnen, zustimmen, sich interessieren soll er, aber um Gottes willen nicht mitfühlen. Er soll sich die Mechanik eines Geschehens betrachten wie die Mechanik eines Autos.[1]

What Brecht is visualising, then, is the scientific demonstration of social forces so as to make the public conscious of changes which otherwise they only vaguely sense. He means to open the eyes of the masses to the causes of their discontent. This involves a change in the function of the stage, a change later defined by Brecht simply as 'Pädagogik'.[2] Didacticism in the theatre is not, of course, new: the originality of Brecht's idea lies in the attempt to transmit an entirely new view of a world, the nature of which involves a change in the function and technique of the theatre itself. Not only the aims, but

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1. Die Weltbühne, 1928, 2. Halbjahr, pp.374-375.
2. Über Stoffe und Form in Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.151 (31 März 1929).

the methods also must be revolutionary.

The problem presents itself to Brecht under two aspects. Firstly, the task of the playwright: to provide works which adequately and accurately analyse our complex society. Secondly, the task of the producer and the actor: to evolve a style which will evoke the correct critical attitude in an audience. It is characteristic of Brecht that these two aspects are always present in his thinking - he is as much a producer as a 'Stückeschreiber'. As he remarked in his interview with Guillemin: "wirkliche Theaterstücke sind überhaupt nur aufgeführt zu verstehen".[1] These two aspects correspond very roughly to the traditional division into 'Stoff' and 'Form'.[2] It is this interest of Brecht's in form which leads to the paradoxical situation mentioned by Jhering (see above p.39), in which Brecht profoundly affected the style of production.

The incongruity of classical dramatic idiom and economic themes, on which Brecht now insists, is something that had been noticed as long ago as 1857 by Marx himself[3];

1. Die literarische Welt, loc. cit.
2. Although these aspects cannot, as Brecht points out, be ultimately separated - cf. Letzte Etappe Ödipus, loc.cit.
3. Marx: Einleitung zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (ed. Berlin 1947), p.268 f. He puts the rhetorical questions: Ist die Anschauung der Natur und der gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse, die der griechischen Phantasie und daher der griechischen (Kunst) zugrunde liegt, möglich mit Selfaktors und Eisenbahnen und Lokomotiven und elektrischen Telegraphen? Wo bleibt Vulkan gegen Roberts et Co., Jupiter gegen den Blitzableiter und Hermes gegen den Crédit Mobilier etc.

it became a common topic of debate in the 1920's, particularly in connection with the Epic Theatre. Some critics did not believe it possible to reduce modern economic life to manageable dramatic form. Julius Bab relegated those themes which go beyond individual experience to the film, the proper province of epic forms.[1] In an article, Über Machtfragen und Grenzen der Dramatik[2], Theodor Greif also denies the capacity of the drama to deal with certain essential contemporary themes:

> Die dramatische Form versagt, sobald es sich nicht mehr um individuelle Probleme handelt. Die gesellschaftlichen, gebrauchen wir das berühmte Wort: die soziologischen Probleme der Zeit bedürfen der Erläuterung, ein Drama jedoch kann nicht mit Fussnoten geschrieben werden.

The monolinear dynamics of classical drama are inadequate to represent social reality:

> Die Gesetze des Theaters verlangen eine sogenannte dramatische Wirkung, das heisst: eine mindestens zu schlagkräftigen Höhepunkten führende Handlung, mit andern Worten, ein exakt aufgebautes Nacheinander. (cf. Brecht's comment in the Cologne radio discussion, p.66 above.) Aber in der Wirklichkeit dieser Gebiete ist mehr Verhandlung als Handlung, ein mitunter höchst unlogisch verlaufendes Nebeneinander, und die Explosionen sind nur Schlussfolgerungen aus weit

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1. See Episches Drama in Die Volksbühne, iv, 3 Juni 1929: "(Das Theater) kann seine Existenzberechtigung nur beweisen, sich im Bewusstsein der Zeit nur behaupten, wenn es sich auf die ausschliessliche Gegenkraft zum Film konzentriert - auf das rein Menschliche: die Seelendarstellung durch Worte. Kurz, wenn es nicht episches, sondern eminent dramatisches Drama gibt."
2. cf. Der Scheinwerfer, Essen, Oktober 1930, Heft 3, p.15 f.

> wichtigeren Voraussetzungen, die nur in epischer Breite entwickelt werden können.

Not even a so-called 'epic theatre', however, is capable of representing this complex reality, according to Greif:

> Man hat gut sagen: machen wir ein episches Theater. Auch das hat seine Grenzen. Es gibt Dinge, die in einem Dialog schlechterdings nicht verständlich gesagt werden können, die zu einem weitausholenden Dialog zwingen.

Whereas, in the past, the characteristic of the drama has been to construct complications, the necessity is now for simplification of real life, and this is beyond the resources of the theatre:

> Unmöglich die Forderung des Theaters, Fäden zu knüpfen, in Einklang zu bringen mit der Forderung dieser Stoffe, Fäden zu entwirren. Unmöglich, einem Theaterpublikum so schwierige Materien zu erklären.

It is precisely this task that Brecht sets himself, and the manuscripts for Weizen and Der Brotladen show how seriously he tackled it. Although it may have defeated him at this first attempt, he returned to the attack in Die Heilige Johanna. In the meantime, he adopted in Mahagonny and Die Dreigroschenoper what was probably an easier idiom - satire, the exposure of paradoxes in capitalist society.

It is to Piscator that Brecht gives the credit for tackling topical themes, and he is almost certainly referring to him when he writes in Der Mann am Regiepult of a type of producer -

> welche angesichts der Unfähigkeit dramatischer Produktion dazu übergegangen ist, nunmehr aus eigenen Kräften, das heisst so gut, als es eben ging, jene Stoffe vor das Publikum zu bringen, zu denen die Dramatiker nichts zu sagen haben. Diese Art Regie kann mit ihren Mitteln nicht wählerisch sein, sie verbraucht vor allem naturgemäss ein ganz enormes Quantum von Mitteln.[1]

This practice is at least useful for training audiences and dramatists:

> Sie kaut die Stoffe vor, sie bringt die mittleren Leute von ihrer öffentlichen Selbstbetrachtung los, sie trainiert den Zuschauer, und vor allem: sie vernichtet den alten reaktionären Theaterstil, der heute im direkten Zusammenhang mit der politischen Reaktion das Theater unumschränklich beherrscht.[2]

The example of Piscator encouraged playwrights to choose themes of contemporary political and social significance: "Diese Saison beweist die Wirkung Piscators", wrote Brecht in February 1929, quoting as examples Verbrecher, Revolte im Erziehungshaus and Ton in des Töpfers Hand.[3]

Brecht, like Marx, is aware of the difficulties involved:

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1. cf. Das Theater, Berlin, ix Jahrgang, 1928, No.1.
2. Ibid.
3. The influence of Piscator is confirmed by Jhering (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, p.39): "Der Einfluss der Piscatorbühne ist in vielen Plänen dieses Winters zu erkennen"- with specific reference to Bruckner (author of Verbrecher) - "Bruckner schreibt hier Krankheit der Jugend plus Piscator-Stück." This play was produced in the Deutsches Theater (October 1928) with the Etagenbühne used by Piscator in Hoppla, wir leben!.

> Können wir in der Form des Iambus über Geld sprechen? Das Petroleum sträubt sich gegen die fünf Akte usw. Schon zur Dramatisierung einer simplen Pressenotiz reicht die dramatische Technik der Hebbel und Ibsen bei weitem nicht aus. [1]

The choice of such economic topics, is, however, only the first stage - "die erste Etappe sind die neuen Stoffe" - a step taken on the level of reality. The next step is on the artistic level, and consists in the representation of the new social relationships which arise from economic complexes:

> Ein Beispiel: die Gewinnung und Verwertung des Petroleums ist ein neuer Stoffkomplex, in dem bei genauer Betrachtung ganz neue Beziehungen zwischen Menschen auffallen ... das Primäre war der Petroleumkomplex, das Sekundäre sind die neuen Beziehungen.[2]

This second step may be taken once the significance of the new topics has been grasped, i.e. once the Marxist doctrine of the economic basis of life has been assimilated. It is in the achievement of the second stage that <u>form</u> comes into play, and the great advance of 1928/29, according to Brecht, was in this sector: "Der Vorstoss des Jahres erfolgte in der Bemühung um die grosse Form".[3] The two works that represent the latest stage in the progress of the theatre are not, then, topical works, not works which remain on the level of 'Stoff', but works which represent a new form -

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1. <u>Über Stoffe und Form</u>, loc.cit.
2. Ibid.
3. <u>Letzte Etappe Ödipus</u>, loc.cit.

Die Dreigroschenoper and Leopold Jessner's production of Ödipus: "Hier wurde zweimal die Formfrage angeschnitten".[1] From this it will be apparent that obvious political relevance was not of primary importance in Brecht's mind; he is aiming at a higher degree of abstraction or formalisation than the Piscator school, and this is aided by the choice of unfamiliar or exotic settings, in itself a rudimentary form of what is later termed Verfremdung. The formalised style for which Brecht is arguing seems to be indicated, too, in the remark, "Die grossen modernen Stoffe müssen in einer mimischen Perspektive gesehen werden, sie müssen Gestencharakter haben".[2] The dramatic form is unsuitable for Brecht's purpose, and he may well be speaking from experience with the uncompleted Fleischhacker when he warns the 'Fachmann' that "ein Stück, dass etwa auf der Weizenbörse spielt, kann in der grossen Form, der dramatischen, nicht gemacht werden".[3] This traditional 'grand' form ('gross' seems to have the connotation of 'sublime' here) aims at the representation of eternal verities, the poet who uses it is aiming at posterity. But the present task of the theatre is to show as 'unnatural' features of our present society which are accepted without question at

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

the moment, but which will be utterly incomprehensible in a reformed society of the future.[1] The significance and appeal of the new 'grosse Form', characterised simply as 'episch', is thus limited by sociological considerations; the term 'gross' changes its connotation from 'sublime' to 'momentous' - "Die Stoffe sind ungeheuerlich, unsere Dramatik muss dies berücksichtigen".[2] What impresses Brecht about Jessner's Ödipus, apart from the epic style of acting mentioned in Dialog über Schauspielkunst[3], is the 'grosse Form' and the use of a narrative style in the second part (Ödipus auf Kolonos) - "wo mit grosser theatralischer Wirkung erzählt wird. Hier hat als lyrisch Verschrieenes Theaterwirkung".[4]

In this way Brecht's thinking develops through and beyond Piscator. His vision of the strangeness of human behaviour, and his attempt to represent it objectively in such plays as Dickicht and Mann ist Mann is supplemented by the interest in sociology and by the insight which

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1. Ibid.: "Es ist für uns schwer, sich eine Zeit vorzustellen, und eine Haltung anzunehmen, in der ähnliche Zustände nicht natürlich sind und die Nachfolgenden werden staunend nur diese unverständlichen und unnatürlichen Zustände betrachten.
2. Ibid.
3. Dialog über Schauspielkunst, Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.81 (17 Februar 1929).
4. Letzte Etappe, loc.cit.

Piscator no doubt gave him into the workings of capitalist society. But Piscator's representation of these workings is apparently too complex, too discursive, too much mere 'Stoff', too naturalistic for Brecht's taste. Hence he seeks to advance from the first stage represented by Piscator ('die neuen Stoffe') to the next stage dealing with social relationships. For this he requires a high degree of formalisation, an abstract style designed either to show up the grotesque paradoxes of the relationships which exist under capitalism (Mahagonny and Die Dreigroschenoper) or to reduce these relationships to their bare essentials (Lehrstücke). The function of form in the epic theatre, as Brecht said, is to simplify, the function of epic acting is to render strange.

Chapter III

Mann ist Mann, Weizen and Der Brotladen

Introduction.

Only one major work, Mann ist Mann, was written, published and produced during the period covering Brecht's establishment in Berlin in 1924 and his first great theatrical success with the Dreigroschenoper in 1928. Mann ist Mann must rank as one of Brecht's most crucial plays for he spent the best part of five years changing and re-assessing the implications of the metamorphosis of the stevedore Galy Gay into the colonial soldier Jeraiah Jip.[1] By the end of 1925 Brecht had completed the original

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1. The plot of the play remains substantially the same in all the versions of the play I was able to consult at the Brecht-Archiv. Right at the beginning of the first version of the play Brecht gives a journalistic synopsis of the events, which is followed by the main plan of the work:
   I) Galgei geht Fische kaufen;
   II) Soldaten verlieren vierten Mann;
   III) Kaufen sich Galgei;
   IV) Können vierten Mann nicht mehr haben;
   V) Galgei spielt Jip;
   VI) Jips Verrat;
   VII) Billard;
   VIII) Elefantenszene;
   IX) Flucht;
   X) Hinrichtung;
   XI) Abmarsch;
   XII) Im Rollenden Zug;
   XIII) Jip;
   XIV) Pantomime, Niggertanz, Boxmatch;
   XV) Aufwaschen. (Arch. No.150/29)

of the play: the Hauptmanuskript.[1] This MS contains a confused and often repetitive mass of material which was never published. Some of it was probably written after 1926, but three-quarters of it, at least, were completed before Brecht took up his study of sociology and economics in that year.[2] The version of the play published in 1926[3], whilst owing a great deal to the Hauptmanuskript, shows, as we shall see, an appraisal of Galy Gay's metamorphosis which is much more sociological than in the original. The play was produced in 1926 (Darmstadt) and subsequently

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1. The title 'Hauptmanuskripte' refers to the first part of Elizabeth Hauptmann's surname. After the completion of the work Brecht gave all the original manuscripts to Frau Hauptmann in gratitude for the help she had given him whilst he was working on the play. The typescript - most of Brecht's first drafts of his plays were type-written - of this manuscript with its total lack of punctuation and lack of capital letters for nouns, together with the many and only slightly varying versions of certain scenes, do suggest that this is the original of the play. There is further evidence for this in the naming of Jip, who for the most part of the Hauptmanuskripte (AN 150/01 to 150/176) is referred to as Jerome Jip. A note on p.150/176 states: "umgetauft in Jeraiah Jip: Sommer 1925, Augsburg", and makes it clear that the Hauptmanuskripte were almost completed by the summer of 1925.
2. cf. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, Berlin 1957, E. Hauptmann: Notizen über Brechts Arbeit 1926, p.243: "Er (i.e. Brecht) behauptete die Praktiken mit Geld seien sehr undurchsichtig, er müsse jetzt sehen, wie es mit den Theorien über Geld stehe. Bevor er noch in dieser Richtung zumindest für ihn sehr wichtige Entdeckungen machte, wusste er aber, dass die bisherige (grosse) Form des Dramas für die Darstellung solcher modernen Prozesse, wie etwa die Verteilung des Weltweizens, sowie auch für Lebensläufe der Menschen unserer Zeit und überhaupt für alle Handlungen mit Folgen nicht geeignet war.
3. Propylaen Verlag, Berlin 1926.

in 1928 (Volksbühne, Berlin), and although there are slight variations between the texts used for these productions they cast no new light on Galy Gay's adventures. We have to wait until 1929 for the first direct association of Galy Gay's metamorphosis with Dialectical Materialism which is to be found in the Arkadia Manuskript (copyright 1929). This MS was used for the production of the play in 1931 (Stadttheater, Berlin) and corresponds to the text published in the Stücke edition.[1]

This brief survey of the stages of composition of Mann ist Mann will help to show how misleading it would be to consider the Stücke edition of the play as representing the next single step in Brecht's development after the first four plays. Indeed, this text which seeks to interpret Galy Gay's transformation on the marxistic level of the relativity of all human manifestations[2] would support the

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1. The note provided in the Stücke edition, II, p.272: "Die Uraufführung des 1924-25 geschriebenen, 1926 im Propylaen Verlag, Berlin, erschienenen Lustspiels fand 1926 in Darmstadt statt, die Berliner Erstaufführung 1928 (Volksbühne). Die gekürzte zweite Fassung wurde 1931 am Berliner Staatstheater gespielt", is misleading, since no suggestion is made that difference between these versions of the play do exist.

2. The "Song vom Fluss der Dinge" which Witwe Begbick sings throughout the stages of Galy Gay's metamorphosis in the last version of the play, exemplifies Jesse's statement about relativity and human personality: "Der Mensch is gar nichts! Die moderne Wissenschaft hat nachgewiesen, dass alles relativ ist". (cf. Stücke II, p.236.)

view that Brecht came to reject the importance of human personality as a consequence of his conversion to Marxism. This is, in fact, not so, since Brecht dismisses the claims of individualism[1] long before his political conversion.

The root experience of Mann ist Mann is basically an Expressionist one: the idea of complete human metamorphosis is characteristic of a great many Expressionist plays. Kaiser[2] and Toller[3], for example, take it as the starting point of the spiritual regeneration of humanity. Such an association is quite foreign to Brecht who in Im Dickicht had already shown that the metamorphic effects of the struggle between Garga and Shlink were changes in the

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1. After the synopsis of the play in the Hauptmannskripte Brecht concludes: "... dieser ganze Vorfall ... beweist den oberflächlichen (illegible) Firnis (?) des Individualismus in unserer Zeit." AN 150/29.
2. Already in Von Morgens bis Mitternachts Kaiser shows in the metamorphosis of the Kassierer a protest against the mechanisation of human life. In plays like Nebeneinander his plea is for a New Man whose social conscience will communicate itself to society at large. Kaiser's New Man only achieves his aim in Hölle, Weg und Erde, a play whose dramatic quality Brecht praised as early as 1920. (cf. Der Volkswille, No.269, 14.12.1920, "Gross angelegt, mit tiefgehender Technik, die Skizze reiner Gesinnungstragödie: Kaiser's 'Hölle, Weg, Erde'. Eines der besten Werke Kaisers. (Die Entwicklung unaufhaltsam läuft zum Film hin. Eine Orgie der Ethik ... Hier ist ein Dichter der Entwicklung hat, noch in der schweren Elefantiasis des Gewissens.)"
3. In Die Wandlung Toller traces the steps which turn Friedrich into the new man, who rejects the claims of power-politics and strives to move the heart and conscience of all men.

relative situations of the two men, not in their personalities. From this struggle Garga emerges with the ruthlessness that initially characterised Shlink: he has cast away conventional ties and reckons that survival alone is what counts. In this respect he is a fore-father of Galy Gay whose metamorphosis is also largely a question of change in situation. Brecht's response to the messianic claims of the Expressionist 'new man' might be said to be that of the parodist. Toller's play Die Wandlung, for example, provides a good antithesis to Mann ist Mann. The choice of this particular play is not arbitrary for there is not only evidence that Brecht disliked it[1], but it is fairly clear that Mann ist Mann inverts the theme of Toller's work. The transformation of the ruthless colonial soldier Friedrich into the regenerator of the human race is matched in Brecht by the change of a harmless man into a ruthless colonial soldier. The grotesque and farcical episodes of Brecht's play -

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1. cf. Der Volkswille, No.269, 14.12.1920: "Tollers Wandlung, bis jetzt das deutlichste, nimmt Anregung vielleicht nirgends so wie von Reinhardt; er arbeitet mit gepflegten Gefühlen, sonderbarerweise. Gedichtete Zeitung, bestenfalls. Flache Visionen, sofort zu vergessen. Kosmos dünn. Der Mensch als Objekt, Proklamation, statt: als Mensch. Der abstrahierte Mensch, der Singular von Menschheit. Seine Sache liegt in schwachen Händen."

which are even more blatant in the Hauptmanuskript[1] - are a measure of the unmetaphysical quality of the work.

We must, however, look further than Brecht's response to Expressionism to see why he came to the conclusion expressed in the very title of Mann ist Mann. In the light of the early plays, this conclusion is hardly strange. For in their animalism all Brecht's early figures conform to a pattern of behaviour which, up to a point, makes them identical with one another.[2] Their isolation is the main factor which makes them 'individuals', that is: differentiated animals in the jungle of society. But this isolation is largely an expression of perplexity about human endeavour: the early figures lack emotional involvement in what happens to them. This is even truer

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1. The later versions of the play which preserve the implausible way in which the soldiers lose Jip and the extraordinary elephant auction-sale, unreal and inconsistent in every particular, unconvincing even as to the characters, contain but vestiges of the painfully ridiculous episodes which cram the Hauptmanuskripte. 'Pie-throwing', sitting on chairs which collapse, a flight on a billiard-table (150/92) - a motif which, incidentally, recurs in Mahagonny - are but a few examples of the slap-stick comedy of the original.

2. One Berlin critic claims that the thesis of Mann ist Mann is equally applicable to Trommeln in der Nacht and Im Dickicht. cf. Die Weltbühne, Berlin, No.3, 17.1.1928, p.102. "Mann ist Mann. Immer kreist der Dramatiker Brecht um dieses Grunderlebnis. Im nächtlich durchtrommelten Berlin ist es zuguterletzt gleichgültig, ob der Kriegsschieber oder der Heimkehrer mit der Anna Balicke ins Bett steigt. Im steinernen Dickicht von Chicago überlässt der Malaye Shlink den Kaukasier Garga willen- und widerstandslos Geschäft und Seele."

of Galy Gay[1] for he comes so violently into contact with the outside world that he loses his faculty for introspection and thereby ceases to suffer from isolation. What seems to preoccupy Brecht at the outset of Mann ist Mann is a new evaluation of existence in terms of its utility. At the beginning of the Hauptmanuskript there is a scene between the soldiers and Galy Gay, in which the stevedore is insulted by Bak (i.e. Polly) and asked whether he does not feel the urge to retaliate and hit back.

> Bak: Spüren Sie, untersuchen Sie genau ihr Inneres, jetzt die Lust z.B. mir ins Gesicht zu schlagen?
> Galgei: Nur einen Augenblick lang.
> Bak: Schauen Sie weg! Wenn Sie mich anschauen erregt es mich zu sehr.[2]

In Galy Gay's reply here it is possible to detect a frame of mind characteristic of the early figures in that it expresses a certain innate incapacity to become involved. Brecht adds as a commentary to the scene the following remark, which in the MS is underlined.

> Alle gehen an ihm vorbei, weil er unbrauchbar ist. Man lässt es ihm fühlen. [3]

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1. He is, for example, never seriously hampered by considerations of his attachment to his wife. Using the metaphor of the skin, which for the early figures was symbolic of their isolation, Galy Gay is merely concerned in saving it for its own sake. cf. Hauptmanuskripte, 150/136: "... Siehst du, du sagst da ja, Johnny, und du, Georgie, sagst nein, aber ich denke doch, es wird darauf hinauslaufen, ob man seine Haut heimbringt."
2. AN. 150/43.
3. AN. 150/43.

One can infer from this remark that Brecht has begun to look at the problem of isolation from a different angle. By using the criterium of usefulness to judge Galy Gay's detachment from the soldiers, he is not only condemning isolation but seeking to overcome it. One may do well to remember at this point Galy Gay's motives for accepting his metamorphosis - motives which survive in the Stücke edition of the play:

> Und ich, der eine ich und der andere ich
> Werden gebraucht und sind also brauchbar.
> Und hab' ich nicht angesehen diesen Elefanten
> Drück ich ein Auge zu, was mich betrifft
> Und lege ab, was unbeliebt an mir, und bin
> Da angenehm.[1]

To what extent Brecht developed this down-to-earth idea of utility in conjunction with his interest in sport is hard to tell. One thing, however, is certain: his fascination by the boxing-ring, which is first expressed in Im Dickicht, is exploited to the full, as we shall see, at the stage of the Hauptmanuskript. At this point we need only mention the link this fascination has with the trend in Brecht's work towards violence and brutality.[2] It acquires its full significance when Brecht associates it with his studies in

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1. Stücke II, p.268.
2. From the very start these characteristics appear in Baal's cruelty, in Balicke's and to a certain extent in Glubb's ruthless treatment of Kragler and subsequently in the ferocity of the struggles of the last two early plays.

Economics and Marxism and may very well have helped him to accept more readily the radical aspects of revolutionary techniques. What were the reasons which prompted Brecht to take up these studies at the end of 1926? They may not be altogether dissociated from the problems of inflation which affected Germany at this time.[1] But beyond this it is possible to see that these studies originated in the lesson of Mann ist Mann. From Brecht's acceptance of the insignificance of human character as a source of motives, it was inevitable that he should begin to think of human behaviour in terms of the external - social and economic - factors which might determine this behaviour. In April 1926 Elizabeth Hauptmann points to this development:

> Mann ist Mann noch einmal umgebaut. (Ich glaube, das siebente Mal, einige Szenen noch öfter.) Und zwar nach Gesichtspunkten, die nicht die Theaterwirkung betreffen. Daran ist Brecht, solange die Bühne nicht in Sicht ist, sehr schwach interessiert, sondern nach anderen ungleich schwereren, die mit der menschlichen Gesellschaft und dem Verhalten darin zu tun haben. [2]

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1. In 1922 when Brecht was taken half-starving to the Berlin Charité, the worst period of the German inflation must have left more than a passing impression on the playwright. Of Brecht's stay in the hospital Arnolt Bronnen reports: "Draussen brodelte stadtbahnbrummig die frierende, hungernde Stadt, verraten von ihren Führern, zerrissen in ihren Kämpfen, zerrissen in Streiks, Aufmärschen, Demonstrationen, Börsenmanövern, rhetorischen Protesten. Drinnen war dies alles kondenziert zu Selbstinjektionen, die der Patient Brecht sich einstach, scharf, kühn, beobachteter Beobachter, mit einem Zynismus, der einer Rasur mit stumpfen Messern glich." cf. Tage Mit Bertolt Brecht, München, Wien, Basel, 1960, p.28.
2. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, op.cit., p.242.

Mann ist Mann, however, because of its specific if grotesque setting of the British Colonial army in India, did not offer much scope for an analysis of society at large. It was in Weizen[1], a fragment which has not been published, that Brecht first attempted to put into dramatic form the results of his studies in economics. He made a second attempt to dramatize economic conflicts in Der Brotladen[2] - also an unpublished fragment. Both these plays were written before Brecht revised Mann ist Mann in 1929 so that they must be regarded as extremely important works in Brecht's development towards dialectical Materialism.

Weizen offers an interesting parallel to the earlier play Im Dickicht. Here, again, Brecht returns to the Chicago setting which seems to have fascinated him and here, again, there is the pattern of the rich financier and the impoverished family. It is hard to piece together even the outline of a plot[3], but it seems that Brecht was trying to show the dependence of rich and poor alike on the corn-market. Brecht does not establish in this sketch any causal relationship between the two groups. He simply regards one - the financiers - as acting, the other - the poor - as suffering. His interest is concentrated more on the former to the extent that the work seems to be more or less an

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1. Referred to as Joe Fleischhacker by Elizabeth Hauptmann - cf. Sinn und Form, op.cit., p.243 - who makes it clear that Brecht was working on the play in 1926.

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2. No precision was obtained from the Brecht-Archiv as to the exact date at which Brecht set to work on the play. Judging from its subject-matter, it was almost certainly written after 1926 and before 1929, the date when Brecht started to work on Die Heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe, with which Der Brotladen has some affinity.

3. There is no apparent link between the fragmentary undertakings of Joe Fleischhacker - a butcher in the slaughter-houses who leaves his business and decides, with the help of 'Vier Bullen' to speculate in corn - and the even more fragmentary adventures of the Mitchell family - whose six members leave their native country near Michigan and come and establish themselves in Chicago. There is, however, one significant parallel between the two groups, namely a decision to abandon a former way of life in order to investigate and partake in the adventures offered by the 'city'.

exercise undertaken to make clear in his own mind the operation of the stock-market. In this respect Weizen may be regarded as a preliminary study to Die Heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe.

Der Brotladen may be said to be Brecht's first attempt to explain the flexibility of human behaviour in terms of the capitalistic economic stresses acting on the poor and the relatively rich alike. As in Weizen there is still no enquiry into the causes or development of the economic system as such. It is assumed that with economic power in the hands of a few, a number of social groups are determined of which some are at the mercy of others. A crisis in the lofty heights inhabited by the few has repercussions down to the lowest classes.[1] Brecht sees America at the peak of the economic power-scale and in Der Brotladen his idea seems to have been to show how a financial crisis in America affects the lower middle-class and working-

1. As the estate agent Flamm explains to the baker Meininger, in a long and involved sentence, such crises are not only complex but incomprehensible. "Unsere Kleinbanken, ausgepresst wie Zitronen von den Grossbanken, welche seit Wochen keine Nacht mehr schlafen, da sogar die D-Banken wanken, weil die Industrie Unsummen verschlingt, ohne dadurch auf einen grünen Zweig (?) zu kommen, weil der Staat doch sogar schon mit dem Gedanken spielt, sogar von der Industrie Steuern zu verlangen, und, was überhaupt seit Menschengedenken nicht vorgekommen ist, sogar schon der Plan besteht, diese Steuern wirklich einzutreiben, weil Amerika, dem Europa bis in den Hals verschuldet ist, sich in einer entsetzlichen Krise windet, über deren Gründe sich die grössten Gelehrten der Nationalökonomie sich absolut nicht klar werden können, sind selbst am Abschnappen." Arch. No. 1352-/43.

class of - probably - Germany. If in Weizen Brecht devotes most of his time to the financiers, in Der Brotladen he focuses his attention on the poor. This fragment may also be considered to be a preliminary study to Die Heilige Johanna in its investigation of the means by which the poor can remedy their situation and in its analysis of the function of the Salvation Army in economic disasters.

Weizen and Der Brotladen may be considered as foundation stones to Brecht's subsequent work. Incomplete and fragmentary as is the material, it nevertheless embodies in embryonic form a fundamental ambiguity in the playwright himself. There is, on the one hand, in his investigation of the factors which govern wealth - as shown in Weizen - an implicit fascination by the cunning involved in unscrupulous deeds.[1] It is, one feels, a part of Brecht

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1. A large proportion of the sketch shows Brecht intent on mastering the technique of making a corner in the grain market. cf. Weizen, 524/84:
   Schwierigkeiten eines Corners:
   Welche Feinde macht sich Fl.?
   Welche Freunde macht sich Fl.?
   Wo muss er sich hereinmischen?
   Verhältnis zur Bank, Eisenbahn, Farm, Presse.
   2. Welche Aktionen des Baissiers kann er abfangen, wenn er um sich weiss?
   3. Welche seiner neutralen Mitarbeiter kann er finanziell mit hineinbeziehen?
   4. Wen ruiniert er?
   5. Wer ist die Mittelperson zwischen ihm und seinen Mitspekulanten (auf Baisse)?
   6. Zeit und Dauer?

Such a passage provides evidence for suggesting that Weizen is an antecedent to Die Heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe.

himself when Joe Fleischhacker exclaims:

> O Wechsel des Besitzes, Wechsel des Verlusts
> O Lust zu Kauf und Verkauf! [1]

It is not without significance that Brecht should use the word 'Spass' - relish - in conjunction with financial transactions.[2] In this respect Weizen is an antecedent to Brecht's gangster-plays.[3] On the other hand these MSS also reveal Brecht's genuine concern with methods for remedying the social condition. Very early on in Weizen we find Brecht preoccupied by the question of the

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1. AN. 524/44.
2. One of Joe's 'Bullen' - Chat - refers to the insecurity of the speculators, who depend on Joe, as a form of 'Spass'. cf. AN. 524/86:
   Fl.: ... von Frisko bis New York gibt's nichts was so / faul wär wie J. Fleischhackers Geschäft. Ich seh' / da viele die ihren letzten Penny setzen auf mich / und einige die von mir Scheussliches fürchten / Doch ich weiss nichts.
   Chat: Ho! Das ist grosser Spass.
3. Public funds, possibly misapplied, seems to be one of the sources of Joe's working capital. Someone who might be a city official says to him:
   Mir gefiel dein vernarbtes Gesicht, Joe.
   In diesem Monat
   Verschlingst du sicher noch einen Ochsen:
   Die Leute von Chicago wünschen ihm zu bezahlen.
   Ich frage bei einem Mann wie dir
   Nicht nach, wo er den Penny hintut, denn,
   Wenn du mich betrügst, bringe ich dir unter den Asfalt (?),
   Und wer will das? AN. 524/109.
   One is reminded here of the Docksanleihe engineered by Dogsborough in Arturo Ui.

relationship between art and politics.[1] His conclusion towards the end of the MS is explicit enough:

> Eine Kunst, die den Menschen nicht besser und glücklicher macht, gehört auf den Kehrichthaufen.[2]

In the light of this statement Der Brotladen comes as Brecht's first attempt to establish himself as 'a moralist'. For here he tries to elucidate the implications of goodness and happiness against a background of economic poverty and endeavours to show how hopelessly inadequate religion is. It is as 'a moralist' that he makes his first reference to the 'K.P.' - the Communist Party - which he compares to the Salvation Army in the following manner:

Die K.P.	Die Heilsarmee
Hilft zunächst niemand	Hilft dem Einzelnen
Führt den Einzelnen zur Masse	Trennt ihn von der Masse
Hat als Hilfsmittel die Gewalt	Bekämpft die Gewalt
Materiell denkend	Ideell denkend
Hat Erfolg durch die schlechte Lage	Hat Erfolg trotz der schlechten Lage
Ist interessiert.	Ist aus ideellen Gründen an der Änderung der Lage uninteressiert.[3]

From here onwards Brecht is possessed by didactic zeal. In the play itself he propounds a code of behaviour for

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1. cf. Weizen, AN. 524/37:
   Wollten Sie mit diesem Buch die Weltrevolution vorbereiten?
   Glauben Sie, dass dies durch Kunst möglich ist?
   Durch möglichst wenig Kunst oder möglichst viel Kunst?
   Glauben Sie nicht, dass durch Tendenz die K. verdorben wird?
   Hat jede Kunst Tendenz?
2. AN. 524/118.
3. AN. 1353/87.

the poor which adumbrates the lessons of the Lehrstücke: human beings are seen as a collectivity in which any one individual counts for very little. This, in fact, harks back to Mann ist Mann but it is only in the 1929 revised version of the play that the metamorphosis is given an unambiguous didactic twist. The song "Vom Fluss der Dinge" is a device introduced into the play to state explicitly Brecht's advice to accept change with equanimity.

Themes.

In Weizen and Der Brotladen Brecht comes to grips with problems which are far removed from the preoccupations of the early plays. The tenor of his theoretical writings during 1925/1929 underlines the gap between Brecht's original undiscriminating attitude of rebellion and his increasingly intellectual approach to what amounts to highly complex subject-matter. Without querying, as yet, the precedence of these theoretical writings over Mann ist Mann, Weizen and Der Brotladen, it is clear from the former that, in general terms, Brecht is moving further and further away from conventional drama. But this development had been foreshadowed in the early plays, particularly in Im Dickicht and Eduard II. In the depiction of the struggle for struggle's sake Brecht affirms, in a sense, his determination to write drama, for the core of all drama may be said

to revolve around some kind of a conflict. At the same time, however, the motiveless struggle undermines the traditional implications of drama. Brecht replaces psychological motivation by stark instinctive cravings for destruction and self-preservation. To a varying degree Mann ist Mann (in all its versions), Weizen and Der Brotladen represent an evolution in Brecht's basic concept of acute conflict and aggression as motives of human action. It is, in fact, possible to talk of a number of phases in this evolution, which, starting from the struggle between Garga and Shlink in Im Dickicht, ends with the class-struggle depicted in Der Brotladen.

The first phase of this idea of conflict unfolds itself on the level of a personal struggle in which two men attack one another and parry the blows which come their way. The display of violence in these struggles is only faintly associated with the notion of power or physical ascendency. Certainly, Garga is moved by a belief in his own superiority[1] and for a very large part of the action he is driven by his desire to win the struggle. But he gives way increasingly to isolation and boredom and if he is the victor, he is no more powerful at the end of the struggle than he was at the

1. cf. Stücke I, p.213: "Garga: ... Für mich genügt es, dass Sie sich für den besseren Mann halten." cf. also p.224: "Mae: Seit seiner frühesten Kindheit verträgt er es nicht, dass etwas über ihm ist."

beginning. This is even truer of Eduard II, where the conflict ends with the death of both Eduard and Mortimer.

At the stage of the Hauptmanuskript of Mann ist Mann, Galy Gay's encounters with the three soldiers Uria, Jesse and Bak (i.e. Polly) provide the basis for the next phase of Brecht's depiction of acute conflict. Here two 'new' elements are brought into play. On the one hand, the struggle is no longer between two individuals, but between one man and a group of men. (In a sense this harks back to Baal, except that Baal is a deliberate outsider.) On the other hand, the idea of accretion of power lies at the bottom of the conflict between Galy Gay and the three soldiers. These two components turn this struggle into something far more violent and brutal than the earlier ones. The atmosphere of the sports arena is, perhaps, even more evident in the Hauptmanuskript than in Im Dickicht. Galy Gay comes to grips with the soldiers on the level of physical stamina - after all, the soldiers only want a man for his physical presence, they merely want a body which can call out Jip at the roll-call. In a loose page of the Hauptmanuskript Galy Gay delivers an address - presumably to an audience - on human personality in which the importance of brute force transcends all other notions of 'personality':

> Ein Mann darf sich in einer Zeit wie dieser nicht so genau nehmen wie sonst. Er muss Geduld mit sich haben und sich Kredit geben (Beifall). Ich warne Sie nur vor einem: denken Sie nie über sich selbst nach. Ich kenne einen Mann, der darüber in Zweifel kam, ob er nicht ein anderer sei, als er selber (Lachen). Einige gelungenen Kinnhaken hätten ihn jederzeit überzeugen können, wer er war (Lachen). Darum sage ich ein für alle Mal: Mann ist Mann (Beifall). Und Sie werden es gleich Ernst nehmen, wenn ich Ihnen sage, dass ich jeden zu einem Boxkampf herausfordere, dem es nicht passt oder der das für falsch hält (Beifall). Sie sehen also deutlich, dass es wahr sein muss.[1]

More so than in the later versions of the play, the struggle in the Hauptmanuskript is a sort of boxing-match, where argument and persuasion give way or provoke a display of physical violence.[2] The accretion of power is identified with physical vitality and it is Galy Gay who wins the struggle - not the group of soldiers who provoke his metamorphosis. His encounters with the soldiers make him aware of his own potentialities.[3] At the end of the Hauptmanuskript he is seen to have gained complete control, not only over the three soldiers, but also over Sergeant Fairchild, whose authority over the army he assumes, after he has disclosed to the troops that Fairchild has lost his vitality by castrating himself:

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1. AN. 150/168.
2. In the later versions of the play the episode where Galy Gay repudiates his wife - cf. Stücke 11, p.226 f. - follows on after he has been tempted by the elephant business-deal (p.221 ff.). In the Hauptmanuskripte, Galy Gay rejects his wife long before the elephant deal

is mentioned. Here it is under the threat of violence that he submits to the wishes of the soldiers:

Bak: Mit anderen Worten wenn Blody Five entdeckt, dass Sie ihn und die Mama (i.e. the army) zum Narren gehalten haben, verarbeiten wir Sie zu Hackfleisch und der Sergeant gibt Sie gesalzen den Hunden zum Diner ...

Uria: Der Sergeant wird mit Sergeant angesprochen und die Frau haben Sie nie gesehen... AN. 150/72.

To these threats Galy Gay submits with barely a murmur and he takes a naive delight in his talent for impersonation. He is, nevertheless, as ferocious as his bullies if needs be. When the soldiers come to realise that they will have to change Galy Gay permanently into Jip, the magnitude of their task makes them treat their victim with more consideration. They decide that Galy Gay should be informed of his complete metamorphosis and for this purpose Bak pretends to be the god Buddha:

"Hebe deine müden Augen auf, mein Sohn. Wer dir hier erscheint, es ist der Gott Buddha. Höre also was der Gott Buddha dir sagt, Galgei, Mann aus Irland: es wird dir aber passieren, dass du dich verwandelst in den Soldaten Jerome Jip. Wenn dir aber solches zustösst, dann wundre dich nicht, sondern tue alles, was man dir heisst." AN. 150/92.

Bak's exhortations to submission have exactly the opposite effect on Galy Gay, who gets up and knocks out Bak's front teeth.

3. If Galy Gay is a weak man who submits to threats, he nevertheless has the cunning to take advantage of weakness in others to show his toughness, as in the case of Bak's exhortations. His pugnacious instincts develop through the soldiers and make them begin to fear and admire him:

"Bak: Er hat einen phenomenalen Kinnhaken. So wie er schlägt, würde er allein eine Kompagnie Shiks zu Paaren treiben. Ein Soldat wie wenige. So etwas habe ich noch nicht gesehen ... Er hätte uns alle erschlagen können..." AN. 150/93.

> Soldaten: (brüllen vor Lachen) Er hat sich seine Männlichkeit abgeschnitten! Er hat sich kastriert!
> (Galy Gay entblösst lächelnd seine Oberzähne und setzt sich ...)
> Soldat: Das war der menschliche Taifun! Und da (er zeigt auf Galy Gay) sitzt dieser Jeraiah Jip, der ihn abgeblasen hat wie in Abrahams Schoss! Der lässt uns noch alle köpfen.[1]

Galy Gay is seen to develop into a 'new' man who is infinitely more powerful than he was when he set out to buy some fish. He not only resists complete assimilation into the group which provokes his metamorphosis, he learns to dominate that group. He is "der grösste Mann, den die Armee hat".[2] Here, Galy Gay's victory and power are still that of a single-handed 'individual':

> Die Kämpfe um einen Namen haben ihm den Wert eines unbestreitbaren Namens gezeigt. Er blüht sichtlich auf, er entfaltet sich ungeheuer als Jip. Der vierte Mann ist der stärkste Mann unter den Vieren, er beherrscht sie vollständig, er ist der Soldat Jerome Jip aus Tipperary, ein grosser Mann. Mit ihm ist schlecht Kirschen. Seine drei 'Väater' werden nichts zu lachen haben.[3]

If in all the versions of Mann ist Mann Brecht sets out to prove the insignificance of individuality, in 1925[4] he still seems to be thinking on the lines of the early plays. For in the Hauptmanuskript Galy Gay's metamorphosis is seen in terms of the growth of a new personality. Galy Gay succeeds

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1. AN. 150/193.
2. AN. 150/203.
3. AN. 150/100.
4. cf. note 1, p.97.

where Shlink, for example, fails. The latter's efforts to grow into Garga's milieu and thereby change are thwarted.

The version of the play which Brecht published in 1926 may be said to show a more normal interpretation of the struggle between a man and a group of men. Here, Galy Gay is altogether less aggressive in his dealings with the soldiers.[1] Consequently, he is not seen to develop into a kind of super-man dominating a collectivity. Echoes of Galy Gay's strength survive in Polly's last remark in the play: "Der lässt uns noch alle köpfen"[2], but his subservience to the army clearly comes to the fore in the reference that he has now become the 'menschliche Kampfmaschine'.[3] Galy Gay develops, in common with the soldiers, a strength which can be put to use in the group to which he now belongs. Brutality and violence are features of the army as a whole and they are used to make Galy Gay part of the super-individual mass. Thus he still increases his power - there is strength in unity! - but at the cost of his individuality as well as his personality. The Mann

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1. Galy Gay, for example, never raises his fist against the soldiers, nor is he governed by that spirit of contradiction which characterised his attitude in the Hauptmanuskripte. There is a decrease in his single-handed vitality.
2. Mann ist Mann, Berlin 1926, p.127.
3. Mann ist Mann, Berlin 1926, p.126.

ist Mann Song[1] which is, perhaps, the most significant feature which distinguishes this version from the Hauptmanuskript as well as the later version, serves precisely to underline the irrelevance of individualism in the war-machine.

> Drauf kommt's nicht ann
> Denn ein Mann ist Mann.
> Wie? Warum? Wann?
> Aber Tom, schau, darauf kommt's ja gar nicht an!:
> Denn Mann ist Mann
> Und darauf kommt's an!:
> Die Sonne von Kilkao scheint
> Auf siebentausend Männer hin,
> Die sterben alle unbeweint,
> Und's ist bei keinem Schad um ihn;
> Drum sagen wir: 's ist gleich, auf wen
> Die rote Sonne von Kilkao schien! [2]

This song, in fact, provides an overture to criticism of Galy Gay's metamorphosis. This is largely due to the militaristic implications of the play which Brecht condemned even more articulately in 1929.[3] The transformation, as such, remains something praiseworthy in Brecht's mind if one is to judge by the Vorrede which he wrote for the play in

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1. A verse of this song is sung at each stage of Galy Gay's metamorphosis very much on the lines of the 'Song vom Fluss der Dinge' in the last version of the play.
2. Mann ist Mann, Berlin 1926, p.68 ff.
3. The last two scenes published as an addendum in the Stücke edition - pp.272-294 - are given as the conclusion to the original of the play. cf. Stücke II, p.272: "Die folgenden zwei Szenen (bilden) ... den Schluss der ersten Fassung ..." While it is true that this material occurs in the Hauptmanuskripte as well as the 1926 edition of the play, it is only in the Stücke edition that one finds the passage which points out that 7.000 courageous refugees are in the Sir El Dchowr fort, which Galy Gay has just shelled.

1927.[1] Apart from the satirical impact of Mann ist Mann, it may be helpful to remember that "Unity is strength" is a motto not only for the imperialist armies, but also for the revolutionary movements.

With Weizen the notion of conflict acquires much more complexity because the setting of the play itself - Chicago, the city - becomes an integral part of the struggles within it. In its impersonal manifestations of wealth and poverty, it becomes a challenge to those who wish to become more powerful, that is more prosperous, it is an invisible enemy and seducer to be conquered.[2] The city is, in fact, held responsible for the vindictiveness of its inhabitants. This emerges in what Brecht has to say about "Die Gesetze der Stadt" - the 'Gesetz' is not without significance when contrasted with Brecht's earlier view of the city as a jungle.

> Die Gesetze der Stadt:
> Bevor du sie brauchst hast du nicht gewusst
> Mein Kind, was die Menschen sind.
> Aber wenn due mit den Menschen reden musst,
> Nimm ein Beil mit, mein Kind. [3]

The city, because of its economic complexity, imparts to the struggles within it an economic aspect. Power no

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1. cf. Chapter II, p.81.
2. cf. Joe's decision to become a speculator and the Mitchell family's decision to move to Chicago.
3. AN. 524/07.

longer resides in physical ascendancy but in financial ascendancy: money becomes the prize in the city struggles.

There is in Weizen no sign of a conflict between rich and poor because both groups are dominated by the attraction of money and both groups are ultimately destroyed by it. The Mitchell family, for example, driven from the land by natural and economic disasters, does not leave Michigan for Chicago on a blind adventure like that of Galy Gay, but in the hope of making money.

> ... Einen Penny zu setzen und
> Unser Stück Fleisch herauszuschneiden,
> Und Ihnen zu zeigen, wie man Geld macht bei uns zu Hause.
> Dieses Chicago soll auf seiner Hut sein.[1]

In the ruin of the family, Brecht probably meant to show how their foolish optimism and traditional values collapse under the impact of impersonal city life, forces which have all the inevitability of natural catastrophe. Brecht, in fact, refers to forces which destroy the family as a 'hurricane', and he emphasises that there is nothing inspiring or romantic about the process:

> Der Hurrikan, in den die Familie Mitchell kommt, muss so nüchtern und kalt wie möglich sein, ohne Romantik; die Schicksalsschläge durch Gummiknüppel, ihr Untergang vollzieht sich durch Wörter, flach und abgenutzt und unpoetisch wie Geldmünzen. Überhaupt dürfen die (nicht?) durch kriegerische Leidenschaften oder Liebe veranlasst werden. Diese Katastrophen vollziehen sich

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1. AN. 524/02.

> viel dünner, stimmungsloser und trockener; es ist gerade diese dünne, unsichtbare, zerstörende Macht des Geldes zu zeigen, die so furchtbar ist; mangelnde Information, geringe Eignung, zu wenig oder zu viel Anpassungsfähigkeit stehen anstelle von verheerenden Gefühlen. Unmöglichkeit der Verständigung; eine die Orientierung erschwerende beständige Veränderlichkeit der Situation von mehreren Seiten her, die entsetzliche Unsicherheit der Riesenstädte: das ist das Schlachtfeld.[1]

In the case of Joe Fleischhacker there is also a determination to meet the challenge of Chicago by taking part in the financial battle. In this respect it is interesting to note how the following metaphor which Garga uses with reference to his enemy Shlink - "Und ich will gern noch Ihr Gesicht sehen, Shlink, Ihr milchglasiges, verdammtes unsichtbares Gesicht"[2] - is taken up by Joe Fleischhacker with reference to Chicago itself:

> Weil jetzt das milchglasige Gesicht dieses Chicago
> Auf mich, Joe Fleischhacker, gerichtet ist,
> Gehorch ich dem Wunsch des ungeheuren Chicago,
> Anders zu werden auf solcher Höh,
> An Tugend zuzunehmen, und
> Mich zu prüfen, eh ich weiter steige, wie
> Gesund ich bin ...[3]

It seems clear that Brecht intended to show Fleischhacker as consumed with lust for economic power, as a Titan demonstrating his strength in the public eye: there is still a good deal of the 'sporting spirit' in Joe, much of

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1. AN. 524/21.
2. Stücke I, p.284.
3. AN. 524/05.

that modern Titanism that goes by the name of record-breaking. But, although Brecht is still clearly fascinated by the display of brute force[1], the brutality of the speculator becomes more impersonal, more subtle and less obvious. The transition to the subtler form of brutality is symbolised in Joe's change from his career as a butcher in the stockyards to that of the speculator in grain, underlining this change by cutting off his right hand.

> Diese Hand,
> Wenngleich für mich seit sieben Jahren roh
> Stinkt doch nach Schmutz ...
> Tu ich ab des Schlachthofs rohen Nackenschlag und kämpfe
> WEITER MIT DEM KOPF.[2]

It is fairly certain that Brecht meant to show how Joe's overweening ambition finally leads to his downfall. For Joe, possession of grain spells possession of money, and

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1. Joe Fleischhacker reacts to a ruinous move on the corn-market by his Bullen by a protest of physical violence.
   > Warum habt Ihr, Hunde, nicht gekauft? Vorhin
   > war es billig und viel, jetzt wird es teuer.
   > Es ist 11 Uhr und zur Mittagzeit
   > ist eine Teurung. Da ist jeder Halm
   > so viel Wert als ein Hut,
   > Ihr Dummköpfe. Heute am Abend
   > könnten (sic) Ihr die Ernte dieses Kontinent stopfen in einen Hut.
   > Wir werden nichts
   > zu essen haben.
   > Joes K.O. AN. 524/06.

   Members of the Mitchell family react to their impoverished condition in a similar way:
   > Der Knabe Allan verlässt die letzten drei Schwestern, die die letzte Zeit mit Messern sich gegenseitig niedersichelten ... AN. 524/14.

2. AN. 524/05.

possession of money spells personal aggrandisement - to have more is to be more, the increment of power heightens the relish of existence.

> Ich habe gehabt
> Den Weizen Familie (??) Amerikas und ich wollte
> Haben den Weizen der Erde.
> Ich habe gehabt
> Geld zu schaffen diese Stadt und ich wollte
> Mehr Geld haben.
> Ich bin gewesen zweimal zwei Ernten der grösste Mann
> Und ich wollte
> Grösser sein, als ich selbst es war.
> Grosser Spass.[1]

"Grösser sein, als ich selbst es war" - this is ambition overleaping itself, no longer just the competitive instinct, but an urge to outstrip the bounds of human nature.[2] Joe (like Arturo Ui) imagines himself extending his empire from Chicago to New York, from grain to cotton. The play was probably meant to reach its climax in a Homeric battle in the stock-market, in which Joe is ultimately destroyed. His wife Annabel visits him immediately before the final fray:

> Annabel:
> Die Strasse weiss und in den Zeitungen
> Stehts auch, dass Ihr heut in ein Schlachten geht wie nie
> Seit Walstreet steht und sehr beteiligt, seid
> Ganz einverwickelt und verstrickt mit allem Geld
> In eine einzigen Sache, die an einem Haar hängt,
> Dass niemand weiss, wie's endet. Darum komm' ich
> Und frag Euch, wie es um Euch steht.

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1. AN. 524/06.
2. This is also the case for Galy Gay in the Hauptmanuskripte where he acquires super-human physical power.

Fleischhacker:
's ist wahr, dass ich auf grosse Wendung hoff'
Und Messer und Nackenschlag bereit Halt für sie
Und im Gefahr bin und sehr hoff' auf Schlachtglück...[1]

The depiction of the class-struggle in Der Brotladen embodies conclusions from both Mann ist Mann and Weizen. On the one hand the individual is regarded as counting for very little. Here, as in Mann ist Mann (1926), there is the notion that unity is strength, except that the unity is not that of the colonial army but that of the working class. With the figure of Frau Queck, the penniless widow with seven children, who is evicted from the room she occupies in Meininger's baker shop, Brecht seeks to show that no help can be given to her as an individual. To those workers who express concern and sympathy for Frau Queck's distress, Brecht opposes the collective body of 'class-conscious' workers. These he presents in terms of a chorus - Die Als - whose aim is to show the "Nutzlosigkeit der Mildtätigkeit auf individueller Grundlage".[2]

Tut Wachs in eure Ohren!
Fragt nicht! Des Unglücklichen Antwort
Verstrickt Euch in Unglück nur.
Ihr, die Ihr zu schwach zum helfen seid,
Seid nicht stark genug zu hören den Todes Schrei
Anders als die Kämpfe der Höhe sind die Kämpfe der Tiefe!
Denn der Mensch der Tiefe versinkt
Beinahe ohne Ursache ... [3]

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1. AN. 524/123. One may note again in this passage the insistence on the struggle motif and its brutality.

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2. AN. 1353/65. The problem of human sympathy emerges for the first time in Der Brotladen and it is possible that Brecht's distrust of emotionalism (cf. the early plays) is connected with his acceptance of the Marxist view exemplified in the play. To the worker Meyer who offers money to Frau Queck the chorus replies:

> Halt! Gib den Groschen nicht
> Aus der Tasche! Aufsteigender
> Gegen die Klagen der Untergehenden verstopf dein Ohr...
> AN. 1352/55.

This is what Brecht calls 'unwissenschaftliche Mildtätigkeit' (AN. 1353/65) and the implication is that an improvement in the conditions of the working-class must involve the whole of the proletariate (at the cost of some of its individual members).

3. AN. 1352/47.

From Weizen derives the economic complexity of the struggles Brecht now sees in terms of two different social classes clashing with one another. Brecht points to a fundamental principle of all social classes: "Grundsatz aller Klassen: weg vom Peche (bis auf einige Genies)".[1] His aim is to show that threats to economic security are greater in the lower classes than the higher ones. When Meininger orders Frau Queck to fetch 100 cbm. of unchopped wood from the wood-merchant Reuter, his aim is to minimise the cost of the purchase. He hopes to make use of hungry unemployed workers to chop the wood. When Frau Queck returns with the wood, she is faced with a complete change of attitude in Meininger. He now disclaims all responsibility for having ordered the wood and when Frau Queck protests he gives her notice. Meininger's cruelty towards Frau Queck has its economic reason. During her absence Meininger receives the visit of the estate-agent Flamm, who points out to him the precariousness of his position as a small business concern, particularly as his failure to pay the interest on the mortgage of his bakery will ultimately lead to the loss of his shop. Thus both Meininger and Frau Queck are victims of an economic system which lies outside their control. The only difference between the two is that

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1. AN. 1353/65.

Meininger, by his very position of economic strength over Frau Queck, can make use of his advantage by being ruthlessly selfish.

From the moment when Frau Queck is left with her furniture and children on the street, the 'plot' of the play becomes confused. This may be because Brecht chooses, at this point, to introduce the Salvation Army into the events of the play and he, himself, seems to be in doubt as to how to exemplify the function he attributes to it. He seeks to embody his conceptions of the Salvation Army in the figure of Fräulein Hiep - also referred to as Heep, Hippler. In the first stages of the MS Fräulein Hiep carries traces of the development which affects Johanna Dark in Die Heilige Johanna.[1] Later, Brecht seeks to underline the fundamental community of interest between the Salvation Army and the more privileged classes.

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1. Fräulein Hiep is moved by a genuine desire to help Frau Queck and she is prepared to argue with Meininger against his claim that she has no business to interfere in his affairs. Supported by some workers she orders Frau Queck's furniture to be returned to her room in the Baker's shop. She pays no heed to the Salvation Army Major who urges her not to get involved in the dispute. There is more than a touch of the learner about Fräulein Hiep, as there is in Johanna Dark. Brecht does not, however, develop the lessons which she might have learnt, but points briefly to the conclusion which Johanna reaches in the final scenes of Die Heilige Johanna: "Im Verlauf des Weiteren appelliert sie an das Gewissen des Polizisten und des Herrn Meininger. Dies nützt aber nichts, so dass sie gezwungen ist, Gewalt anzuwenden." AN. 1352/20.

Frau Queck has become willy-nilly responsible for the pile of wood which neither Meininger wants nor the wood-merchant Reuter is prepared to take back. Fräulein Hippler's 'help' to Frau Queck consists in taking over this responsibility and offering to buy the wood. The Army has at its disposal a number of poor who will chop the wood for nothing. Meininger consents to sell it to Fräulein Hippler and as the wood is dragged away the unemployed workers to whom Meininger had promised work start to protest:

> Wehe sie schleppen das Holz fort!
> Nur durch Arbeit winkte uns Brot,
> Und sie schleppen die Arbeit fort
> Die Soldaten des Himmels! [1]

These protests soon develop into threats and ultimately a demonstration of violence. Meininger, for all his relative economic power, is seen to fall into a defensive attitude in the first stages of the battle which follows. He makes promises to the workers about providing them with free bread.[2] The workers are sufficiently 'class-conscious' not to accept Meininger's bribe. The latter is intimidated by the very physical brutality of the poor and he seeks - and gets - help not only from the Salvation Army but from

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1. AN. 1352/23.
2. AN. 1352/25.

other shop-keepers. The workers, however, are not 'scientific' enough to realise that their unorganised struggle against the wealthy is pointless. A first clear echo of Marxist doctrine, a first sign of tendentiousness emerges, when the chorus of class-conscious workers addresses the poor as follows:

> Ihr dummen Hunde, meint Ihr, wenn Ihr einen
> Brotladen stürmt, dem und dem Schwein von
> Bäcker die Fresse einhaut, wird es besser? Das ist
> Ganz aussichtslos. Aber nicht ohne Aussicht ist
> Unser Kampf, der immerwährende, um die Herrschaft
> Selber im Staat und die Diktatur selber.[1]

Brecht does not bring his battle between the poor and the rich to a definite ending. He suddenly reverts to the motivation of the struggle and by so doing comes to deal with the problem of human sympathy elaborated above.

In no other play does Brecht come as close to an actual depiction of the class-struggle as in Der Brotladen. It is interesting as the logical conclusion in Marxist terms of Brecht's original idea of conflict and as presenting new alleys of investigation. It is not surprising to find that the concept of relativity[2] begins to emerge in Der Brotladen, a concept which pervades the final version of Mann ist Mann.

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1. AN. 1352/26.
2. "Relativität des Unglück : dasselbe Unglück wirkt sich ganz verschieden aus, je nach der Kraft auf die es stösst." AN. 1355/98.

This version of Mann ist Mann is bound to puzzle[1] because its initial message, which survives even here[2], contradicts the caricature of imperialism, which derives from Brecht's adherence to Marxism.

Structure.

The fact, that in these three plays Brecht has added considerable substance to his original notion of struggle for struggle's sake, does not mean that he comes any closer to a conventional form of drama. On the contrary, the very complexity of his subject-matter makes him adopt an analytical approach which makes the structure of these plays undramatic. It is, of course, impossible to comment fully and conclusively on the structure of Weizen and Der Brotladen because of their fragmentary nature. But both these sketches do provide evidence of an 'epic' - rather than 'dramatic' - treatment of subject-matter.

We have, again, to go back to Mann ist Mann to trace this development. As far as the Hauptmanuskripte are

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1. cf. Ronald Grey, Brecht, in the series Writers and Critics, Edinburgh/London, 1961, p.45: "... the play leaves a bewildering impression of a ferocious irony that still leaves the standpoint of the ironist uncertain."

2. cf. Stücke II, p.284: "Jesse: Es ist schon ekelhaft, wenn ein Mammut, nur weil man ihm ein paar Flintenläufe unter die Nase hält, sich lieber in eine Laus verwandelt, als dass er sich anständig zu seinen Vätern versammelt. Uria: Nein, das ist ein Beweis von Lebenskraft."

concerned, it is difficult to elaborate on structure, partly because of the abundance of the material, partly because of the many variants to certain scenes.[1] The main impression is one of a long nightmare in which Galy Gay becomes more and more inextricably involved. The fact that the soldiers and Galy Gay are drunk for most of the time contributes to this impression.[2] When Brecht published the play in 1926 he adopted the technique of dividing sharply the stages of Galy Gay's metamorphosis into six stages.[3] Even if the Zwischenspruch[4] does not figure in the play in 1926, Uria introduces the metamorphosis as follows:

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1. Mainly the scene where Jûp is turned into a god. This, incidentally, is a motif which Brecht borrowed from Kipling. cf. The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney from Soldiers' Tales, Macmillan & Co., 1896, 3rd printing 1900, p.118 ff. There exist also many variants of the last two scenes of the play.
2. It is for the sake of drink that the action of the play starts. The soldiers raid Wang's pagoda in order to get money for whisky. It is not without significance that Polly considers the act of drinking a sport in itself. "Wenn Sie erst - he says to the still innocent Galy Gay - den innersten Geschmack auf den Lippen haben, braucht Ihre Zunge diesen Sport ebenso dringend wie ein Boxer sein Punjingball." AN. 150/74. Echoes of drunkenness survive in the Stücke edition, when Galy Gay comments about his metamorphosis as follows: "Und man mag sagen, was man will, und eigentlich war es ein kleines Versehen, und ich war zu sehr betrunken, meine Herren...", p.270 f.
3. In the Stücke edition there are only five stages in the metamorphosis. In 1926 Brecht subdivided the last part into two sections. There is basically no difference between these two versions in this respect.
4. cf. Stücke II, p.229 f.

> Jetzt muss er im Laufschritt umgebaut werden. Dazu brauchen wir einen Elephanten. Denn wenn dieser Galy Gay sein Geschäft mit einem Elefanten gemacht hat und das Geschäft ist faul, dann will er noch lieber Jeraiah Jip sein als Galy Gay, der Verbrecher. Deshalb lasst uns vor allem einen Elefanten machen. [1]

This introduction makes quite clear what is going to happen to Galy Gay so that the rest of the scene is demonstrative. This demonstrative character is enhanced by the fact that Uria announces at the beginning of each of the stages of the metamorphosis the gist of the action. The artificiality of the whole scene is stepped up by a further three elements. In the first place it is made quite clear that the elephant is a fake: it is built with the head of an elephant and with Polly and Jesse hiding beneath the map. In the second place Witwe Begbick's interest in buying the elephant is fraudulent: her prime concern is to obtain the help of the soldiers to dismantle and pack up her canteen. Lastly, the person who sells the elephant is also a fake: Galy Gay is only prepared to act as purchaser of the elephant if he is not named.

This stress on the artificial and the absence of suspense, while achieving a complete destruction of theatrical illusion, calls to mind the words which Brecht addressed, in 1926, to Guillemin in his interview in

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1. Mann ist Mann, Berlin 1926, p.63.

Die Literarische Welt.[1]

> Ich gebe die blossen Vorgänge, um das Publikum selbst denken zu lassen. Der Zuschauer sollte Psycholog genug sein, den Stoff, den ich ihm biete, selber zu durchdringen.

One effect of the artificiality of the elphant scene is to make the basic characteristics of Galy Gay all the clearer: his business instinct, a compound of dishonesty and stupidity and his inability to assert himself.[2] This again brings to mind what Brecht had to say to Guillemin:

> Ich verbürge mich nur für die absolute Echtheit und Richtigkeit dessen, was in meinen Dramen geschieht - Ich gehe Wetten auf Menschenkenntnissen ein.[3]

It was, in fact, in this interview that Brecht first claimed his adherence to the Epic Theatre: "Ich bin für das epische Theater".[4] It seems more than probable that what Brecht had to say to Guillemin about such a theatre derived directly from his work on Mann ist Mann. When he claimed that "Der Mensch ist ein immerwährend zerfallendes und neu sich bildendes Atom"[5] and that his style of

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1. No.31, 30 Juli 1926.
2. Galy Gay has considerable doubt about the authenticity of the elephant but he keeps this to himself when he sees a chance of selling it to Begbick: "Dich geht's nicht an, wenn du nur deinen Sheck hast" (Stücke II, p.238). Provided there is a buyer for the elephant he is prepared to be a party to the fraud: "Elefant ist Elefant, besonders wenn er gekauft wird" (p.239). But after his arrest, Galy Gay's only wish is to go home and forget about everything: "Ich kenne den Elefanten nicht" (p.241).
3. Die Literarische Welt, loc.cit.
4. Die Literarische Welt, loc.cit.
5. Die Literarische Welt, loc.cit.

presentation sought to be objective, he could only be thinking of Galy Gay's metamorphosis and the demonstrative character he gave to its representation.

Structurally the 1926 and subsequent versions of Mann ist Mann are 'nüchtern, sachlich' - terms which Brecht used in his interview with Guillemin. This is also true of Weizen, particularly with reference to the way in which Brecht planned to show the ruin of the Mitchell family.

> Der Hurrikan, in den die Familie Mitchell kommt, muss so nüchtern und kalt wie möglich sein, ohne Romantik.[1]

It is impossible to say just how Brecht would have represented this, but it is clear that with his gaze fixed on economic factors he is brought to shift the centre of dramatic interest from people to situations, which he attempts to unravel. In the case of Joe Fleischhacker, his thirst for economic power is not so much an expression of personality as an expression of the economic system.[2]

This is equally true of Der Brotladen where none of the 'characters' is designed to carry or determine the action of the play. If there is a central figure it is that of Frau Queck in the sense that the situation - in all its various versions - develops around her. She is, however, not

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1. AN. 524/21.
2. It is because the 'milchglasiges Gesicht Chicago' is turned to him that Joe decides to speculate.

central in the classical dramatic sense of the word where the hero is capable of affecting the situation. The centre Frau Queck forms is essentially centripetal in that external forces beyond her control and against which she does not - and cannot - react are brought to bear on her. There is something fundamentally analytical in this technique for Frau Queck is nothing but an instrument in a demonstration. She is, in fact, placed in a situation where her personal character would be quite irrelevant.[1] The real central feature of the play is the pile of wood - an economic symbol in the form of a simple concrete object, which acts as a nucleus around which a number of facets of human behaviour can be demonstrated.[2] Brecht saw this pile as a kind of barometer of human behaviour - "Ist Barometer für richtig handeln und falschhandeln".[3] That it was meant to be the central feature of the play emerges in the following remark:

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1. At what might conceivably be the beginning of the play, the widow introduces herself to the audience in much the same way as does Pelegea Wlassowa in Die Mutter. She elucidates the aspects of her position but does not characterise herself. "Ich bin die Witwe Queck mit der rückständigen Miete. Ich mache die Gänge für Herrn Bäckmeister Meininger, dem dies Haus gehört. Durch diese meine Gänge ernähre ich, da mein Mann gestorben ist, meine sieben unmündigen Kinder, von denen mein Wilhelm ein sehr aufgewecktes Kind ist." AN. 1352/41.
2. This reminds one of the part played by the cart in Mutter Courage, or the telescope in Galileo Galilei.
3. AN. 1353/04.

> Es muss eine Mitte, ein statischer Kern gezeigt werden, an dem man das Auf- und Absteigen demonstrieren kann.[1]

The wood, as such, does not mean anything but through it economic stresses, economic laws can be exemplified and at the same time the materialism of human behaviour can be demonstrated. Meininger's reluctance to have it as his own property reflects his economic insecurity. The materialism of the Salvation Army emerges in the fact that the wood is treated as a commodity.[2] Here, we find one of the seeds of Brecht's theatrical technique - his poetic materialism:

> Der Holzstoss spielt die doppelte Rolle der moralischen Schuld (Geldschuld) und des eigentlichen faktischen Holzes (als verkäufliche Ware). [3]

Characterisation.

Galy Gay was once described as a 'Woyzeck der Komödie'[4] and it is true that Brecht's 'hero' combines Woyzeck's incapacity to escape from the situations into which he is thrust and his impulsive nature. Galy Gay, however, is infinitely less pathetic than Woyzeck, partly because he

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1. AN. 1353/59.
2. As Brecht puts it: "Der Kern hat magische Anziehungskraft." AN. 1353/04.
3. AN. 1353/59.
4. cf. J.L. Schücking, Dichter, Mensch und Atmosphere, Die Hilfe, No.24, Berlin 1929, p.602.

has no sense of responsibility, partly because the satisfaction of his greed and impulses enable him to adapt himself to anything.

In the very first scene of the play Galy Gay is characterised by his wife as having a 'weiches Gemüt'.[1] He is a man 'who cannot say no' and who develops an inertia that leads him to the train to which he was originally compared.[2] It is, in fact, hardly possible to talk of Galy Gay's character. While he can be described as weak-willed, stupid and dishonest such an evaluation is not conclusive.[3]

What is important about Galy Gay is the dynamics of his behaviour. There is a kind of dialectical pattern to the stages through which the stevedore passes before his final change. While he has to be persuaded to undertake the first impersonation, he remains in the camp when he is

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.171.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.172. "... aber er läuft wie ein Güterzug wenn er ins Laufen kommt". Galy Gay himself uses this image when he is detained by Witwe Begbick on his way to buy the fish. cf. Stücke II, p.184. "... aber ich bin wie ein Personenzug, wenn ich ins Laufen komme". When he finally finds himself in the troop-train taking him to Tibet he first protests but finally accepts his position. cf. Stücke II, p.274. "Wenn der Zug nicht hält, will ich mich auch hinlegen und schlafen, bis er hält."
3. In the Vorrede to Mann ist Mann, op.cit., p.112, Brecht makes this quite clear: "Ich denke auch, Sie sind gewohnt, einen Menschen, der nicht nein sagen kann, als einen Schwächling zu betrachten, aber dieser Galy Gay ist gar kein Schwächling, im Gegenteil, er ist der Stärkste."

no longer needed. There is no introspective explanation for this decision, merely a comment on the possibility that he may be needed again:

> Jetzt könnt ich weggehen, aber
> Soll einer weggehen, wenn er weggeschickt wird?
> Vielleicht, wenn er gegangen ist
> Wird er wieder gebraucht? Und kann einer weggehen
> Wenn er gebraucht wird? Wenn es nicht sein muss
> Soll einer nicht weggehen.[1]

In the case of the second and final impersonation, Galy Gay has again to be persuaded and he only consents when he thinks that by selling the elephant to Witwe Begbick he is conducting a smart business deal. In his final soliloquy beside the coffin which is supposed to contain his dead body there is a difference in tone and feeling from the rest of the play. As Galy Gay broods over the problem of personality, he cannot bear to open the coffin and it is as if he recoiled from the revelation of self:

> Ich könnte nicht ansehen ohne sofortigen Tod
> In einer Kiste ein entleertes Gesicht
> Eines Gewissen, mir einst bekannt, von Wasserfläch her
> In die einer sah, der, wie ich weiss, verstarb.[2]

There is a nightmarish quality about his awareness of the operation which is being performed on him. He consents to it as inevitable. After all, he reflects in Berkeleyian fashion, is a wood still a wood when nobody is passing

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.203.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.266.

through it and is there such a thing as personality outside the social context?

Einer ist keiner. Es muss ihn einer anrufen.[1]

Even in this soliloquy Galy Gay is completely lacking in introspection and it is this which gives him an elemental kind of vitality - a strength which is comparable to that which characterises Baal and Garga. This is made particularly clear through the case of Sergeant Fairchild. He lacks Galy Gay's adaptability and he is depicted as a man who tenaciously holds on to his identity and reputation. His weakness is not so much his attacks of sensuality as such, but his concern to discipline them and his worry about them.[2] In the Hauptmanuskript Fairchild finally castrates himself after a fit of introspection:

> Bloody Five mit einer Lampe, Stück Darmsaite und Brotmesser.
> Ich, Bloody Five, steh jetzt
> Vor kalter Entdeckung menschlicher Verworfenheit
> Und einer Tat kaltblütiger Berechnung, fischblütiger Bosheit.

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.267. A more recent expression of this view can be found in Edward Hyams, Gentian Violet, Longman 1953, p.116 f.: "It occurred to Jim that people were not immutable and singular personalities existing in a vacuum, in the way that 'a rose is a rose'. They were what they were in association with and because of accidents of time and place, people, income, habits of thought and manners. There was no such thing as a human personality integral and indestructible by and as itself, a sort of Berkeleyian absolute."
2. cf. Stücke II, p.199: "Seit drei Tagen habe ich wieder mein Strickbett bezogen und mit den kalten Waschungen begonnen. Am Donnerstag sah ich mich veranlasst, wegen hemmungsloser Sinnlichkeit den Belagerungszustand über mich zu verhängen."

> Denn es geschah in diesen Tagen, dass durch Menschen
> Ein Mensch verwandelt wurde mit Bosheit in einen anderen,
> Welches ein Verbrechen ist, so gross, dass es
> Weitergeübt den Granit dieses indischen Reichs,
> Ja sogar des Erdballs, zu Schlamm verfräss ... [1]

Galy Gay's acceptance of the nullity of human aspirations is emphasised by his purely animal concern about himself. What is important to him is that his bodily functions should be satisfied.

> Gestern abend regnete es doch? Ich bitte euch, wenn ihr hierher schaut oder dorthin, wo diese Stimme herkommt, das bin ich, ich bitte euch. Ruft die Stelle an, sagt Galy Gay zu ihr oder andere Wörter, erbarmt euch, gebt mir ein Stück Fleisch! Worin's verschwindet, das ist der Galy Gay und das, woraus es kommt.[2]

This is quite clearly illustrated at the end of the play when the original Jip returns to his companions. He insists on being recognised as Jip by the soldiers and the more he insists on his identity, the more emphatically Galy Gay demands food.[3] Jip, himself, was for a time transformed into a god[4] and he was maintained in this position by the

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1. AN. 150/172.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.255.
3. cf. Stücke II, p.287 f.: "Jip: Aber ich bin doch euer Kamerad Jip. (Die drei lachen. Da fängt auch Galy Gay zu lachen an, und sie hören auf.) Galy Gay: Noch eine Portion! Ich habe heute starken Appetit vor der Schlacht."
4. Brecht derived this motif from Kipling's story, The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney, in Life's Handicap, Macmillan, London 1923. "My performinces have been stupenjus: my luck has been the blessed luck av the British Army - an' there's no better than that. I went out dhrunk an' dhrinkin' in the palanquin, and I have come back a pink god", p.26 f.

beefsteaks which Wang fed to him in the palanquin. (The satirical contrast of material and spiritual values is only too obvious in this case.) The reduction of human beings to the level of their physical functions - to their utter materialism - is further exemplified in the progressive dismantling and packing-up of Witwe Begbick's canteen as Galy Gay is turned into Jip.[1]

Galy Gay represents the culmination of the animality of Brecht's early figures and at the same time he adumbrates the type of behaviour which is characteristic of many of the later figures of Brecht's plays. Like Mauler and Mother Courage, for example, he displays an instinctive delight in business transactions. It emerges in his bargaining with the soldiers as to the number of cigars and bottles of beer he is to receive for his first impersonation. The keenness he shows when the elephant deal is first mentioned outweighs all his former misgivings about the second and last impersonation. He sells his 'soul' for the sake of business. One is tempted to misquote Goethe in the final analysis of Galy Gay's behaviour:

> Geschäft ist alles
> Name ist Schall und Rauch.

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.242: "Denn nicht nur euer Mann, auch meine Kantine soll umgebaut werden." This reduction of human beings to inanimate objects is also apparent in Trommeln in der Nacht. cf. Stücke I, p.168: "Marie: ...Und inzwischen haben sie ihm seine Verlobte geklaut. ... Glubb: Mir haben sie vorige Woche ein Fahrrad geklaut."

It is not really possible to make conclusive remarks about the 'characters' in the fragments Weizen and Der Brotladen because these works are too fragmentary. It seems, however, clear that Joe Fleischhacker is an assertive type not unlike Baal and Garga. He is possessed by his desire to dominate the corn-market, to fulfil his business urge. He shares with Galy Gay an inability to introspect which, in his case, seems to be a result of not being able to become emotionally involved, or to remember feelings. This is shown in his comments as he wonders whether he loves Käthe Mitchell:

> Wüsst ich nur noch, wie mein Gefühl war
> Als ich sie erstmalig und plötzlich sah,
> Obs grosser Spass war bei dem mir mein Herz
> Plötzlich lachte. Oder nur
> Eine schwächliche Möglichkeit. Wie schwer ists
> Sich zu erinnern an ein Gefühl! ...
> ... Aber kann einer
> Der so vernünftig denkt, Gefühl haben? 1

Frau Queck, on the other hand, is a more submissive type who recalls figures like Kragler and Shlink. The parallel, however, cannot be drawn very far because, as we have suggested above, it is economic stresses which make her behave inconsistently. These inconsistencies make her appear weak-willed and stupid - she is like Galy Gay in this respect.

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1. AN. 524/09.

The very theme of Mann ist Mann testifies to Brecht's lack of interest in 'characters'. Galy Gay is never viewed from a psychological, but from a behaviouristic point of view. In the fragments characterisation tends increasingly towards the representation of certain types. The ruthless businessman - Joe Fleischhacker in Weizen and Meininger in Der Brotladen - and the long-suffering members of the proletariate - the Mitchells in Weizen and Frau Queck in Der Brotladen - emerge as two types which figure prominently (particularly the former) in the plays of the following period.

Language.

Jhering once pointed to the importance of Brecht's language in connection with the playwright's aim "to change the world":

> Brecht erfuhr früh, dass die Welt verändert werden müsste; in der Sprache hatte er die Waffe, sie veränderbar darzustellen.[1]

In view of the crucial nature of Mann ist Mann with regard to the birth of the Epic Theatre in these years, it is, perhaps, not surprising to find that the language of the play differs considerably from Brecht's earlier work. It is language which shows considerable contrasts in its styles -

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1. Jhering, Bertolt Brecht und das Theater, Rembrandt Verlag, Berlin 1959, p.6.

the most obvious of these being between the prose passages and the free verse of the songs. It relies on the incongruous to put forward the message of the play and acquires a kind of provocative function. One may, perhaps, do well to remember that Mann ist Mann is a comedy and that it exploits the use of paradox, often characteristic of comedies, particularly in the language.

The very opening sentence of the play provides a good example of the incongruous:

> Liebe Frau, ich habe mich entschlossen, heute, entsprechend unserem Einkommen, einen Fisch zu kaufen.[1]

What is striking about this sentence is its overall pomposity. There is a kind of build-up in the enumeration of the factors which prompt Galy Gay to his decision, but the sentence ends in an anti-climax. The purchase of a fish does not require the weighty explanations which Galy Gay offers. A similar kind of pomposity and wordiness is used by Polly shortly before the soldiers raid Wang's pagoda:

> Diese Anregung unseres lieben Uria in bezug auf eine baufällige und fliegenverschissene, aber vielleicht mit Kupfer ausgestopfte Pagoda ist es durchaus wert, dass man ihr menschlich näher tritt. [2]

The style of this passage suggests a speculative way of thinking which is hardly in keeping with the soldiers'

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.171.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.173.

craving for drink - which is, after all, why they want the copper in the pagoda.

Also characteristic of the language of the play is the use of deductions to formulate conclusions which do not warrant the turgid repetition of the premises which lead to them:

> Wenn es jetzt regnet, dann wird der Palakin nass, und wenn der Palankin nass wird, dann wird er in die Pagode geholt, und wenn er in die Pagode geholt wird, dann wird Jip entdeckt, und wenn Jip entdeckt wird, dann ist es aus mit uns.[1]

While the language is often phrased in this weighty and bombastic manner, it operates with simple and down-to-earth words, which are always used in their literal sensé. Fish, cucumber, pass, beefsteak, elephant are the key-words to the play. On one level they communicate nothing more than what they mean - trivialities. On another, however, they reveal something more than what they intrinsically mean by the way in which the characters cling to them and are guided by them. In Jip's monologue, for example, the language fluctuates between the beefsteak and the considerations which might check his appetite.

> Das ist ein gutes Beefsteak, aber es ist falsch, dass ich hier sitze. Sicher haben Polly und Jesse auf mich gewartet. Vielleicht warten sie jetzt noch. Es schmeckt wie Butter. Es ist schlecht von mir zu

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.195. Similar logical exercises are formulated on p.180 f. and p.208.

> essen. Horch, jetzt sagt Polly zu Jesse: Jip kommt bestimmt ... Es ist ganz falsch verkehrt, dass ich hier sitze, aber es ist gutes Fleisch.[1]

The style of this passage has a disjointed quality which serves to underline the spontaneity of Jip's appetite.[2]

This disjointedness is also characteristic of the way in which the characters react to one another. Questions are not replied to[3] or the context in which one remark is made is ignored and the motives which prompted the remark grossly misinterpreted:

> Galy Gay: Ich habe zum Abendessen eine Gurke gekauft, und kann deshalb nicht ganz, wie ich möchte.
> Jesse: Ich danke Ihnen. Ich habe das - offen gestanden - von Ihnen erwartet. Das ist es: Sie können nicht, wie Sie möchten. Sie möchten heim, aber Sie können nicht.[4]

One important effect of this kind of language - which fluctuates from the trivial to the basic earnestness of the play - is that it conveys a succession of concrete actions - or gestures 'Gesten' - which have an eminently scenic quality. This is particularly obvious in the function of the word

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.215.
2. A critic in the Weltbühne, XXIV, January 1928, No.3, p.102, referred to the language in the play as being 'animal'. "Bei Brecht ist die Sprache ... keine Ausdrucksform, sondern etwas Primäres, eine leibliche Funktion. Sie ist, so paradox das sein mag, animalisch geworden."
3. cf. Stücke II, p.183.
4. cf. Stücke II, p.192. This is also apparent in the way in which Wang reacts to the soldiers' query about Jip's whereabouts. cf. Stücke II, p.207: "Polly: Es ist klar, dass Jip in ihm war. Wang: Nicht wahr, er kann nicht darin gewesen sein."

'elephant'. When Galy Gay is referred to by Polly as an elephant - "Er ist der reinste Elefant"[1] - the word is taken up by Galy Gay in a completely different context, namely one in which he is not an elephant, but one in which the elephant stands for business:

> Elefant? Ein Elefant, das ist selbstverständlich eine Goldgrube. Wenn Sie einen Elefanten haben, da verrecken Sie nicht im Spital.[2]

The word which is first used in a metaphorical sense - not only by Polly but by Galy Gay's wife at the very beginning of the play[3] - subsequently becomes something tangible, if not real, which is used as a scenic device to operate Galy Gay's change.[4]

While in general the prose style of the play appears disjointed, because it is meant to underline the impulsiveness of the characters, the passages in verse tend to be more consequential. The only exception is, possibly, Galy Gay's

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.222.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.222.
3. cf. Stücke II, p.171 f. "Du bist wie ein Elefant, der das schwerfälligste Tier der Tierwelt ist ..."
4. Jhering described the quality of this language in the following way: "Immer mehr strebt er einer Dichtung zu, die ohne Metaphern zu brauchen, Metapher ist." (Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, II, op.cit., p.306.) It is a language which keeps the stage and the theatre in mind and exteriorises motivation. One critic regards this to be Brecht's greatest theatrical merit: "Er war Szeniker - das war, meine ich, das grösste an ihm. Was immer er für das Theater schrieb, war szenisch, gestisch und mimisch gedacht und gesehen." (cf. Stuttgarter Zeitung, No.130, Juni 1957, p.8.)

soliloquy over the coffin which is supposed to contain his dead body, where the contorted style reflects his fears and bewilderment about his identity:

> Drum kann ich nicht aufmachen diese Kist!
> Weil diese Furcht da ist in mir beiden, denn vielleicht
> Bin ich der Beide, der eben erst entstand
> Auf der Erde veränderlicher Oberfläch
> Ein abgenabelt fledermausig Ding, hangend
> Zwischen Gummibäumen und Hütt, nächtlich
> Ein Ding, das gern heiter wär'.[1]

In contrast to this soliloquy the "Song von Witwe Begbicks Trinksalon", for example, has a racy musical quality which comes to the fore in the refrain:

> Mit Toddy, Gum und hai, hai, hai,
> Am Himmel vorbei, an der Höll entlang.
> Mach das Maul zu, Tommy, halt den Hut fest, Tommy
> Auf der Fahrt vom Sodabergchen bis zum Whiskyhang.[2]

There is something deceptively spontaneous in the completely unsophisticated tone of this song which is clearly inspired by Kipling.[3] The other passages in verse in the play, when Begbick seduces Fairchild[4] or when she sings the "Lied vom Fluss der Dinge", achieve their immediacy through the persuasive quality of their rhythms:

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1. Stücke II, p.267.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.188 f.
3. Although it is not possible to point to a specific model Brecht may have used for this song, it captures much of the spirit of the Barrack Room Ballads. Brecht, in a sense, acknowledged his debt to Kipling when he translated some of his poems, Banjo and The Ladies, which he published in Die Dame, Berlin 1927, LIV, 8, p.8.
4. cf. Stücke II, p.199 f.

> Nenne doch nicht so genau deinen Namen. Wozu denn?
> Wo du doch immerzu einen andern damit nennst.
> Und wozu so laut deine Meinung, vergiss sie doch.
> Welche war es denn gleich? Erinnere dich doch nicht
> Eines Dinges länger, als es selber dauert.[1]

Schumacher argues that the function of this particular song is to distract the attention of the audience from the course of Galy Gay's metamorphosis.[2] This seems hardly likely. The stages of Galy Gay's change are, in any case, clearly separated from one another and lack continuity. If there is anything which does impart unity to the metamorphosis it is Begbick's "Lied vom Fluss der Dinge". The 'moral' it communicates urges not only Galy Gay but the audience to accept change with equanimity. While this song does interrupt the course of the action, it does so only to stress the inevitability of Galy Gay's transformation. It is a kind of inverted 'Verfremdung' in that it turns a very strange and artificial episode into something which should be accepted and acceptable.

Both Weizen and Der Brotladen show Brecht experimenting with a style very different from Mann ist Mann. It is difficult to say whether Brecht planned the whole of Weizen

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1. cf. Stücke II, p.243 f.
2. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.119: "Die Funktion dieser rhythmisierten Partien in bezug auf den Zuschauer besteht offensichtlich darin, ihn in der unbewussten, automatischen Hinnahme des Dargestellten zu unterbrechen, seine Aufmerksamkeit 'aufzufrischen', sie auf Markantes zu lenken."

to be in a grand and elevated idiom, but it seems likely. The language in this sketch has a certain rhetorical grandeur which contrasts sharply with its harsh and prosaic subject-matter. When Joe Fleischhacker talks of his decision to leave the slaughter-house, for example, he does so almost in a classical style:

> 's ist gefährlich zu steigen, geh Milk ! Diese Hand,
> Wenngleich für mich, seit sieben Jahren roh,
> Stinkt doch nach Schmutz ...
> Tu ich ab des Schlachthofs rohen Nackenschlag und kämpfe
> Weiter mit dem Kopf.[1]

A similar kind of grand style is used by Joe's wife when she comes to see him shortly before his struggle in the corn-market. It is, no doubt, designed to underline her selfish motives in coming to see him for she wants to make sure that she will not be impoverished should Joe lose the battle:

> Joe: Drum dank' ich Euch, dass Ihr mich stärken kamt.
> An.: Wenn 's also wahr ist, nun dann bitt' ich Euch
> Nicht ohne Bitte um Verzeihung auch,
> Dass ich mit kleinem Maas vielleicht Euch stör':
> Ihr mögt mir's schriftlich geben und beglaubigt,
> Dass alles war Ihr mir geschenkt nicht wenig
> Mir zugehört. [2]

In Weizen Brecht is clearly experimenting with the iambic metre, but in fact produces verse with irregular rhythms which tend to impart to the language a jerky but forceful quality. This comes clearly to the fore in the

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1. AN. 524/05. The middle-part of this passage is illegible.
2. AN. 524/123.

following two lines:

> Ich bin immer entschlossen, gut
> Zu schlafen, ohne Sorge.[1]

The words 'ohne Sorge' inserted after the verb produce a kind of syncopated rhythm which has more force than it would have if the verb ended the sentence. A similar kind of irregular and jerky rhythm is apparent in the following passage:

> Wenn dieser Fleischhacker
> Nicht von der Art ist, fürcht' ich, er hat
> Nichts was ihm nützt an mir.[2]

The syntax of the language in Weizen is much more involved than in Mann ist Mann. This is partly a consequence of the complex subject-matter, but more especially of the irregular rhythms which Brecht wishes to produce. The digressive clauses tend to be placed paratactically and introduced by conjunctions of coordination rather than subordination:

> Schreibt gut für mich, ich gehör zu euch
> Seit ich drei Wochen zählt'. 's ist was ich sicher
> weiss,
> Und fast das einzige,
> Denn eingewickelt wurd' ich in ein Zeitungsblatt,
> Und hingelegt vor eine Tür, und so
> Hat meine Mutter - seht ihr -
> Mich euch aufgehängt, und ihr müsst
> Über ihren Sohn gut schreiben.[3]

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1. AN. 524/109.
2. AN. 524/53.
3. AN. 524/108.

This tends to disrupt the continuity of the sentence because each clause, although explanatory, stands in its own right. It is a style which makes little or no use of adjectives and concentrates on verbs.

In contrast to Weizen, Der Brotladen offers a greater variety of styles. The parts of this fragment which refer to the struggle between Meininger and the workers are written in verse and are of particular interest because of their epic quality. It is a style reminiscent, in its rhythm, of Hermann und Dorothea, although Brecht does not use the dactylic hexameter consistently:

> Die Als: Und sie erfassen von Hunger geschwächt die Latten,
> Schwingend aus matten Gelenken den Pflasterstein,
> Aber der Zorn ist gerecht und ersetzt teueres Kampfgerät.
> Meininger: Da besteigt der gewaltige Meininger selber
> Wutfunkelnden Auges den Brotwall
> Brüllend: Rettet,
> Rettet den Staat ...[1]

By referring to themselves in the third person, the characters were, no doubt, meant to narrate as well as perform their actions. This style anticipates the purely narrative sections in Die Mutter.[2] The passages in verse in Der Brotladen tend, as in Weizen, to be in an elevated idiom and to have a poetic as well as a utilitarian function.

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1. AN. 1352/26.
2. cf. Stücke V, p.41 ff. and p.115 f.

This is apparent in the following passage where the wood which the workers had hoped to chop is described in all its changing forms, to emphasise that it will never belong to the workers:

> Also verschwindet das Holz jetzt, das euch auf seinem Wege vom rauschenden Fichtenwalde zum eisernen Ofen,
> Wandelnd von Baum sich zur Wärme,
> Eine zeitlang Schuld war und Aussicht,
> Niemals euer Eigentum.[1]

As far as the prose passages in Der Brotladen are concerned, Brecht makes use of an objective expository style at the opening of the play when Frau Queck explains her circumstances directly to the audience:

> Ich bin die Witwe Queck mit der rückständigen Miete. Ich mache die Gänge für Herrn Bäckmeister Meininger, dem dies Haus gehört. Durch diese meine Gänge ernähre ich, da mein Mann gestorben ist, meine sieben unmündigen Kinder, von denen mein Wilhelm ein sehr aufgewecktes Kind ist.[2]

The conversations between Meininger and Fräulein Hippler and between Frau Queck and a Salvation Army major have a kind of humour which is characteristic of many of the prose passages in Die Heilige Johanna. This is particularly noticeable in the usage of the same word to refer to material as well as spiritual values:

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1. AN. 1352/29.
2. AN. 1352/41.

> Es gibt nicht nur einen irdischen, es gibt auch einen himmlischen Brotladen, Frau Queck, und der ist Ihr Brotladen. [1]

In the case of the conversation between Meininger and Fräulein Hippler the humour emerges in the transparency of the former's motives:

> Ich will Ihnen einmal etwas sagen, Fräulein Hippler: Hände weg von meinem Eigentum! Verstanden? Seit wann ist denn das Mode bei der Heilsarmee? [2]

In general the syntax of the language in Der Brotladen is simpler than in Weizen. Both plays, however, adumbrate the diversity of the styles which Brecht uses in Die heilige Johanna.

Theatrical production.

Mann ist Mann was first produced in Darmstadt, 1926, by Jacob Geis who was a close friend of Brecht. Minimum use was made of scenery and the producer himself aimed at showing the mechanical and logical aspects of the whole play.[3] He was not altogether successful in this, if we are to judge from Jhering's comparison between this

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1. AN. 1353/03. A similar comic juxtaposition of spiritual and material values is made by Johanna when she talks of 'die grosse himmlische Suppe'. cf. Stücke IV, p.22.
2. AN. 1352/16.
3. Geis himself talks of the 'kalte Selbstverständlichkeit des Stücks' in an article he wrote about the production of the play (Die Szene, 1926, p.300 f. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.122).

production and the one for which Engel was responsible in Berlin (Volksbühne, 1928). Jhering claimed that Geis, by concentrating too much on the style he wanted to produce, tended to ignore the requirements of the play itself.[1] Engel, on the other hand, kept these requirements uppermost in his mind for his production of the play:

> Denn der Stil entwickelte sich aus der Sache, aus dem Inhalt, nicht, wie manchmal noch in Darmstadt, aus einer Stilidee.[2]

Neither of these two productions was designed to show Galy Gay's metamorphosis in a satirical way. Jhering, in fact, justified his enthusiasm for the play by stating that Brecht had not treated his theme either in a tragic or a critical way:

> Brecht ist der erste deutsche Dichter, der die Mechanik des Maschinenzeitalters weder feiert noch angreift, sondern selbstverständlich nimmt und dadurch überwindet.[3]

He points to the epic quality of the work when he refers to its similarities with films like Chaplin's Goldrush or

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1. Geis was aware of the shortcomings of his production because he was dissatisfied by the jerkiness which some of the episodes he produced acquired. "Statt des erhofften fliessenden Lebens bewegte sich die Maschine rückweise." Schumacher, op.cit., p.122.
2. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.206.
3. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.230 f.

Buster Keaton's General.[1] Engel, who seems to have had a better group of actors to work with than Geis, exploited this cinematic quality of the play by concentrating on its events rather than its ideas, and by avoiding the creation of atmosphere. Jhering complained only of the ending which struck him as out of keeping with the rest of the play:

> Dass der umgebaute Galy Gay jetzt auch in der Funktion des Jeraiah Jip gezeigt wird, das wird zwar angedeutet, geht aber in der musikalisch-balladenhaften Umkleidung der Szene (Rückfall ins Atmosphärische) unter.[2]

In this production, too, a minimum use of scenery was made and what was used was clearly designed to destroy theatrical illusion. Such a destruction is, of course, implicit in the play itself: its grotesque idiom is calculated to prohibit identification with the 'characters' in the play. It is quite impossible to believe in the bogus elephant as does Galy Gay, or to feel greatly involved in its solemn sale to Witwe Begbick.

When Brecht produced the play in 1931 at the Berliner Staatstheater, his attitude towards Galy Gay's metamorphosis had changed and he was intent on underlining the satirical aspect of this change. For this production Brecht

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1. cf. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit., p.307: "Brecht berührt sich auf der einen Seite mit dem Ausdruck des Films (Chaplin, Buster Keaton), auf der anderen mit den versachlichenden Bestrebungen der Musik (Klemperer, Hindemith, Weill), auf der anderen mit Piscator."
2. op.cit., p.307.

accentuated the grotesque quality of the play: the soldiers were presented as hideous and over-sized automata and Galy Gay was ultimately changed into this guise:

> Die Soldaten und der Sergeant erschienen vermittels Stelzen und Drahtbügeln als besonders grosse und besonders breite Ungeheuer. Sie trugen Teilmasken und Riesenhände. Auch der Packer Galy Gay verwandelte sich ganz zuletzt in ein solches Ungeheuer.[1]

Brecht also made use of lantern slides to separate the various stages of Galy Gay's metamorphosis. In the case of Sergeant Fairchild's change into a civilian, the stage-manager appeared in front of the curtain and read short comments on the course of this transformation. Brecht employed four masks to mark the development of Galy Gay.[2] As in Eduard II fear was shown by painting Galy Gay's face white - in the third part of the metamorphosis to show that fear of living is greater than fear of death.

All these devices suggest that Brecht aimed, above all, at exteriorising the main events of the play. Even in the case of Witwe Begbick's "Lied vom Fluss der Dinge" the three parts of the song were illustrated by the

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1. cf. Stücke II, Anmerkungen zum Lustspiel Mann ist Mann, p.316.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.324: "Die Entwicklung der Figur ist sehr sorgfältig in vier Phasen eingeteilt, wozu vier Masken verwendet werden. (Das Packergesicht - bis in den Prozess hinein; das 'natürliche' Gesicht - bis zum Erwachen nach der Erschiessung; das 'unbeschriebene Blatt' - bis zur Aufmontierung nach der Leichenrede; am Ende: das Soldatengesicht.)

dismantling, washing and folding of awnings. The emphasis on physical manifestations is an illustration of Brecht's consistent aim in his theatre to express what he has to communicate in a concrete - visual - form.

Chapter IV

The Operas and the Lehrstücke

Introduction.

Brecht wrote his first operas and Lehrstücke at a time when the theatrical climate in Berlin was being radically influenced by political events and by the formal experiments conducted in the field of music and opera in Germany and elsewhere.

The economic slump which affected Germany at the end of the 1920's brought in its wake a host of plays which dramatized the social and political problems of the day. Although not all turned to Communism, playwrights like Gunter Weisenborn, Peter Martin Lampel, Ferdinand Bruckner and Friedrich Wolf sought to formulate an accusation against Capitalism. The protests ranged from attacks on Imperialism[1] to demonstrations against the arms race[2], from dramatisations of topical cases of social injustice[3]

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1. cf. Feuchtwanger, Die Petroleuminsel, which was produced by Jürgen Fehling in Berlin (1928) with songs and jazz.
2. cf. Weisenborn, U-Boot S.4, produced in 1928 with dance-music contrasting with the vain efforts to rescue the sailors from a sunken submarine.
3. cf. F. Ziege, Die Affaire Bullerjahn, which treated an actual case in which the accused was unjustly imprisoned for 15 years on account of an embezzelement he had not committed.

to demands for reforms in the law.[1] The Zeitstück in its obvious topicality contrasts in some senses with Brecht's own work in this period. The operas are all set outside Germany[2] and the Lehrstücke in their re-enactment of events which take place before the plays start, share a quality of remoteness which is characteristic of Brecht's work as a whole. There can, however, be no doubt that the Zeitstück did have an influence on Brecht. For in their groping towards an understanding of political issues, in their predilection for the court-case, the Zeitstücke foreshadow the didactic plays. It is true that in a play like F. Bruckner's Die Verbrecher, which depicts a number of court-cases on a simultaneous set and shows how justice is abused, the message is simply that the law must be interpreted in more humane fashion. There is no suggestion that the system can only be remedied by a social revolution, as was to be Brecht's view in the Dreigroschenprozess.[3] But in a play like Die Verbrecher the stage is used as a kind

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1. cf. Wolf, Zyankali, produced in 1930, which demanded the legalization of abortion.
2. Die Dreigroschenoper is set in London around 1900. Happy End in Chicago, Mahagonny in a boon-town which has no parallel in 'real' life.
3. cf. Brecht's Dreigroschenbuch, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt/Main, 1960, p.107: "Es genügt nicht zu wissen, dass der Kapitalismus immer unfähiger wird, seine eigene Angelegenheiten zu ordnen ... es genügt nicht dies zu sagen ... Er kann nicht sterben, sondern er muss getötet werden."

of tribunal which is exactly what it becomes in the Agitpropspiele.

The Agitpropspiele, as we have seen, were connected with the work of Piscator, Wagenheim and F. Wolf. Although in the years 1927-29 Brecht showed restraint in employing the revolutionary theatrical techniques of Piscator[1], the didactic plays he wrote between 1930-1932, in particular Die Massnahme and Die Mutter, are almost certainly influenced by those of the Agitprop-Theater. This is, perhaps, not surprising in view of Brecht's conversion to Marxism in these years. The work of Friedrich Wolf is of particular interest in this context. In 1928 Wolf wrote Tai Yang Erwacht - a so-called Lehrstück[2] - where he made use of a simultaneous setting to show the link between the revolutionary movement in China and Germany. Quite apart from the obvious political message common to both Brecht and Wolf in their Lehrstücke there are parallels in the production

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1. cf. Chapter II, p. 71 f.
2. cf. Wolf, Aufsätze über Theater, Berlin 1957, p.9: "In diesem Stück - als einem Lehrstück - versuchten wir auf der Bühne die dialektischen Zusammenhänge gleichartiger Epochen der deutschen und chinesischen Bauernbewegung für den Arbeiterzuschauer verständlich und sichtbar zu machen."

techniques of this play and Brecht's Die Massnahme.[1] Wolf is probably not far off the mark when he claims that Brecht was indebted to the Agitprop-theater for some of the formal aspects of his didactic plays:

> Spezialisten der Dramaturgie (Brecht, Wagenheim, Wolf) arbeiten jetzt Hand in Hand mit den Agitproptrupps, oder sie benutzen die Formelemente der Agitszenen: die Simultanszene, die Szenenmontage, den referierenden Ansager für ihre eigenen Bühnenstücke (Die Mutter, Die Massnahme).[2]

In spite of this, it is important to remember that Brecht's development towards the Lehrstück was not exclusively motivated by his political ideas. Although Brecht's operas and Lehrstücke contrast so sharply with one another in that the first have no direct political message while the latter do, they do have at least one important link. Both were plays in which music acquired a new and significant function. In 1927 Brecht became associated with Kurt Weill in the production of the Singspiel, Mahagonny[3] at the festival, Deutsche Kammermusik, in Baden-Baden. Kurt Weill, who subsequently wrote the music for Brecht's operas and the Lehrstück, Der Flug der Lindberghs, belonged to a circle of composers who aimed at a simplification of musical idiom:

> Von diesem Standpunkt aus gesehen, reiht sich die Dreigroschenoper in eine Bewegung ein, von der heute fast alle jungen Musiker ergriffen werden. Die Aufgabe

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1. In Die Massnahme the agitators take it in turn to act the part of the young comrade. This obvious device to prohibit identification was also used in Tai Yang erwacht.

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cf. Alfred Polgar in Die Weltbühne, XXVII, January 1931, No.4: "Von der Listen ... des Theaters, von der grossartigen Magie des Indirekten, deren es sich zu bedienen weiss, machen Piscator und sein Librettist (i.e. Wolf) wenig gebrauch ... Die Schauspieler kommen zu Beginn in ihrer Zivilerscheinung auf die Szene, schminken und kleiden sich vor allen Publikum zu den Figuren um, als die sie nachher sich verstellen werden."

2. cf. Wolf, op.cit., p.12.

3. The original to the opera Mahagonny consisted in a number of songs which were published in Die Hauspostille, Propyläen Verlag, Berlin 1927, the first anthology of Brecht's poems. These songs are reprinted in the Suhrkamp (no date) edition of the Hauspostille under the heading Vierte Lektion: Mahagonnygesänge, pp.111-121.

> des l'art pour l'art Standpunktes, die Abwendung vom individualistischen Kunstprinzip, die Filmmusikideen, der Anschluss an die Jugendbewegung, die mit all dem in Verbindung stehende Vereinfachung der musikalischen Ausdrucksmittel - das alles sind Schritte auf dem gleichen Wege. [1]

The incongruous combination of older musical forms, like the cantata and oratorio with the jazz idiom formed the basis of a series of new musical experiments which owed a lot to French experimentation in this field.[2] The harking back to these particular musical forms may be linked with the Händel revival in Germany about 1925. Schumacher, who goes into some detail about the contemporary cult of Händel[3], relates the composition of the Dreigroschenoper to this revival, arguing that Brecht's model - Gay's Beggars' Opera - was a parody of Händel's work. It seems however more likely that Brecht was directly inspired by Nigel Playfair's production of Gay's opera in London (1920). It was this play which Elizabeth Hauptmann brought to Brecht's notice and set about translating.[4] Furthermore, Kurt Weill, in

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1. cf. Kurt Weill, Zur Komposition der Dreigroschenoper, in Die Szene, 1929, reprinted in Brechts Dreigroschenbuch, op.cit., p.219.
2. cf. Willet, op.cit., p.126 ff.
3. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.218 f.
4. cf. Willy Haas, Bert Brecht, Colloquium Verlag, Berlin 1958, p.46: "Brecht hatte von dem Riesenerfolg in London gelesen (i.e. of Sir Nigel Playfair's production of Gay's opera), wie jeder von uns. Er las den Inhalt in Zeitschriften und Zeitungen ... Er bat seine treue Mitarbeiterin Elizabeth Hauptmann, den Originaltext für ihn zu übersetzen."

composing the music to the opera, was utilising the rhythms of jazz - which are hardly inspired by either Händel or Peputsch. For Weill jazz had a quality of directness and unsophistication, i.e. the required simplification of musical expression:

> Unverkennbar ist es aber, dass an der rhythmischen, harmonischen und formalen Auflockerung, die wir heute erreicht haben, und vor allem an der ständig wachsenden Einfachheit und Verständlichkeit unserer Musik der Jazz einen wesentlichen Anteil hat.[1]

Such a simplification allowed for the participation of amateurs in musical experiments. This is precisely what Weill sought to achieve in the case of the Dreigroschenoper, where he was dealing with a group of untrained singers:

> Dieses Zurückgehen auf eine primitive Opernform brachte eine weitgehende Vereinfachung der musikalischen Sprache mit sich. Es galt eine Musik zu schreiben, die von Schauspielern, also von musikalischen Laien gesungen werden kann. [2]

This is one respect in which Brecht's Dreigroschenoper is linked with the musical experiments conducted at Donaueschingen, and, later, at Baden-Baden, where Hindemith sponsored what later came to be known as Gemeinschaftsmusik.[3]

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1. cf. Anbruch, Monatsschrift für moderne Musik, Wien 1929, p.139. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.250.
2. cf. Brechts Dreigroschenbuch, op.cit., p.220.
3. cf. Willet, op.cit., p.130: "'Gemeinschaftsmusik' ... sprang ... from Hindemith's meeting with the various singers of various youth organisations at the Donaueschingen festival. He began writing music for amateurs: first the instrumental Schulwerk ... and Spielmusik, then the Choruses ... and the Sing- and Spielmusiken of 1927 and 1928.

The purpose of these experiments - according to Herbert Rosenberg - was to foster a new spirit of communal living among those who actively took part in them.[1] Such a communal spirit could not be imparted by music alone, and the text in such experiments was equally important. In the resulting combination of words and music for educational purposes critics were quick to see the parallel with older dramatic and musical forms:

> So bedeuten die immer häufiger werdenden Oratorien, Lehrstücke und Revüen eine radikale Rückkehr zu dem, was eigentlich Theater ist.[2]

Brecht wrote his first two Lehrstücke, Flug der Lindberghs and Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, for the Baden-Baden festival. Hindemith contributed individual items to the music of the first and was solely responsible for the score of the second.[3] These two plays were largely written for and in the spirit of the festival; their didactic tone was, in a sense, imposed from without and conformed to the disciplinary aims which musical theoreticians claimed for the new kind of oratorios and cantatas:

> Das Lehrstück ist für den nachhaltigen 'Gebrauch' des einzelnen bestimmt. Der einzelne, der hier hörend oder mittätig beteiligt ist, findet sich nicht in irgendeiner Gemeinschaft aufgehoben, er untersteht auch als musizierender Laie keinerlei Idealbezogenheit. Die

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1. Neue Musik und Neue Zeit, p.42, quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.293: "Die Grundlage ihres Musizierens

bildete die Überzeugung, dass die gemeinsame Aufführung eines musikalischen Werkes gemeinschaftliche Kräfte weckt."

2. Rudolph Arnheim, Theater ohne Bühne in Die Weltbühne, June 1932, No.25, p.863.

3. Hindemith and Brecht came to disagree with one another about the production of Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis in Baden-Baden. Whereas Hindemith thought it permissible to cut scenes from the play, Brecht was adamant about retaining them. In the notes to the play - cf. Stücke III, p.316 f. - Brecht published a letter from Hindemith which stressed the freedom the composer felt should be allowed to those who took part in the play: "Auslassungen, Zusätze und Umstellungen sind möglich. Ganze Musiknummern können wegbleiben, der Tanz kann ausfallen, die Clownszene kann gekürzt oder ausgelassen werden. Andere Musikstücke, Szenen, Tänze oder Vorlesungen können eingefügt werden, wenn es nötig ist und die eingefügten Stücke nicht den Stil des Ganzen stören ... Dem die Übung Leitenden und der Gemeinschaft der Ausführenden ist es überlassen, die für ihren Zweck passende Form zu finden." Brecht refuted these ideas by stating that his play was not simply a basis for further interpretation: "Aber die Baden-Badener Aufführung war natürlich lediglich zur Selbstverständigung und einmalig gedacht."

> Entscheidung, die das Lehrstück von ihm fordert, darf ihm von keiner Seite abgenommen werden. Es muss so sein, dass er vor sich selbst einzustehen hat. Nur aus diesem ganz persönlichen Einsatz heraus kann hier Gemeinschaft gefunden werden. Die Not der Vereinzelung zwingt, sich aneinander zu schliessen, selbstverständlich und völlig unbetont für einander da zu sein oder zu bekennen, dass man nicht willens ist für einander einzustehen, weder für sich noch für die anderen. Die Ausflucht in die Sphäre des 'Erlebnisses' ist abgeschnitten. [1]

Such aims must have had a particular appeal for Brecht, who had come to the conclusion in Mann ist Mann that man can only acquire significance in so far as he is useful to others:

> Und ich, der eine ich und der andere ich
> Werden gebraucht und sind also brauchbar.[2]

Themes.

Broadly speaking the themes of Brecht's operas and didactic plays are concerned with the two fundamental problems of the works immediately preceding them. On the one hand the operas explore the workings of society along the lines of Weizen and Der Brotladen. On the other hand the first Lehrstücke (Flug der Lindberghs, Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, Die Massnahme) return to the problem of the place and function of the individual in society, and so hark back to Mann ist Mann. In the late

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1. Musik und Gesellschaft, Berlin/Wolfenbüttel, 1930/31, p.114. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.293 f.
2. cf. Stücke II, p.268.

Lehrstücke (Die Ausnahme und die Regel, Die Mutter and Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe) there is a fusion of these two themes.

Brecht's operas are set in a twilight atmosphere, reminiscent of Im Dickicht, where gangsters and criminals, souteneurs and prostitutes rule. They reveal a romanticised conception of the 'Grosstadt' very different from the one in the fragments. Where in Weizen and Der Brotladen Brecht had tried to depict both the brutality of the ruling-class and the suffering of the working-class, in the operas he neglects to examine all the effects of a society based on economic competition. The operas are not analytical, but satirical and descriptive of a mode of existence which has no counterpart in real life.[1]

Die Dreigroschenoper, which Brecht wrote in 1928, is perhaps the less biting of the operas as far as the satire is concerned. It aims at criticising and debunking middle-class manners and morals by comparing them with the immorality and crudeness of the gangsters' way of life. Brecht, of course, borrowed this motif from Gay's original which sought to show that 'high life' and 'low life' were

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1. A left-wing critic of Die Weltbühne (No.15, April 1930, p.558) was very scathing about the unrealistic tone of Die Dreigroschenoper: "... diese sorgsam panierte Roheit, diese messerscharf berechneten Goldgräberflüche ... so ist das Leben ja gar nicht. Nicht einmal das in Klodyke von gestern, bestimmt nicht das Amerika von heute ... auch die Beziehung zu Deutschland bleibt flau. Es ist stylisiertes Bayern."

not really very different from one another:

> Through the whole Piece you may observe such a similitude of Manners in high and low life, that it is difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable Vices) the fine Gentlemen imitate the Gentlemen of the Road, or the Gentlemen of the Road the fine Gentlemen.[1]

The projection of ordinary social malpractices into the gangster world must have had a particular appeal for Brecht who in Weizen had tried to point to the literal brutality as well as the economic harshness of city-life. In Brecht's eyes the gangster is the capitalist reduced to his simplest expression: both thrive on ill-gotten goods. Peachum, too, in his ruthless exploitation of the beggars is a kind of gangster. The underworld is, however, more than a means to an end in Brecht's presentation. It holds a deep fascination for the playwright - which first emerges in Im Dickicht - and which in Die Dreigroschenoper comes to the fore in the sympathetic treatment of the robber Macheath. The man on the fringe of society by singing ballads which are directly inspired from the outlaw-poet Villon[2] is amoral in the sense in which Baal was. His condemnation as a middle-class capitalist is disrupted by his contention that the foundation of a bank is far worse than breaking into it:

> Was ist ein Dietrich gegen eine Aktie? Was ist Einbruch in eine Bank gegen die Gründung einer Bank?

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1. The Abbey Classics, The Plays of John Gay, Vol.I, London n.d., p.223 f. Gay's satire is, in fact, far more

pointed than Brecht's since he was attacking identifiable politicians of his day. cf. Cäcilie Tolksdorf, John Gays 'Beggar's Opera' und Bert Brechts 'Dreigroschenoper'? Rheinberg Rhl., 1934, p.17 f. "Am stärksten sind überhaupt seine (i.e. Gay's) Ausfälle gegen bestimmte, ihm bei der Abfassung vor Augen stehende Persönlichkeiten: Staatsmänner, Minister, Höflinge, Maitresse. Am hefstigen sind seine Ausfälle gegen den Premierminister Walpole."

2. The Ballade vom angenehmen Leben, Stücke III, p.84 f., is derived from Villon's Le contrediz de Franc Gontier; the Salomo Song, Stücke III, p.115 f., is very similar to Villon's Ballade des folles Amours and the Ballade in der Macheath Jederman Abbitte leistet, Stücke III, p.136 ff., is a fusion of Villon's L'Epitaphe en forme de ballade and the Ballade de Mercy.

> Was ist die Ermordung eines Mannes gegen die Anstellung eines Mannes? [1]

It is this presentation which prompted Jens to dismiss the satirical intention of the play altogether.[2] This, however, is an exaggeration. There is unambiguous social criticism in Brecht's portrayal of the friendship between Macheath and the chief of police, Inspector Brown. The implication is quite clear: the friendship is meant to show the fundamental solidarity between the ruling-class and the police force. It is a theme which recurs in Die Ausnahme und die Regel when the merchant can no longer depend on police protection as he reaches the desert. The satire in the Dreigroschenoper attacks several other aspects of society: the means of subsistence of the middle-class; the way in which marriages are made; the way in which justice is carried out and the corruptibility and hypocrisy

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1. Stücke III, p.135 f.

2. Jens, Statt einer Literaturgeschichte, Pfullingen, 1957, p. 179 f. "In der Dreigroschenoper aber erblickt die Kritik nur eine Handlung, die, als rein historisierende Räubermoritat, die Überzeichnungen der Musik eher noch verstärkt, statt ihr dialektisch entgegenzuwirken, so dass das Ganze am Ende mehr als zeitloses Gaudi denn als Gesellschaftskritik erscheint ..."

of middle-class people.[1]

Die Dreigroschenoper is far more lively and entertaining than either Happy End or Mahagonny. Happy End was written in the same year as Die Dreigroschenoper (1928) and it exploits the theme of the gangsters' way of life to debunk Christianity and to unmask its function in a capitalist society. This is expressed very crudely in this play and the analysis of the relationship between the Salvation Army and the ruthless band of thieves, led by a mysterious 'Dame in grau', can hardly compare with the one which was attempted in Der Brotladen or the one which found final expression in Die heilige Johanna. Happy End revolves around the sentimental attachment between Bill Cracker, gangster and owner of 'Bill's Ballhaus', and Lilian Holiday, a Salvation Army girl[2] who tries to convert the thieves who frequent

1. Polly's marriage to Macheath illustrates several of these points. At the time of the wedding Macheath gives his gang of thieves a lesson in social etiquette in a horse-stable surrounded by stolen property. Macheath's established habit of visiting the prostitutes in Turnbridge makes his marriage to Polly a matter of pure form - and interest. cf. Stücke III, p.64f.: "Mac: Also gut, wenn ich weg muss, dann musst du die Leitung des Geschäfts übernehmen." Polly herself has realised the financial advantages of being Macheath's wife. Having been given charge of the business during Macheath's absence, Polly feels no qualms in refusing to help her husband out of prison with the money he has left in her care.

2. This attachment foreshadows the relationship between Mauler and Johanna in Die heilige Johanna, although in this play the emphasis is more on the economic and political implications of this relationship. There is, however, a suggestion in Die heilige Johanna that Mauler and Johanna - according to gossip - might have been more intimate: cf. Stücke IV, p.112: "Slift: Was neues von deiner Johanna? An der Viehbörse /Geht ein Gerücht, du hast mit ihr geschlafen."

Bill's shady inn. Through his attachment to Lilian, Bill fails to crack a safe. Ordinarily the penalty for such a failure would be death but the 'Dame in Grau' does not exact this penalty when she recognises her long-lost husband in the Salvation Army major, Hannibal Jackson. This recognition brings about the 'happy ending' to the play. Clearly, this is not a subtle analysis: Bill's marriage to Lilian is meant to emphasise the fundamental community of interest between the Salvation Army and a capitalist society, but it is a low grade attempt at social criticism.[1] Brecht never acknowledged his part in writing the play and when he used it as a basis for Die heilige Johanna he claimed Elizabeth Hauptmann had written Happy End.[2] Schumacher, however, disputes this claim and states that Brecht was certainly responsible for the Songs in the opera.[3] There is also evidence of much that is Brechtian in the play, particularly with regard to his interest in sport. One of

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1. The crude association of big business with the Salvation Army emerges in the following remark: "Ja ja wenn die Arbeit der Heilsarmee nicht so fad wäre. Das wäre ein Geschäft. Ein paar hübsche Mädchenbeine hineingearbeitet und das ganze Experiment ginge hoch wie irgendwelche Aktien der Standard Oil (Bühnenfassung, p.33).
2. In a MS of Die heilige Johanna (AN 427) the work is headed by the remark: "Das Stück ist entstanden aus dem Stück Happy End von Elizabeth Hauptmann unter der Mitarbeit von Borchart, Burri und Hauptmann." 427/07.
3. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.256: "Brecht schrieb für das Stück in erster Linie die Songs ... und arbeitete ausserdem intensiv an der Einstudierung mit."

the gangsters - Johnny Flint - is introduced as 'der Exweltmeister im Halbschwergewicht'[1] and another describes the whole gang of robbers as sportsmen: "Sport - Wir sind ja alle Sportsleute".[2]

The opera Mahagonny, which was written in 1928/29, also testifies to the link Brecht establishes between the brutality of the boxing-ring[3] and that of a society which exaggerates one aspect of Capitalism. Mahagonny shows a less indulgently satirical picture of society. Brecht founds his grotesque anti-utopian city on the bald assumption that the true nature of pleasure in a capitalist society is commercial. To expose this has become the unambiguous function of the poet.[4] The brutality of the laws in Mahagonny are, again, shown in a rather crude idiom. The case of Vielfrass[5] who dies of over-eating was meant to show, according to Brecht[6], that this was only possible

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1. Happy End, Bühnenfassung, p.1.
2. op.cit., p.7.
3. cf. Stücke III, p.219 ff. The fight between Dreieinigkeitsmoses and Alaskawolf - Joe ends in the death of the latter.
4. cf. Arnolt Walter in Die Weltbühne, XXVII, No.52, December 1931, p.982: "...der Künstler ist Soziologe geworden, der sich bemüht, die gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhänge zu durchschauen und zunächst seine eigene Stellung zu fixieren, um im Sinn seiner Erkenntnisse zu wirken."
5. Stücke III, p.213 f.
6. cf. Stücke III, Anmerkungen zur Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, p.265: "Wenn ... der Vielfrass sich zu Tode frisst, so tut er dies weil Hunger herrscht."

because thousands were starving, but the connection is too blatant to be very profound. Paul Ackermann, the woodcutter from Alaska, by revolting against the quietude in the city, implies that everything should be obtainable with money. The logical conclusion to this is that in such a society the greatest of crimes is to lack money. Paul is ultimately sentenced to death because he is unable to pay for three bottles of whisky:

> Darum wirst du zum Tode verurteilt, Paul Ackermann
> (Begbick, Willy, Moses)
> Wegen Mangel an Geld
> Was das grösste Verbrechen ist
> Das auf dem Erdenrund vorkommt.[1]

In Mahagonny the individual perishes at the hands of a monstrous society he has, himself, helped to create. There is in this theme an obvious pointer to the Lehrstücke.

With the exception of the Flug der Lindberghs the didactic plays postulate death as the penalty for non-conformity but for very different reasons than in Mahagonny. The Lehrstücke are not concerned with a satirical depiction of social injustice but with developing and postulating the subjugation of the individual to the rules of a community

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1. cf. Stücke III, p.246. A similar motif can be found in G.B. Shaw, Major Barbara (Constable Standard Ed., p.498):
"Cusins: Do you call poverty a crime?
Undershaft: The worst of crimes. All the other crimes are virtues beside it: all the other dishonors are chivalry itself by comparison."

which is represented by choruses.[1] It is these which give the plays their unambiguous didactic twist. They figure in the early Lehrstücke (Badener Lehrstück, Ja-sager, Nein-sager and Die Massnahme) as well as later in Die Mutter, Die Ausnahme und die Regel and Die heilige Johanna lack the more obvious didactic devices of the above plays and, consequently, offer more scope for interpretation.

In the Flug der Lindberghs (1929) the annihilation of the individual is expressed figuratively through Brecht's insistence that the first transatlantic flight is not the achievement of any one person, but rather of many men. On his arrival in Paris, Lindbergh contrasts his weakness with the power of the plane's engine:

> Ich bin Lindbergh. Bitte tragt mich
> In einen dunklen Schuppen, dass
> Keiner sehe meine
> Natürliche Schwäche.

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1. In the Badener Lehrstück the chorus embodies an attitude about charity and brutality which is revolutionary in intent It is an abstract kind of body which comments on the action of the play and instructs. Its teachings are perfectly dogmatic: its function is to lead the audience to a particular decision. An emphasis on expediency rather than on justice makes its pleading completely unequivocal and one-sided. The 'Gelernter Chor' comments on the action and instructs. It acts as an intermediary between the 'Menge', an audience on the stage who are examined and indoctrinated, and the airmen.
In the Ja-sager and the Nein-sager 'Der Grosse Chor' is not as dogmatic as the 'Gelernter Chor'. Its function is still didactic in that it repeats certain important points and comments on the action but it does not indoctrinate as in the Badener Lehrstück.
In Die Massnahme 'Der Kontrollchor' stands for a kind of abstraction of the elite in the Communist Party. 'Der Kontrollchor' - as its name implies - controls the activities of its lesser servants and, at the same time, exercises judicial power.

Aber meldet meinen Kameraden in den Ryan-Werken von San-Diego,
Dass ihre Arbeit gut war.
Unser Motor hat ausgehalten
Ihre Arbeit war ohne Fehler.[1]

Lindbergh is treated as a mere unit in an army involved in Der Kampf gegen das Primitive, the central ideological theme in the play. Although Brecht mentions views about God, superstitions and social classes, his main interest is focussed on progress through technology:

Jetzt nämlich
Lasst uns bekämpfen die Natur
Bis wir selber natürlich geworden sind.[2]

This mechanical view of life is connected with the way in which Brecht presented Galy Gay's metamorphosis, satirically, as a process in which the individual is dismantled and re-built like a motor-car.[3] In Mann ist Mann human change is depicted against the background of the relativity of all human phenomena and the same idea, only more forcefully put, is expressed in Das Badener Lehrstück. Here, too, the world is depicted as being in a constant flux. But whereas Galy Gay is merely urged to accept change it is important that in this didactic play the theme is rather that of active consent to this flux:

Ihr, aber, die einverstanden seid mit dem Fluss der Dinge,
Sinkt nicht zurück in das Nichts.[4]

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1. Brecht, Versuche 1 - 3, Berlin 1929, p.18.

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2. op.cit., p.10. Marxist critics regard such an ideology as 'mechanical Materialism' rather than 'dialectical Materialism'. Schumacher goes into some detail about the shortcomings of the work in terms of Communist ideology (cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.297 ff.). The emphasis, however, which Brecht gives to scientific progress has its limitations and this emerges in the final comment in the play. The Bericht über das Unerreichbare (op.cit., p.19) stresses the tentative nature of all human undertakings. The unattainable is something which cannot be conquered, either by man or scientific progress:

   Gegen Ende des 3. Jahrtausends unserer Zeitrechnung
   Erhob sich unsere
   Stählerne Einfalt
   Aufzeigend das Mögliche
   Ohne uns vergessend zu machen: das
   UNERREICHBARE.

   The Badener Lehrstück opens at the point where the Flug der Lindberghs ends and substitutes for the Bericht über das Unerreichbare the Bericht vom Fliegen. Both passages are identical except that Brecht replaces 'Das Unerreichbare' by 'Das Noch nicht Erreichte' (cf. Brecht, Versuche 1 - 12, Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin 1959, p.117)a and adds the footnote: "Im ersten Versuch heisst es fälschlich: Das Unerreichbare. Dies ist auszubessern in: das noch nicht Erreichte." Karl Thieme interpreted this change in terms of Brecht's conversion to Marxism: "Diese Anmerkung bedeutet, dass sich zwischen der Publikation des ersten Hefts der Versuche (1-3) im Juni und der des zweiten im Dezember 1930 das definitive Einschwenken Brechts in die leninistische Linie vollzogen hat." (cf. Des Teufels Gebetbuch?, Hochland (München), No.24, February 1932, p.407.) In view of Brecht's work in the fragments Weizen and Der Brotladen, where there can be no doubt of his acceptance of Communism, this interpretation is misleading.

3. cf. Stücke II, p.229: "Hier wird heute abend ein Mensch
   wie ein Auto ummontiert
   Ohne dass er irgend etwas dabei
   verliert."

4. Stücke III, p.313.

It is indeed generally true of the early Lehrstücke that they portray not only the subjugation of the individual, but also in many cases the consent and co-operation of the individuals in this change. In Das Badener Lehrstück (1929) Brecht tries to demonstrate the necessity of the pilot's death, because the latter has usurped the position he occupies, and misapplied the property of the masses to his own ends:

> Ich bin für nichts und niemand geflogen,
> Ich bin für das Fliegen geflogen.[1]

In this case the pilot's death indicates his annihilation, because he cannot adapt himself to new circumstances, while the mechanics, on the other hand, accept the progressive obliteration of their personality. The exaggeration of the theme in this play - a relatively innocent pilot who crashes is taken as the exponent of Capitalism[2] - springs from Brecht's determination to drive home his lesson to the point of outraging any sense of fairness. The pilot must die because he is incapable of attaining greatness in poverty and death[3] which is precisely what his co-pilots achieve. They, too, 'die' but only in a metaphorical sense: by consenting to their death as individuals, they are saved from literal annihilation.[4] The harsheness of Nungesser's

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1. op.cit., p.308.

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2. He embodies the selfishness of the man who has no social conscience whatever.

3. cf. Stücke III, p.301 f. "Also, wenn ihr das Sterben überwinden wollt, so überwindet ihr es, wenn ihr das Sterben kennt und einverstanden seid mit dem Sterben.
   Wer aber den Wunsch hat, einverstanden zu sein, der hält bei der Armut. An die Dinge hält er sich nicht! Die Dinge können genommen werden, und dann ist da kein Einverständnis. Auch an das Leben hält er sich nicht. Das Leben wird genommen werden, und dann ist da kein Einverständnis. Auch an die Gedanken hält er sich nicht, die Gedanken können auch genommen werden, und dann ist da auch kein Einverständnis."
   The renunciation of life and the vow of poverty which come to the fore in this passage are lessons which are much closer to Christian ideology than to Marxism. (cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.313 f.) There is a biblical parallel to Charles Nungesser's refusal to accept these lessons: "For whoever exalteth himself, shall be abased" (Luke, 4.10).

4. It is this idea of consent which makes Brecht's Lehrstücke differ from those of the 17th century Jesuit drama. Both, however, are similar in their unambiguous didacticism. cf. Bab, Lehrstück in Gegenwart und Vergangenheit, Die literarische Welt, No. 8/9, Februar 1932, p.11: "Der Inhalt der Dogmen ist natürlich ausserordentlich verschieden, ja sogar entgegengesetzt. Aber die Verkündung als solche hat als gleiche künstlerische Form das gleiche seelische Erlebnis: die Ausschaltung jedes persönlichen Zweifels, jeder individuellen Leidenschaft durch die Hingabe an eine völlig gewisse und das ganze Leben ausfüllende übergeordnete Sache."

penalty is emphasised throughout the play by Brecht's fanatical insistence on reason, and rational argument, to the utter exclusion of sentiment, or feeling. It is in this way that the whole complex relation between reason and feeling, which Brecht exploits in the Lehrstücke, can be introduced.

Perhaps the most striking treatment of this theme is to be found in Die Massnahme (1930), Brecht's most ruthlessly doctrinaire play. In this play Brecht indicates the subjugation of the individual to a community on two levels. First, the whole group of agitators in China are required to suppress their own personalities, as a condition of their revolutionary work, and wear masks[1] in the play in order to signify this suppression. When the young comrade is overcome by his humanitarian instincts and so disobeys the Party's ruthless logic, he indicates his refusal to surrender his individuality by destroying the mask he wears. Second, however, Brecht shows how the young comrade is brought to see the dangers of his emotional attitude, and finally consents to his own execution, as the only way to prevent further harm to the cause. Thus the penalty for failing to accept a metaphorical extinction of personality is literal

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1. cf. Wolf, op.cit., p.18: "Wir erkennen: die Maske ist im revolutionären Arbeitertheater kein artistisches Requisit: sie ist eine politische Waffe! Ein Mittel, die Klassenkämpfer zu organisieren, zu tarnen, zu bewaffnen..."

death:

> Der erste Agitator: Wenn du gefasst wirst, werden sie dich erschiessen, und da du erkannt wirst, ist unsere Arbeit verraten. Also müssen wir dich erschiessen und in die Kalkgrube werfen, damit der Kalk dich verbrennt. Aber wir fragen dich: weisst du einen Ausweg?
> Der junge Genosse: Nein.
> Die Drei Agitatoren: So fragen wir dich: bist du einverstanden?
> Der junge Genosse: Ja.[1]

The young comrade, in consenting to his death, recognises in two ways the power of reason and the error of feeling.

Brecht has been criticised by Marxists for his portrayal of Communism in this play. Schumacher, for example, objects that Brecht's conclusion does not follow from 'concrete social situations'.[2] K. Thieme relates how a group of communist workers discussed the play with Brecht after its performance in Berlin (1930), and rejected its conclusion:

> Die Diskussion konzentrierte sich hauptsächlich um die Tötung dieses Genossen, und vor allem wollten die Kommunisten nicht zugeben, dass dies kommunistische Praxis ist. Der kommunistische Weg sei der Ausschluss aus der Partei, nicht aber die Tötung eines Genossen... der physische Tod sei für den Genossen selbst ... nicht so tragisch wie der Ausschluss. [3]

This criticism, however, does not seem to take into account the basic 'truth' that Brecht wished to canvass, namely that

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1. Stücke IV, p.305 f.
2. Schumacher, op.cit., p.344 f. "Der Versuch blieb unvollkommen, weil Brecht nur formal konkreter wurde - indem er die revolutionäre Bewegung zum Träger der Handlung machte - aber von einer wirklichen Konkretisierung auch jetzt zurückschreckte."
3. Des Teufels Gebetbuch, op.cit., p.412 f.

charity is not a virtue in situations where brutal injustice reigns:

> Der junge Genosse: So frage ich: dulden die Klassiker, dass das Elend wartet?
> Die Drei Agitatoren: Sie sprechen von Methoden, welche das Elend in seiner Gänze erfassen.
> Der junge Genosse: Dann sind die Klassiker also nicht dafür, dass jedem Elenden gleich und sofort und vor allem geholfen wird?
> Die drei Agitatoren: Nein.[1]

Brecht did not, however, always represent the dictates of reason in terms of the death of the individual. Comparison of the twin plays Der Ja-sager (1930) and Der Nein-sager (1930) shows rather that each situation must be treated on its merits. In the Ja-sager a child, who falls ill while a member of a party searching for a cure of an epidemic, admits the necessity of his death, in order not to hinder the search. He consents to the dictates of reason, just as the young comrade does in Die Massnahme. But in the Nein-sager a similar situation, in which a child falls ill while a member of an expedition, calls for a quite new result. For in this case the expedition is undertaken for purely scientific reasons, and there is thus no

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1. cf. Stücke IV, p.295. This idea is expressed in more abstract form in Das Badener Lehrstück, Stücke III, p.297:
   Solange Gewalt herrscht, kann Hilfe verweigert werden
   Wenn keine Gewalt mehr herrscht, ist keine Hilfe mehr nötig.
   In Die heilige Johanna Johanna comes to the same realisation after her own efforts to help and be charitable fail. cf. Stücke IV, p.206:
   Es hilft nur Gewalt, wo Gewalt herrscht, und
   Sondern
   Es helfen nur Menschen, wo Menschen sind.

compelling reason why the child should be sacrificed. The child sees that his death is unnecessary, and so rejects the tradition based on the earlier situation and asks to be taken home.

It is, however, true that most of the Lehrstücke oppose reason to the feelings, perhaps because they are set in situations where ruthlessness is required, even though one's feelings may mislead. It has been suggested that Brecht's account of Communism in terms of the supremacy of reason over feeling corresponds to his own experiences in his conversion to Marxism:

> Der Widerstreit zwischen Verstand und Gefühl ist also ein Grunderlebnis des bürgerlichen Intellektuellen, der eben im Begriff ist, sich dem revolutionären Proletariat anzuschliessen.[1]

The implication here is that Brecht's middle-class feelings revolted against the harsh measures of Communism, but that he fully endorsed these measures from a rational point of view. But in the light of the philosophy of brutality which emerges in the earlier plays (in particular Im Dickicht and Mann ist Mann) as well as the fragments Weizen and Der Brotladen, there seems little evidence for this. Brecht's interest in, even fascination with, violence and brutality is evident long before his acceptance of Communism.

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1. Alfred Kurella, Ein Versuch mit nicht ganz tauglichen Mitteln, Literatur der Weltrevolution, Moskau 1931, No.4, S.103. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.366.

Mahagonny, in a way, recapitulates the various stages of Brecht's interest in violence, from the rather pointless brutality of the boxing-ring, to the more calculated violence of Capitalist society. It is not all unnatural that Brecht should have come to recognise and accept the same brutality and harshness when it is linked with the Communist fight against Capitalism.

Die Massnahme, as we have seen, is perhaps the most striking portrayal of such Communist brutality, justified as it is nevertheless intended to be by reason. It is also revealed in the Fatzer fragment, which Brecht published in 1930 along with the Flug der Lindberghs.[1] Fatzer, a Communist, expounds his views on war and has nothing but praise for it. All the misery of war is good, because it makes the condition of the poor worse:

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1. Examination of the unpublished material to the play (AN. 112) suggests that Brecht meant to depict a topical situation connected with revolution and the first world-war. "Zu Mühlheim an der Ruhr spielte sich in der blutigen und wirren Zeit des Weltkrieges und zwar dessen Ende zu zwischen vier Männern eine Geschichte zu, die mit dem völligen Untergang dieser vier endete aber inmitten Mord und Eidbruch die Spuren einer Moral zeigte" (AN. 112/25). It is possible that Brecht may have been influenced by Erich Mühsam's Judas (1920) which was produced in April 1928 at the Studio der Piscator-Bühne. The play was "... ein Arbeiterdrama aus den Streiktagen des Januar 1918" in which the hero "alles der Idee und Partei opfert" (cf. Jhering, Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.334). Brecht meant to portray Fatzer as an apparent egoist, who was in reality a communist: "Er wird Kommunist und die anderen schlagen ihn tot, weil er ihnen ein Egoist ist, der in Wirklichkeit doch Kollektivist ist. Sie halten ihn für einen Schädling und Aussichtsloser" (AN. 112/18).

> Auch glaub ich schon zu sehen:
> Arm ist ärmer und reich reicher jetzt und
> Zwischendrin ist nichts: das ist auch gut ...
> Gut auch, dass da bald Winter wird, das
> Zehrt am Krieg, wenn das Volk friert.[1]

All the comforts which can still be enjoyed during the war are bad because they make life bearable.[2] There can be no doubt that the play was meant to illustrate the Marxist law of increasing misery which is meant to determine the outbreak of revolutions. In Brecht's terms only a situation which has become unendurable will make people reasonable:

> Jetzt sitzen schon fünfzehn / In jedem Mauerspalt, weil / Nicht mehr gebaut wird, und je mehr / Beisammen sitzen, desto / Vernünftiger werden sie.[3]

In all these earlier Lehrstücke the analysis of society on which the extinction of the individual is meant to be

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1. Versuche 1 - 3, op.cit., p.28.
2. Brecht is here thinking of sexual intercourse. In the material to Fatzer there is an extraordinary passage - Über das Lehren der geschlechtlichen Liebe - in which the playwright employs the most perverse arguments to reject sex as natural: "Unrichtig handeln die dem Lernenden das Geschlechtliche natürlich hinstellen, als sauber, harmlos und verständlich. Recht aber haben die es ihm als unnatürlich beweisen, also als schmutzig, gefährlich und unverständlich ... Aber nicht um die Lernenden von der Liebe abzuhalten, soll man ihm die Liebe so schmutzig oder unnatürlich schildern, sondern allein um ihm die Wahrheit zu sagen. Nicht um ihm Abscheu zu erregen, sondern um ihm Schrecken zu lehren ..." (AN. 112/64). It is, of course, not clear for what purpose this passage was written, but it suggests a frame of mind in which 'truth' and terror come dangerously close to meaning the same thing.
3. Fatzer, Versuche 1 - 3, op.cit., p.28.

based is very fragmentary indeed.[1] With Die Ausnahme und die Regel, however, the exploration into the workings of Capitalism becomes much more central to the contrasts between the individual and society and between reason and feeling. Through the attitudes of the merchant and the coolie as they proceed on the journey through the desert[2] Brecht endeavours to show the relations between businessmen and the working class. It is possible to talk of a kind of conflict between the merchant and the coolie, even though it is only the merchant who is aware of this conflict. It is as a result of this awareness that the merchant mistrusts and fears the coolie, quite unjustifiably, and finally

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1. Das Badener Lehrstück does not go much further than the grotesque puppet scene in which the giant Smith is progressively dismantled by two sycophants, Einser and Zweier. The sketch is meant to epitomise the self-seeking nature of Capitalism, where one power undermines the other. In the Ja-sager and Nein-sager there is no suggestion of an analysis of society at all. Die Massnahme, while it gives brief flashes into the exploitation of the coolies and the brutality of the ruling-class and the police, does not delve into the economic causes of social injustice.
2. The merchant is, in fact, trying to obtain some oil concessions. The guide recognises the reason for the merchant's haste: "Ich höre, dass das Öl, wenn es entdeckt wird, versteckt wird. Der das Loch zustopft, aus dem das Öl kommt, erhält Schweigegeld. Darum beeilt sich der Kaufmann so." cf. Stücke V, p.194. For the sake of financial gain, the merchant ruthlessly denies the principle of progress which he professes to serve, when he coaxes the coolie to speed up his pace: "Wenn das Öl aus dem Boden heraus ist, wird es hier Eisenbahnen geben und Wohlstand sich ausbreiten. Es wird Brot und Kleider geben und Gott weiss was." op.cit., p.203.

murders him. In this brutal act Brecht again points to the folly of charitable actions in the class-struggle, for it is when the coolie offers the merchant his water-bottle that the latter mistakes it for a stone and kills the coolie out of what he regards as self-defence. In the subsequent trial it might be expected that the balance would be redressed, that the wicked capitalist would be punished and the saintly coolie vindicated. But Brecht turns the tables on us: not only does he have the merchant acquitted, he also makes it clear that the coolie was in the wrong, given a capitalist society. The merchant admits the injustice of the system and the brutality of his own conduct and both he and the court assume that hatred and resentment on the coolie's part are natural and inevitable. The merchant is absolved of blame because he could not be expected to know that the coolie was an exception: that he had neither recognised the class-struggle, nor become reasonable.[1]

It is important to realise that Brecht is not attempting to evoke indignation in the audience: he is trying to demonstrate the logic of class-war. Die Ausnahme und die Regel is remarkable for the ingenious conclusion - almost a coup de theatre - by which Brecht drives home his point.

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1. cf. Stücke V, p.224: "Der Kaufmann: Anzunehmen, der Kuli würde mich nicht bei der ersten Gelegenheit niederschlagen, hätte bedeutet anzunehmen, er habe keine Vernunft."

Yet the judgment of the court is designed to shock not only by its harshness but also by its logicality - to stimulate in the audience a similar logicality: in terms of political indoctrination to make them class-conscious, in the theatrical term of Brecht's later writings, to alienate them.

To conclude, one may detect within this group of plays - i.e. the Lehrstücke - a progression of ideas. There persists throughout the first four plays a concern with the problem of the individual versus the community, but the light in which the problem is viewed changes: In Der Flug der Lindberghs the achievement of the individual is absorbed in that of the mass; in Das Badener Lehrstück a note of hostility is struck, the individual is seen as belonging to an outworn age; in Der Jasager / Der Neinsager the issue between the individual and the community is settled in favour of one or the other as reason demands; in Die Massnahme the conflict is between the individual with his complex of emotions and the Party which is guided by a rational concept of history; with Die Ausnahme und die Regel, Brecht turns his attention more to the conflict between classes, but at any rate one might say that the individual suffers here, too, because he remains an individual - eine Ausnahme - rather than sharing the emotions appropriate to his class.

In all the plays, except Der Flug der Lindberghs, this extinction of the individual is associated with death - at first in a formal and ambiguous sense (Das Badener Lehrstück); then in an actual and literal sense (Jasager / Neinsager); again as a deliberate sacrifice in the interest of revolution (Die Massnahme); and finally as a victim of class-war (Die Ausnahme und die Regel). In all but the last instance consent (Einverständnis) is required of the victim. The progression from a metaphorical to a literal interpretation of death is characteristic of a judicial code which derives from a society dominated by a privileged class.

Another feature common to several of these plays is the device of the journey. Here the progression is more from the literal to the metaphorical or symbolic, from the actual flight of Lindbergh to the journey of the merchant and the coolie, the topography of which is designed to create certain characteristic situations.[1] It is interesting to note that the journey tends to be an epic rather than a dramatic device (cf. Odyssey, Bildungsroman). The trial scene, on the other hand, is essentially dramatic, so that we see in Die Ausnahme und die Regel something like a transition from a more epic to a more dramatic idiom.

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1. The haste of the journey, the obstacle which motivated the use of force, the desert which represents the limit of legal authority.

Brecht's last two plays in this period Die Mutter and Die heilige Johanna may be said to project the themes of Die Ausnahme und die Regel onto a much broader - epic - scale. Die Mutter (1930-32) which extols the courage and fighting spirit of the working-classes during the Russian Revolution is concerned in portraying the class-consciousness which the coolie lacked. Die heilige Johanna (1929-30) transfers the attitude of the merchant to the broader canvas of intricate and complex economic factors. While Die Mutter represents the culmination of the didacticism[1] of the Lehrstücke, Die heilige Johanna recapitulates the more significant issues raised in the operas and the Lehrstücke[2] and stands as the most profound play Brecht wrote in this period.

Die Mutter can hardly rank as one of Brecht's most remarkable plays. In dramatizing the life of Gorki's

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1. The chorus in this play is unambiguously associated with the revolutionary workers. In the Lied vom Flicken und vom Rock, Stücke V, p.29 f., for example, the message is one which no longer encourages a particular attitude (cf. for example Lob der Illegalen Arbeit, Die Massnahme, Stücke IV, p.266 f.) but one which demands the dictatorship of the proletariate:
   "Wir brauchen nicht nur den Arbeitsplatz
   Wir brauchen die ganze Fabrik.
   Und die Kohle und das Erz und
   Die Macht im Staat."
2. Die heilige Johanna is a satirical work in so far as it aims at unmasking the hypocrisy of Capitalist society; it is a didactic play in that it is concerned to show what attitude is required to replace this system.

heroine - Pelegea Wlassowa[1] - the playwright pruned the stages which lead to her acceptance of the Communist cause in the novel, to their bare essentials.[2] Unlike the novel, the play depicts this conversion with considerable speed[3], so that the remaining two thirds of the action are devoted to the mother's revolutionary work. The vicissitudes of her life, from her flight to the country to the death of her son, are always presented in terms of the cause. There is no attempt to show internal conflict, the characters are

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1. Gorki's novel Die Mutter is based on the first Russian revolution (1905-1907). His main characters, Pawel Wlassow, and his mother Pelegea Nilowna, stand for two real people, P.A. Salomow and his mother Anna Kirillowna Salomowa, who took part in the Sormowo May demonstration.
2. Scene II (cf. Stücke V, p.10 ff.) and scene IV (op.cit., p.23 ff.) of the play in which the mother is instructed about the Communist doctrine are based on no less than seven chapters of Gorki's novel (Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10 in Part I and Chapters 1, 19 and 27 in Part II).
3. Brecht compressed most of the first part of Gorki's novel into the first 5 scenes of his play. The participation of the mother in the May demonstration (cf. Stücke V, p.41ff.) marks her full allegiance to the cause of the workers. In the novel, on the other hand, the mother's participation in this demonstration is only one step in her progression towards Communism. She is still a Christian when she calls out to the people, after her son's arrest: "Unsere Kinder ziehen durch die Welt, der Freude entgegen - sie sind gegangen für alle und um Christi Wahrheit willen" (M. Gorki, Die Mutter, Aufbau, Berlin 1956, p.186). It is only at the very end of the novel, after her son's trial, that she herself feels the strength of his belief in Communism: "Das, was ihr Sohn gesagt hatte, war ihr nicht neu, sie kannte diese Gedanken, aber sie fühlte zum erstenmal hier angesichts des Gerichts die seltsame, mitreissende Kraft seines Glaubens" (op.cit., Part II, Ch.XXVI, p.362).

exemplary and the play can best be described as a compendium of revolutionary techniques.[1] The play is pure, unambiguous propaganda and so strong is the desire to convince that Brecht contradicts the abstract teachings of the Lehrstücke about the irrelevance of the individual 'hero'. Pelegea Wlassowa may be just a member of the working-classes, but as an epitome of their courage and fighting spirit, she stands out from among her class.[2] She is, in fact, a perfect heroine who once converted never makes a mistake. In this respect Die Mutter may be linked to Der Flug der Lindberghs: both Charles Lindbergh and Pelegea Wlassowa are meant to represent a plurality in order to save them from being heroes. But their exemplary behaviour makes them heroic paradigms.

The class struggle in Die Mutter is seen almost exclusively from the side of the working-class and the authority is glimpsed only in the meanest of its representatives: a police-inspector, a jailor, a minor official and a land-lady. It is interesting that even this attempt to

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1. These range from printing pamphlets to distributing them, from educating the masses to counter-acting war propaganda.

2. This is particularly obvious when the chorus of revolutionaries rouses the sick mother from her bed and urge her to continue the fight in such a way as to suggest that the whole fate of the movement rests on her:
   "Steh auf, die Partei ist in Gefahr!
   Du bist krank, aber die Partei stirbt.
   Du bist schwach, du musst uns helfen!
   Steh auf, die Partei ist in Gefahr." (Stücke V, p.103)

represent the working-class as a political force did not satisfy Communists. The Russian dramatist Tretyakow complained that "the workers are hard to distinguish from one another; this is a general shortcoming of all Brecht's plays, which shows that he does not know the proletarian milieu intimately (this is a warning to him that he must get to know it)".[1] Schumacher has a similar complaint to make when he refers to the abstract nature of Brecht's conception of the working-class movement.[2]

Whatever justification there is for these criticisms, Die Mutter remains a solitary example of unambiguous praise of Communism. It is clear that a play of this kind could not offer much scope for further development. Its rate of conversions does, in a sense, injustice to the playwright who stressed in these years the difficulties and conflicts involved in the acceptance of communist ideology - a theme which finds its most problematic form in Die heilige Johanna.

Die heilige Johanna constitutes Brecht's most complete analysis of the economic and political implications of

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1. cf. S. Tretyakow, Bert Brecht, International Literature, Moscow, May 1937. Quoted in Esslin, op.cit., p.143.

2. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.426: "Wenn die übrigen Vertreter der kämpferischen Arbeiterschaft in Die Mutter nicht dieselbe Individualisierung erfahren haben wie die Wlassowa, wenn sie in der ersten Fassung von 1932 mehr Typen als typisch sind, so kam dies von der abstrakten Auffassung des Kollektivs, der proletarischen Bewegung und der revolutionären Partei ..."

Capitalism. While the play is a parody of Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans[1], it is more than a mere attempt to deride classical tragedy. The play proclaims the inadequacy of traditional classical idiom for the representation of modern social processes.[2] It is the realisation of the

1. It is because Brecht places his action in a sphere of values completely different from that in Schiller's play that Die heilige Johanna is a parody of Die Jungfrau von Orleans. There is, in particular, a parallel between the relationship of Johanna and Mauler, on the one hand, and Johanna and King Charles, on the other. In both plays Johanna is called upon to point out, without previous knowledge, who Mauler is and who the King is. The different attitudes in Johanna are indicated as follows. In Die heilige Johanna:
   "Mauler: Wie kennst du mich?
   Johanna: Weil du das blutigste Gesicht hast." (Stücke IV, p.37)
   In Die Jungfrau von Orleans:
   "Johanna: Ich sah dich, wo dich niemand sah als Gott." (Act I, sc. 10)
   The retention of this incident in Brecht's play points to further contrasts between the plays. In Brecht no amount of pleading from Lennox, Criddle or Graham can shake Mauler's decision to keep out of the Beef-Trust business. Only Johanna succeeds in making him change his mind. This is clearly reminiscent of King Charles' decision to abandon Orleans to the hands of the English and the Burgundians in Schiller's play. Charles pays no heed to the pleadings of the councillors of Orleans, of Dunois, La Hire and Agnes Sorrel. It is Johanna who saves the situation by intervening in the battle. The petty quarrels between the English and the Burgundians in Die Jungfrau von Orleans are recalled in those between the meat-salesmen and cattle-breeders in Die heilige Johanna.
2. This is something which Jhering felt too. "Nun werden wir uns eben daran gewöhnen müssen, dass die klassische Form des Dramas heute etwas anders ist als damals. Dass es nicht das Barock Shakespeares, nicht das idealistische Weltgefühl von Achtzehnhundert zu gestalten gilt, sondern die des nächsten Jahrzehnts oder des nächsten Halbjahrhunderts. Dieses Weltgefühl kann nicht an den sozialen Gegensätzen, an dem Endkampf der Weltsysteme vorbeigehen, der ausgefochten wird. Der "Macbeth" von heute ist der grosse Unternehmer. Seine Gegenspieler sind nicht Kronprätendenten und Söldnerheere. Es sind andere Unternehmer, andere Industrielle, andere Gruppen und die grosse Anzahl der Kopfarbeiter." Klassikertod? in Die Zwanziger Jahre, Berlin 1948, p.87 f.

kind of 'Epic drama' Brecht had in mind as early as 1926[1] and the play has something of a classical stature in the balance Brecht succeeds in imparting to the various forces involved. On the one hand, the bosses, the exploiters, on the other, the mass of the exploited and between them the spiritual power represented not by the Church but the Schwarze Strohhüte, the Salvation Army. Not that the latter is neutral: to the question of the employers as to which side of the barricade they stand, their leader, the hypocritical Snyder replies:

> Die Schwarzen Strohhüte stehen über dem Kampf
> Herr Slift: Also diesseits.[2]

The Salvation Army, with its exhortations to poverty and its attempts to pacify the workers with meagre offerings - spiritual and material - is seen to fulfil the role ascribed to religion in Marxist theory.[3] As their rivals in the struggle for the minds of the masses there stand the dedicated cadres of the Communist Party.

The attempts Brecht had made in Weizen[4] to demonstrate the workings of the corn-market find final expression in

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1. cf. Chapter II, p. 65.
2. cf. Stücke IV, p.102.
3. Bernard Shaw expressed a similar view, but less blatantly in Major Barbara, op.cit., p.471: "Price: Right! Do you think the Army'd be allowed if it went and did right? Not much. It combs our hair and makes us good little blokes to be robbed and put upon."
4. cf. Chapter III, p.109.

Die heilige Johanna. Brecht transfers his examination of stock-market manoeuvres to the Chicago Beef-trust and returns to the struggle motif not only between the Capitalists, but between the ruling- and working-classes. Pierpont Mauler, the great meat magnate, embodies the vital economic nerve of Chicago meat-market. His connections with the Wall-street stock exchange[1], together with his irresistible urge to out-do and out-wit his competitors determine a fierce struggle for survival among the meat-dealers, meat-packers and cattle-breeders. The climax to Mauler's manoeuvres consists in cornering the market[2], which eventually brings about a financial catastrophe. The situation is, however, 'saved' when Mauler - after briefing from Wall-street - suggests that all the slaughter-houses should operate as a ring with appropriate measures for prosperity: a decrease in production by cutting the number of workers, a reduction of wages and an increase in the price of meat.

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1. These connections are represented very schematically in the play through the letters Mauler receives from his friends in New York - cf. Stücke IV, pp.7, 87 and 183 - who inform him of the fluctuations in custom duties on cattle.

2. He buys up the surplus meat from the meat-packers under the pretext of enabling work to proceed in the slaughter-houses. cf. Stücke IV, p.76.
   Mauler: Ihr alle hört: Pierpont Mauler kauft!
   Dass diese Arbeit haben und entfernt sind.
   Shortly afterwards under a similar pretext he buys up the surplus cattle in the market. cf. Stücke IV, p.93.
   Slift: Um Illinois zu retten und den Untergang der Farmer und Viehzüchter abzuwenden, hat sich Pierpont Mauler entschlossen, alles Vieh aufzukaufen, das auf dem Markt steht.

It is against this background that Brecht shows the development of Communist ideas. In one sense, Johanna, a member of the Salvation Army, commits the fatal mistake of her models[1] in the Lehrstücke. Her reaction to the distress of the workers is a desire to alleviate their misery at once. Brecht, again, demonstrates the shortcomings and dangers of this attitude by making two of Johanna's appeals to Mauler coincide with his own moves to corner the market.[2] Through these appeals all Johanna succeeds in doing is to worsen the situation of those she wanted to help most. In another sense, however, Johanna is unlike her models in the Lehrstücke because she progresses towards 'truth'. Brecht demonstrates this progression through the other two meetings Johanna has with Mauler where he teaches her the ruthlessness of the Capitalist system and drives her to the Communists.[3]

In contrast to the care which Brecht devotes to expose the vices and hypocrisy of the capitalists and the Salvation Army, the workers' attempts to remedy their situation remain very much in the background. This is to Brecht's credit whatever Schumacher may say.[4] For even if the play was designed to show the prolètariate as the only force capable of overturning the system, this was not meant to be the major theme of the work. In no sense can the play be

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1. She combines the charitable emotions of the Young Comrade in Die Massnahme and the naivety of the Coolie in Die Ausnahme und die Regel.

2. Mauler faints when Johanna shows him 'the poverty of the poor' - 'Der Armen Armut' (op.cit., p.73 f.) - and immediately after he buys up the surplus meat. It is also because Johanna insists that the cattle-breeders should be helped - "Wir wollen nicht von hier weggehen, bis den Viehzüchtern auch geholfen ist" (op.cit., p.91) - that she encourages Mauler to buy up the cattle.

3. When Johanna first comes to see Mauler he does not make vague promises to her about re-opening the factories. He sends her with Slift to the slaughter-houses to show her the immorality of the workers. cf. Stücke IV, p.43.

   Mauler: Dann nimm sie mit
   Zum Schlachthof und zeig ihr
   Ihre armen Leute, wie sie schlecht sind und
   tierisch, voll Verrat und Feigheit
   Und dass sie selber schuld sind.

   After this visit Johanna is brought to the conclusion that all she has been shown is the poverty of the poor.

   Johanna: ... Nicht der Armen Schlechtigkeit
   Hast du mir gezeigt, sondern
   Der Armen Armut (op.cit., p.58).

   When she is thrown out of the Army, she comes to Mauler to ask him to help finance the rent of the Salvation Army building. It is then that Mauler, deliberately tells her that the workers are still without work. He offers her the cheque but makes quite sure that she knows what this means.

   Mauler: Nimm was du bekommst, aber wisse wofür und
   Nimm's dann! Hier ist die Bescheinigung, das ist
   Miete für vier Jahre (op.cit., p.121).

   Johanna cannot accept and declares her allegiance to the workers and departs for the slaughter-houses.

   Johanna: Wenn Sie mich künftig sehen wollen, dann
   Auf den Schlachthöfen (op.cit., p.122).

4. He in fact argues that Brecht was forced to parody the ending of Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans because he had no other means of exposing the vices of Capitalism. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.484 f.: "Aber diese Ironie als Akt formaler Blosstellung, Diskreditierung und ätzender Satire war notwendig, weil Brecht den realen Gegenspieler, der eine solche Dekuvrierung des Kapitalismus und seiner Helfer an sich dargestellt hätte, eben die kämpferische Arbeiterschaft, nicht auf konkrete Weise zu gestalten vermochte." This interpretation not only makes complete nonsense of Brecht's play, but misrepresents the ironical situation which Brecht did want to produce at the end of the play.

called propagandist or doctrinaire as Die Massnahme or Die Mutter can. Brecht does communicate his belief that only Communism can serve to replace the rottenness of Capitalism, but the themes of the work are designed to stress the difficulties involved in the realisation of this ideal. Capitalism, itself, is depicted as a force which drives its exponents onwards, despite their misgivings:

> Denn sieh, wenn
> Der viel dagegen hat und schlecht schläft, auch
> Davon abgehen wollt, das wär, als wenn eine
> Mücke davon abliesst, einen Bergrutsch aufzuhalten.
> Ich würd
> Ein Nichts im selben Augenblick und über mich weg
> ging's weiter.[1]

The proletariate remains in the background to emphasise the gulf which separates Johanna from the working-classes, to stress the difficulties involved in her final acceptance of bloody revolution. Her ultimate failure to help the workers[2] provokes her ruthless and almost hysterical condemnation of Capitalism and her former religious beliefs:

> Und auch die, welche ihnen sagen, sie könnten sich
> erheben im Geiste
> Und stecken bleiben im Schlamm, die soll man auch mit
> den Köpfen auf das
> Pflaster schlagen. Sondern

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1. cf. Stücke IV, p.119 f.
2. She fails to deliver a letter entrusted to her by the Communists. The letter urged a strong group of workers to join in a planned general strike. The failure of this strike forces the workers into accepting Mauler's plans for the re-opening of the slaughter-houses. cf. Stücke IV, p.196.

Es hilft nur Gewalt, wo Gewalt herrscht, und
Es helfen nur Menschen, wo Menschen sind.[1]

Die heilige Johanna, although it expresses the message of the earlier Lehrstücke in Johanna's final conversion to Marxism, is a work which has a tragic undertone. This is mainly due, as we shall see[2], to the care Brecht devotes to the figures of Mauler and Johanna. It is a work which is strangely impressive in the bitterly ironical conclusion Brecht gives to it. Brecht achieves this irony by parodying the ending of Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans. Like King Charles, Mauler orders flags to cover the body of Johanna when she dies. The significance of the act, however, has completely changed. It is no longer a symbol of unambiguous praise. In Brecht's play Johanna had vowed that she would never return to the Salvation Army before Mauler had been converted to Christianity:

Nicht eher will ich
Wieder anziehen diesen Rock und schwarzen Strohhut
Auch nicht zurückkehren in dieses liebe Haus
Der Gesänge und Erweckungen, vor ich
Den reichen Mauler mitbring' als einen
Von uns, bekehrt von Grund aus. [3]

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1. cf. Stücke IV, p.206. Mauler, incidentally, uses the same expression as Johanna when he expresses his fears to Slift about the poor:
   Was da in unsere blutigen Keller fällt, das
   Ist nicht mehr zu vertrösten, die
   Werden uns, wo sie uns fassen
   Auf die Pflaster schlagen
   Wie faulen Fisch (op.cit., p.82).
2. cf. the section on characterisation in this chapter, p.
3. cf. Stücke IV, p.109.

Her vow is fulfilled but against her later convictions. Johanna is brought back dying to the Salvation Army and dressed once more in her uniform whilst she curses the capitalists and the organisation to which she once belonged. Her words, however, are drowned in a flood of refutations from the cattle-breeders, reminiscent of the ending of Mahagonny. The lowering of the flags on her body is the final act of concealment, the final hushing-up of her protests: it becomes the symbol for the exploitation of her abortive crusade.

Structure.

Die Dreigroschenoper and Happy End, which have a definite story-line and are subdivided into three acts, may, on the face of it, be said to have a conventional dramatic structure.[1] But even if these operas are not

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1. As far as Die Dreigroschenoper is concerned a single event - Polly's marriage to Macheath - upsets the equilibrium of social forces and determines the enmity between Brown and Peachum initially and that between Brown and Macheath ultimately. The play is not deprived of suspense. For example, at the beginning of Act II Polly urges Macheath to flee from the town as Brown can no longer help him: "Mein Vater hat mit etwas Furchtbarem gedroht und Brown hat zu dir gehalten, aber dann ist er zusammengebrochen" (Stücke III, p.63). It is only at the very end of the act that we learn the nature of Peachum's threat.
   The structure of Happy End is determined by the love of Lilian Holiday for Bill Crackers. Lilian's intrusion into the gangsters' den in Act I is paralleled by the gangsters intrusion into the Salvation Army in Act II. Act III fluctuates between these two establishments until the dénouement occurs.

devoid of conflicts which rise to a kind of climax in the last act[1], they are no more dramatic, structurally, than is Trommeln in der Nacht.[2] Jhering hailed Die Dreigroschenoper as being the 'triumph of open form'[3] and Kerr referred to the epic quality of the work by terming it a 'Morri-ballade'.[4]

It is largely the insertion of songs and ballads into these works which produces what a critic aptly describes as the 'fragmentation of the drama'.[5] These songs by disrupting the continuity of the dramatic action destroy the illusion of a self-contained plot. In the Dreigroschenoper, for example, the Salomo-Song[6], which Jenny sings after she has given Macheath's hiding-place away, stresses a general truth about human endeavour which has only a very indirect relevance to her treachery. On one level she expresses a weary fatalism which serves as a kind of commentary on her behaviour as a prostitute. She betrays Macheath because she has no faith in anything or anybody:

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1. In Die Dreigroschenoper it takes the form of Peachum's first and last meeting with Macheath (Stücke III, p.133ff.). The climax in Happy End occurs when the mysterious 'Dame in Grau' recognises her husband among the salvationists.
2. cf. Chapter I, p.
3. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, op.cit., p.350.
4. Die Welt im Drama, op.cit., p.171.
5. Joel A. Hunt, Monatshefte (Univ. Wisconsin), Vol.XLIX, Oct. 1957, No.5, p.277.
6. Stücke III, p.115 f.

Die Sinnlichkeit hat ihn so weit gebracht -
Beneidenswert, wer frei davon! [1]

On another level her fatalism has a universal significance: she refers to figures past and present, from Salomo to the playwright himself, who fall out of the compass of the plot of the play. She is, in fact, giving voice to an attitude in Brecht himself and she steps out of her part to do so. This is equally true of Lilian Holiday in Happy End when she sings the Surrabaja-Johnny song[2] to Bill Crackers in order to restrain him from robbery. She has to drop her guise of the Salvation Army girl to adopt the part of the fallen woman which she never is in the play. The song is in complete contrast to her primness, propriety and morality as a Salvation Army girl.

Du sagtest viel, Johnny,
Kein Wort war wahr, Johnny,
Du hast mich betrogen, Johnny, in der ersten Stund'.[3]

In general the songs in Die Dreigroschenoper fall into two categories: those that have some connection with the

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1. Stücke III, p.116.
2. This song is modelled on Kipling's poem Mary, Pity Women. cf. Rudyard Kipling's verse, Inclusive edition 1885-1926, London 1927, p.447 ff.
   "I 'ate you, grinnin' there ...
   Ah, Gawd, I love you so!"
   cf. Happy End, Bühnenfassung, p.26:
   "Wie du dastehst und grinst, Johnny ...
   Du hast kein Herz, Johnny, und ich liebe dich so."
3. Ibid., p.26.

action of the play[1], those that have none at all.[2] Whereas, for instance, the Kanonen-song[3] helps to explain the friendship between Macheath and Brown in terms of their common experiences, the Seeräuber-Jenny song[4], which Polly sings on the day of her wedding, has in it no relevance at all to this event. Despite these differences, however, the function of all the songs is the same: they not only have a unity of their own in the cynicism which they all express, they establish a kind of lyrical lens through which the dramatic action has to be viewed. It is in this sense that the structure of the opera is stereoscopic.[5] Instead of shaping or encompassing the action of the play - (it would, in fact, be quite impossible to reconstruct the plot of the opera on the basis of the songs) - the songs impart to it an epic quality by offering general and detached comments on life.

Through their songs Die Dreigroschenoper and Happy End

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1. These include Morgenchoral des Peachums, III, p.10. Anstatt-Dass-Song, III, p.22, Eifersuchtsduett, III, p.89.
2. These include the Ballade vom angenehmen Leben, III, p.84 which is derived from Villon Le Contrediz de Franc Gontier, Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Strebens, III, p.111, Ballade in der Macheath Jedermann Abbitte leistet, III, p.136 which is inspired by Villon's L'épitaphe en forme de ballade de mercy.
3. Stücke III, p.43 f.
4. Stücke III, p.38.
5. Andrzej Wirth commented at length on what he calls the 'stereometric' structure of Brecht's work. cf. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, Berlin 1957, p.346ff. "Das Problem des Autorenkommentars ist der Schlüssel zum Verständnis der 'stereometrischen' Struktur der Brechtsche Stücke", p.348.

present their actions in terms of a number of episodes which are clearly separated from one another. In the case of Mahagonny, which dispenses almost entirely with a plot, the structure of the play itself has become episodic. The technique here is a succession of fleeting pictures[1] - rather as if a film-reel had been cut up and patched again with pieces missing - which illustrate various stages in the development of the city. A kind of balance is achieved between the hurricane which threatens the city shortly after its foundation[2] and the total anarchy which develops in the town at the end of the play.[3] The one is meant to illustrate and comment on the other: human brutality and violence transcend natural catastrophes.[4] After the threat of the hurricane the play acquires a demonstrative character. The

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1. The action, in fact, covers a number of years as the titles to the various sequences indicate. cf., for example, the heading to the fourth sequence, Stücke III, p.177: "In den nächsten Jahren zogen die Unzufriedenen aller Kontinente der Goldstadt Mahagonny entgegen."

2. Stücke III, p.201 f. Sequence 10: "Ein Hurrikan in Bewegung auf Mahagonny."

3. Stücke III, p.254 ff. Sequence 20: "Und in zunehmender Verwirrung, Teuerung und Feindschaft aller gegen alle demonstrierten in den letzten Wochen der Netzestadt die noch nicht Erledigten für ihre Ideale - unbelehrt."

4. Stücke III, p.205: "Schlimm ist der Hurrikan
Schlimmer ist der Taifun
Doch am schlimmsten ist der Mensch."
This recalls the way in which catastrophes in Chicago are compared to a hurricane in Weizen; cf. Chapter III, p.118.

inhabitants of Mahagonny sing a recurring injunction to anarchy:

> Erstens, vergesst nicht, kommt das Fressen
> Zweitens kommt der Liebesakt.
> Drittens das Boxen nicht vergessen
> Viertens Saufen laut Kontrakt.
> Vor allem aber achtet scharf,
> Dass man hier alles dürfen darf.[1]

Each separate point of this injunction is exemplified until the play ends in complete chaos.

The episodic structure of Mahagonny is calculated to minimize dramatic coherence. Hurricane and social confusion are not true dramatic climaxes but they are used in a repetitive way to highlight Paul Ackermann's discontent and anarchy. Although the subject-matter of Die Mutter is totally different from Mahagonny, its structure is not unlike that of the opera. Here, too, there is a succession of episodic scenes where conspiracy and agitation lead to mass demonstrations - a process which is repeated twice in the play. The conversion of Pelegea Wlassowa 'culminates' in her participation in the first May-day demonstration[2]; her subsequent efforts to spread the doctrine among the working-classes, to gain adherents to her cause is a phase which 'culminates' in the triumphant demonstration of working-class

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1. Stücke III, p.212.

2. Stücke V, p.41 ff.

solidarity at the end of the play.[1] Both May-day demonstrations are used to emphasise Pelegea Wlassowa's devotion to Communism, her untiring energy and identification with the working-class movement.

The structure of Die Mutter, however, is affected by the chorus which has a function in this play very different from that in Mahagonny. In the opera the chorus is made up of the inhabitants of Mahagonny - the term is not used to describe a group of people who stand outside the events of the play - who occasionally[2] sing together. The function of the chorus in Die Mutter, on the other hand, derives from the early Lehrstücke.

In Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, Der Ja-sager, Der Nein-sager, Die Massnahme and Die Mutter the various choruses are part of the structure of these plays and establish a didactic framework through which various events are to be judged. It has, in fact, been suggested that there is a connection between the function of the songs in the operas and the choruses in the Lehrstücke.[3] Up to a point

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1. Stücke V, p.115 f.
2. Stücke III, p.200 f.
3. cf. Jens, Statt einer Literaturgeschichte, op.cit., p.180: "Statt dass sich die Handlungsteilnehmer als Individuum vorstellten ... stellte sich der Dichter nur selbst dar: der Song war Chor-ersatz, nicht wie später, parodistisches Handlungselement."

this is true. In all these plays events are either represented or reconstructed at one remove so that there is no inevitable chronological succession. Even in the Flug der Lindberghs, where the chorus is used to present the part of Lindbergh, its function is somewhat different from that in the following didactic plays: the flight across the ocean is clearly presented as a repetition of the actual flight.

> Radio: Das Gemeinwesen bittet euch: wiederholt
> Den Ozeanflug des Kapitän Lindbergh
> Durch das gemeinsame
> Absingen der Noten
> Und das Ablesen des Textes.[1]

The flight is furthermore interrupted in mid-ocean, so to speak, after Lindbergh has surmounted a number of obstacles - the fog, a snow-storm and sleep - for the purpose of the ideology of the play: Der Kampf gegen das Primitive.[2] Lindbergh then resumes his struggle - he faces the danger of falling into the ocean, fears that his engine may fail - and after his arrival in Paris the play ends with a further ideological note: Das Bericht über das Unerreichbare.[3]

Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis is really devoid of action altogether. The crash of the airmen and their 'death' - between which there is, in any case, very

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1. Versuche 1 - 4, op.cit., p.7.
2. Ibid., p.13 ff.
3. Ibid., p.21 f.

little connection - are separated from one another by a series of Untersuchungen.[1] In the analysis of man's inhumanity to man the points are made by argument[2], by projecting photographs[3] and by using the technique of the play within the play.[4] A grotesque kind of puppet-play is used to demonstrate the self-seeking nature of capitalism where one power undermines the other.[5] After the demonstration and 'proofs' of man's inhumanity to man, there is a kind of reversal of technique in the structure of the play. The necessity of 'death' for the pilots is seen not in terms of a demonstration but of an acceptance of the right attitude. Die Verlesung der Kommentartexte[6] is the ideological basis on which the pilots must accept death and they are then trained to consent. The chorus, whose task it is to demonstrate as well as train, intervenes in the course of the play to show the operation of judgment in slow motion. It underlines the unreal and purely didactic nature of the play.

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1. Stücke III, p.283 ff.
2. Stücke III, p.283 f.
3. Stücke III, p.284 f.
4. Stücke III, p.285 ff.
5. The two sycophants Einser and Zweier dismantle progressively the giant Smith.
6. Stücke III, p.299 ff.

The chorus in Die Massnahme has an equally important function in the structure of this play. Here, however, the technique of the play within the play is used more fully: the trial of the agitators by the chorus provides one level of the play, the fate of the young comrade the other. This fate is a re-enactment of past events - the reader or audience experiences the 'real' events at third hand - and they are objectified through the three agitators who take it in turn to play the part of the young comrade. On four separate occasions[1] he endangers the work of the revolutionary movement and his actions are demonstrated to the chorus which then examines his mistakes at each crucial point and tests the correctness of his choice.

It is clear that in a play like Die Massnahme the chorus, like the songs in the operas, breaks up the 'dramatic' action and allows for the insertion of commentaries by the author himself. But Brecht communicates something quite different from the cynicism of Die Dreigroschenoper in the Lehrstücke. The unambiguous ideology which is expressed through the chorus cannot be regarded as the work of an artist, but as

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1. e.g. when he tries to help the coolies (III, p.268 ff.), when he distributes pamphlets for a strike (III, p.276 ff.), when he revolts about the cruelty of the merchant from whom he is to make sure that he gets arms for the coolies (III, p.284 ff.), and when he wants to start the revolution too soon (III, p.291 ff.).

that of a marxist. It has been suggested that Brecht's use of the chorus is related to ancient classical tradition and to the function which Schiller attributed to it.[1] The latter saw in the chorus a means of tempering emotional participation in drama and achieving a certain disengagement on the part of the audience:

> Dadurch, dass der Chor die Teile auseinanderhält und zwischen die Passionen mit seiner beruhigenden Betrachtung tritt, gibt er uns unsere Freiheit zurück, die im Sturm der Affekte verloren gehen würde.[2]

While Brecht may be said to conform to Schiller's notion in that his choruses do prohibit affective involvement, the destruction of illusions which Brecht achieves is so radical that it seems barely related to what Schiller had in mind. Furthermore, in no sense do Brecht's choruses in the Lehrstücke impart freedom either to the audience or to those who come up against them within the plays. This is particularly true of Die Mutter, where the chorus communicates nothing more than propaganda, not only to Pelegea Wlassowa but to

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1. cf. A. Wirth, Sinn und Form, op.cit., p.347: "Mit seiner Auffassung vom Chor knüpft er (i.e. Brecht) an die Schillerschen Tradition an, wenn er empfiehlt, den Zuschauer aus dem Zustand der Kontemplation und der 'freien' Assoziationen zu reissen." cf. also Schumacher, op.cit., p.421 ff.

2. Schiller, Werke V (ed. Bellermann), Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie, p.350 f.

the audience at large.[1] As far as this play is concerned Brecht even advocated the placing of choruses in the theatre itself which would help the audience to become class-conscious.[2] This direct and unambiguous function of the choruses to instruct is quite different from that of the songs in the operas.

Although Die heilige Johanna has, like most of the plays, in this period an episodic character in its contrasting and often rapid changes of scene[3], its structure differs from that of the operas, the early Lehrstücke and Die Mutter because it tends to contain songs and choruses within the action - not to project them at the audience. This is also true of Die Ausnahme und die Regel which has none of the

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1. The chorus serves to link the opening scenes in Die Mutter. At the end of the first sequence (V, p.8 ff.) the chorus formulates the mother's desperate search for a means of mitigating her poverty. The Lied vom Ausweg (V, p.14) in the following sequence offers her as the only solution the path of revolution. In the third sequence the chorus sings the Lied vom Flicken und Rock (V, p.29 ff.), which stresses that this solution allows no compromise. After the first May-day demonstration the chorus and other songs are directed more particularly to the audience (as, for example, in Das Lob des Lernens, V, p.57 f.).

2. cf. Anmerkungen zur Mutter, Stücke V, p.134: "Um das 'Versinken' des Zuschauers, das 'freie' Assozieren zu bekämpfen, können im Zuschauerraum kleine Chöre plaziert werden, welche ihm die richtige Haltung vormachen ... Solche Chöre richten einen Appell an den Praktiker im Zuschauer."

3. The second sequence of the play, for example (Stücke IV, p.10 ff.), moves from Lennox's factory, to a street, to the Salvation Army and back to the factory.

audience-directed interruptions characteristic of the earlier didactic plays. Like Die Massnahme it does show a succession of events and the judgments which are based on them, but in Die Ausnahme und die Regel the two are consecutive and not parallel. This means that the trial of the merchant in the second part of the play is the culmination of the journey he undertook in the first part of the play. In this sense the structure of the play is more truly dramatic than the earlier plays. Tension is not only created during the journey through the mounting fears of the merchant, suspense is also created in the court-room during the subsequent trial. The structure of the play marks a turning away from the austerity of the pure Lehrstücke and a return to a more lively and problematic form. It is true that at the beginning and the end of the play the actors, in chorus, exhort the audience to become aware of the oddity of the capitalist system and to cease to take it for granted[1], but these exhortations are only a framework, not an intrinsic part of the play.

The return to a more traditionally dramatic form which emerges in Die Ausnahme und die Regel is exploited to the full

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1. Stücke V, p.187:
"Betrachtet mit Misstrauen! Untersucht ob es nötig ist
Auch das Übliche!..."
and p.229: "Was die Regel ist, das erkennt als Missbrauch
Und wo ihr den Missbrauch erkannt habt
Da schafft Abhilfe."

in Die heilige Johanna. It is, in fact, possible to see that the structure of the work is based on five parts which are not unlike the five acts of a conventional tragedy. The first two sequences of the play[1] may legitimately be regarded as an exposition to the work as a whole. Mauler's decision to leave the Beef-trust, the effect which this has on the workers and the attempts of the Salvation Army to re-introduce God into the world are preliminaries to the action of the play. The following six sequences[2] are dominated by the four meetings between Mauler and Johanna and the complications which derive from them. These lead to a kind of climax in the ninth sequence[3] where Brecht succeeds in dramatizing the inter-dependence of capitalism and communism. In three[4] of the ten scenes which make up this sequence Mauler and Slift force up the cattle price:

> Mauler: ... Aber
> Jetzt wird's euch reuen: jetzt her mit den Konserven
> Die ich gekauft habe.[5]

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1. Stücke IV, p.7 ff. and p.10 ff.
2. These take place in the stock-market (sequence 3, p.28 ff., sequence 5, p.59 ff.), before the slaughter-houses (sequence 4, p.45 ff.), in Slift's house (sequence 6, p.81 ff.), in the Salvation Army (sequence 7, p.94 ff.) and in Mauler's office (sequence 8, p.111 ff.).
3. The rapid changes in this sequence reflect the growing tension between Mauler and his associates on the one hand, and Mauler and Johanna, on the other.
4. Stücke IV, p.125 ff., 132 ff., 140 ff.
5. Stücke IV, p.141.

In three scenes[1], which separate the steps in Mauler's manipulation of the market, Johanna offers her help to the communists and denounces the system of exploitation:

> Johanna: 's ist ein Schaukelbrett, dieses ganze System
> Ist eine Schaukel mit zwei Enden, die voneinander
> Abhängen, und die oben
> Sitzen oben nur, weil jene unten sitzen...
> Auch müssen's unten mehr als oben sein
> Sonst hält die Schaukel nicht. 's ist nämlich eine Schaukel.[2]

In the extreme situations into which both Mauler and Johanna have been forced a retarding moment is introduced when Mauler loses his nerve[3] and leaves Slift to finish the cattle auction. At the same time Mauler's weakness weakens Johanna: she cannot make up her mind to deliver the letter entrusted to her.[4] In the last scenes of this sequence[5] both Mauler and Johanna come to grief: Mauler is ruined because Slift over-plays his hand, Johanna is ruined because she recognises her guilt:

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1. Stücke IV, pp.128 ff., 135 ff., 147 ff.
2. Stücke IV, p.150.
3. Stücke IV, p.144: "Slift, ich hab keinen Spass mehr an dem Geschäft. Es könnt zu weit führen."
4. Stücke IV, p.158: "Ich will weggehen. Es kann nicht gut sein, was mit Gewalt gemacht wird. Ich gehör nicht zu ihnen."
5. Stücke IV, pp.161 ff., 164 ff., 166 ff.

Johanna: O Wahrheit, helles Licht! Verfinstert durch
einen Schnee-Sturm zur Unzeit
Nicht mehr gesehen werdend fürderhin! Oh von
welcher Gewalt sind Schneestürme!
O Schwäche des Körpers! Was lässest du leben
Hunger?
Was überdauert dich, Nachtfrost?
Ich muss umkehren![1]

The last four sequences of the play[2] bring about the dénouement which as far as Mauler is concerned consists in rescuing the system of exploitation and which provokes in the case of Johanna the final catastrophe. It is not so much her death which is tragic, but her awareness that she has failed, that she herself has been exploited:

Wie gerufen kam ich den Unterdrückten !
Oh, folgenlose Güte! Unmerkliche Gesinnung!
Ich habe nichts geändert.[3]

Characterisation.

Psychological motivation was never of any interest to Brecht and this was never to be more evident than in the plays of this period. Despite their variety as far as their themes and language are concerned, they display a fairly limited range of central characters. It is, in fact, misleading to talk even of characters, for the social and political issues of these plays make the playwright use types

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1. Stücke IV, p.168.
2. Stücke IV, pp.169 ff., 192 ff., 197, 197 ff.
3. Stücke IV, p.202.

rather than individualised figures to communicate his message.

Commenting on the origins of Happy End Schumacher ascribes great importance to the influence of the detective novel on Brecht.[1] This influence is not limited to the obvious similarity between the figure of the gangster in Brecht's work and the criminal in the detective story. Brecht's interest in this type of literature is connected with his vision of human beings in terms of their behaviour, rather than their character. In an unpublished essay - Über die Popularität des Kriminalromans - Brecht went into some detail about methods of characterisation in the detective story:

> Entscheidend ist, dass nicht die Handlungen aus den Charakteren, sondern die Charaktere aus den Handlungen entwickelt werden. Man sieht die Leute agieren in Bruchstücken. Ihre Motive sind im Dunklen und müssen logisch erschlossen werden. Als ausschlaggebend für ihre Handlungen werden ihre Interessen angenommen und zwar beinahe ausschliesslich ihre materiellen Interessen. [2]

In this analysis Brecht is arguing from the point of view of a narrator rather than a dramatist. There is here an implied rejection of the dramatic technique by which events that lead

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1. cf. Schumacher, op.cit., p.256: "In Wirklichkeit kam das Stück auf Grund der Lektüre von zahlreichen Detektivgeschichten und Kriminalromanen aus dem englisch-amerikanischen Sprachbereich, des Betrachtens von Hollywoodfilmen und auf Grund des Studiums des Wirkens und Treibens der Heilsarmee, vor allem in Berlin, zustande."
2. AN. 208/22.

to a hero's downfall are ultimately dependent on his character.[1] Brecht views 'character' from a completely different angle - namely one from which a story unfolds itself. In detective novels the very lack of clarity as to what a character is really like is a function of the epic quality of these works. It is because their figures are developed from without - that is in terms of their behaviour in different circumstances - that Brecht was fascinated by detective novels.

The relevance of Brecht's view of characterisation in the detective novel with regard to his own work is twofold. On the one hand the motives of many of his characters are seen purely in terms of 'material interests'.[2] This is certainly true of the businessman, a type who belongs to one of the three categories into which the central figures of the operas and Lehrstücke may be said to fall. (The figures of the outlaw and the representatives of the working-class, which represent the other two categories, do not always act on self-interest - as we shall see.) On the other hand, all Brecht's figures in these plays reveal themselves in

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1. As for example in Wallenstein or König Ottokars Glück und Ende.
2. This is characteristic of many of Brecht's later figures like Mother Courage, Galileo and Shen Te in the guise of Shui Ta, although in these figures these motives are never pure.

terms of the pressures which are brought to bear on them. They are part of a story rather than characters who introspect about themselves. It is true that a figure like Mauler does dominate the action of Die heilige Johanna, but he does so in his function as a businessman, not because of his strength or weakness of character.

The outlaw, the businessman and the representatives of the working classes are not evenly distributed in the plays of this period. While the first two types appear in different guises in both operas and Lehrstücke, the latter do not properly figure in the operas at all,[1] but only in the Lehrstücke. Even there, however, it is not always easy to find true representatives of this class. The agitators in Die Massnahme may appear on the side of the workers, but they are a class distinct from the workers as the Communist Party elite would be. In Die heilige Johanna no single worker rises to the importance which Mauler and Johanna have in the play. Only the coolie in Die Ausnahme und die Regel and Pelegea Wlassowa in Die Mutter can be reckoned as central figures representing the working-class.

In the plays of this period the outlaw has changed almost beyond recognition in comparison to the early plays.

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1. Paul Ackermann in Mahagonny could be taken as a working-class product in his employment as a wood-cutter in Alaska, but this background is not really relevant to the play.

Whereas Baal stood literally outside society this is no longer true of the rebels in the operas whose relationship to society is ambiguous. Figures like Macheath and Bill Crackers are outlaws as far as their mode of livelihood is concerned - they are gangsters; they enjoy, however, the benefits of social existence. While Macheath has the protection of the Metropolitan Police Force, Bill Crackers finds solace in the Salvation Army without having to give up his illegal calling. Brecht's Macheath lacks none of the brashness, determination and humour of his model in Gay's opera. It is, perhaps, because Brecht does stay close to his model in this respect that Macheath in his unswerving adherence to minor social convention is a far more entertaining character than Bill Crackers. The latter owes something to Galy Gay for he, too, has 'ein weiches Gemüt'[1] - a pliable kind of disposition - but it rings false. The bells of the Salvation Army have the power to prompt him to leave his fortune to the organisation![2]

In Mahagonny Paul, the wood-cutter from Alaska, has some affinity with Baal in his restlessness and demands for the

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1. Happy End, Bühnenfassung, p.44.
2. Ibid., p.44: "Was bedeuten denn diese Glocken? Hallo, das ist nichts für uns! Alle Männer sollen vortreten und sich das verbitten. Feige Bande! Ich kann das nicht aushalten! Ich kann nichts dafür! Die Leute sollen aufhören! Was wollen Sie haben, dass Sie aufhören? Sie können mein ganzes Geld haben!"

immediate satisfaction of his impulses.[1] His anarchy, however, lacks the vitality and poignancy of Baal's because it is, in a sense, dissociated from the character himself and projected into a grotesque kind of society. In the operas the outlaw has become a type who is portrayed in a social framework in order to expose the vices of society. The minor gangsters in the Dreigroschenoper and Happy End build up this framework and they display with little or no individual differentiation the vulgarity and brutality commonly associated with this type. The founders of the city of Mahagonny are also reduced to caricatures in their exaggerated exploitation of human pleasures. It would be hard to differentiate between Leokadja Begbick, Dreieinigkeitsmoses and Willy der Prokurist: they all typify self-interest in the crudest manner by candidly asserting their motives.[2] If there is one outlaw in the operas who stands out from among the rest it is Macheath. Beyond the dubiousness of his mode of existence, he expresses in his songs a philosophy of life which not only justifies but glorifies such existence.

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1. Stücke III, p.201: "Ach mit eurem ganzen Mahagonny
Wird nie ein Mensch glücklich werden
Weil zu viel Ruhe herrscht
Und zuviel Eintracht
Und weil's zu viel gibt
Woran man sich halten kann."

2. Stücke III, p.171: "Ihr bekommt leichter das Gold von Männern als von Flüssen!"; cf. also p.180: "Wünschen Sie zuerst sich mit frischen Mädchen zu versorgen?"

This philosophy which defends material values in completely unambiguous terms represents an attitude in the playwright himself which regards the satisfaction of basic vital needs as the primary function of life. "Nur wer im Wohlstand lebt, lebt angenehm"[1], "Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral"[2] are utterances which might be put into the mouth of Baal. They also formulate the basis for a pattern of behaviour where in the last instance the physical considerations of life transcend the spiritual ones. Macheath's philosophy has some relevance to Johanna's development, as we shall see.

In the Lehrstücke the outlaw figure is again quite different from that in the operas. Macheath is an outlaw in the sense that he is a law-breaker, but he accepts the social order which promulgates these very laws. In the Lehrstücke, however, the outlaws are at times like the agitators in Die Massnahme who reject the social order which Macheath accepts. The same is, of course, true of Johanna. But at a deeper level in Die Massnahme the young comrade is also an outlaw, and recognises himself as such, not only because he is working for the overthrow of a whole social system, but also because he cannot conform to the discipline

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1. Stücke III, p.85.
2. Stücke III, p.99.

of the Party.[1] He has, in this respect, something in common with the pilot Charles Nungesser in the Badener Lehrstück who is an outlaw because he refuses to accept the ruling of the chorus. Finally, in a still weaker way, Johanna is a kind of outlaw both because she rebels against the accepted social order of Mauler[2], but most importantly because she does not - and cannot - conform or belong to any class in the struggle between exploiter and exploited.[3]

The early Lehrstücke with their insistence on correct behaviour reduce the figures they use to the personification of human attitudes which Brecht wishes to criticise or commend. As in Mahagonny and Happy End, characterisation is seen in terms of schematic types who have no particular

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1. Stücke IV, p.298: "Alles das gilt nicht mehr; im Anblick des Kampfes verwerfe ich alles, was gestern noch galt, Kündige alles Einverständnis mit allen, tue das allein Menschliche. Hier ist eine Aktion. Ich stelle mich an ihre Spitze. Mein Herz schlägt für die Revolution.

2. Stücke IV, p.204: "... denn ohnegleichen ist
Das System, das sie gemacht haben:
Ausbeutung und Unordnung, tierisch
und also
Unverständlich."

3. Stücke IV, p.110: "Arme Unwissende!
Was du nicht siehst: aufgebaut
In riesigen Kadern stehn sich gegenüber
Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer
Kämpfende Fronten: unversöhnlich.
Laufe herum zwischen ihnen, Versöhnerin
und Vermittlerin
Nütze keiner und gehe zugrund."

idiosyncracies.[1] In Brecht's critique of human feelings in the early Lehrstücke there is an implied recognition of their relevance to human action. It is, perhaps, this recognition which enabled him to create in Johanna one of his finest and most genuine figures. Her feelings of compassion for the workers are a measure of her absolute integrity and naivety which drive her to the communists and finally kill her with remorse, when she finds that she has betrayed their trust. Through them she acquires tragic stature because there is a sense of waste in her failure to achieve something for the workers. Her feelings only fail her as far as her difficulties go in accepting communism. But they lead her in her determination to seek out Mauler, to thrust before his eyes not the immorality of the poor - which he had told Slift to show her - but their misery and dejection.[2] When she finds that her efforts to help have remained fruitless, she has the courage of her convictions and departs to the slaughter-houses to offer her help to the Communists.[3] When, however, she has spent three nights and

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1. Whereas the pilots in Das Badener Lehrstück and the agitators in Die Massnahme act in accordance with Brecht's sociological laws, the alleged 'individuals' like the young comrade and Charles Nungesser are simply representatives of an emotional and rebellious attitude.

2. Stücke IV, p.75.

3. Stücke IV, p.122: "Wenn Sie mich künftig sehen wollen, dann Auf den Schlachthöfen."

days in the slaughter-houses without food and warmth, she begins to show the same signs of wretchedness and immorality which characterise the workers.[1] In the bleak hardships of reality she loses her heroic stature to become human and all too human. Hunger and the cold of winter and snow make her give up her struggle for the poor. Her instinctive dislike of violence together with her hankering after the warmth and security of her lost job make her realise that she is not part and never will be part of the working-class which she valiantly tried to support.[2] Like Galileo, human weakness overcomes Johanna in the moment of decision. She fails to hand over to some workers a letter which urged them to strike.

Es war zu kalt.[3]

In this moment of weakness we cannot withhold our sympathy from Johanna. She reacts as do Baal, Kragler and Galy Gay and reveals a kind of tenacious claim to existence for existence's sake. Her physical protests, her recoil before the cold, have precedence over her mental and emotional life. Johanna is the first of Brecht's characters who raises a

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1. Stücke IV, p.152: "... Wer hat jetzt den Schal an sich gebracht? Sofort hergeben. (Sie reisst der neben ihr stehenden Frau den Sack vom Kopfe. Diese wehrt sich.) Na, Sie sind's doch. Lügen Sie nur nicht, und jetzt geben Sie den Sack her."
2. Stücke IV, p.158: "Hätten mich als Kind der Tritt des Elends und der Hunger Gewalt gelehrt, würde ich zu ihnen gehören und nichts fragen."
3. Stücke IV, p.160.

fundamental problem with regard to the playwright's work as a whole. His message that the world should be changed and that man alone can effect this change - a message which few of us would tackle with Johanna's disinterest and courage - collides into man's inadequacy and frailty. The idealism of his higher aims falters in the face of man's fundamental materialism.

The figure of the big businessman is represented by Peachum in the Dreigroschenoper, the Merchant in Die Ausnahme und die Regel and Mauler in Die heilige Johanna. Here again there is growing complexity in the characterisation of this figure. Peachum is portrayed as a cynic who, nevertheless, has an almost fanatical sense of property. His refusal to let Polly part from him stems from his reluctance to be robbed of anything, least of all the sentiments he has for her. It is doubtful whether Polly is, in fact, indispensable to the running of his business as Peachum argues to his wife.[1] She is indispensable to him simply because she is his daughter: i.e. she belongs to him. As Brecht points out in the notes to the Dreigroschenoper Peachum looks on Polly as he looks on the bible:

> Nichts als eine Hilfsquelle.[2]

and the bible is chained to his desk for fear it may be stolen.

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1. Stücke III, p.19.
2. Stücke III, p.146.

While Peachum displays in his exploitation of the beggars the same ruthlessness which characterises both the merchant and Mauler, his business is not a means of demonstrating the cunning and shrewdness of the businessman. The nature of Peachum's business, the organisation of fake beggars into a concern which exploits sentiments commercially, - a motive which, incidentally, Brecht did not find in his model but seems to have borrowed from U. Sinclair's The Jungle[1] - is a comment on his own emotional life. His cynical remarks which reveal that the heart of mankind is as cold as stone[2] and that its capacity to feel sympathy is inversely proportional to genuine misfortune[3] reflect in an ironical way Brecht's own views about feelings. Peachum can even be caught voicing with flagrant irony Brecht's aversion to emotional involvement in artistic creation as the only way in which human beings can be moved.

Nur Künstler erschüttern noch das Herz.[4]

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1. The Jungle, 73 Impression, 1955, p.273: "Many of these professional mendicants had comfortable homes and families and thousands of dollars in the bank; some of them had retired upon their earnings, and gone into the business of fitting out and doctoring others, or working children at the trade."
2. Stücke III, p.53.
3. Stücke III, p.16 and p.17.
4. Stücke III, p.54.

The Merchant in Die Ausnahme und die Regel demonstrates the cunning and hypocrisy which Brecht associates with the capitalist. The merchant is, for example, prepared to waive social distinction, which he otherwise believes to be the natural law, in the interest of his aims. These are purely selfish and the guide recognises the true reason for the merchant's haste.

> Ich höre, dass das Öl, wenn es entdeckt ist, versteckt wird. Der das Loch zustopft, aus dem das Öl kommt, erhält Schweigegeld. Darum beeilt sich der Kaufmann so.[1]

For the sake of financial gain the merchant ruthlessly denies the principle of progress which he professes to serve, when he coaxes the coolie to speed up his pace.

> Wenn das Öl aus dem Boden heraus ist, wird es hier Eisenbahnen geben und Wohlstand sich ausbreiten. Es wird Brot und Kleider geben und Gott weiss was.[2]

The merchant is more than a mere caricature of the capitalist because there is something genuinely human in his growing suspicion and fear of the coolie as the journey proceeds. Because of the exploitation to which he submits the coolie he does not credit him with good will, honesty or integrity and he expects revolt. In his view only the power of the police can restrain the forces of revolt but in the desert he cannot rely on this protection. Without the power of

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1. Stücke V, p.194.
2. Stücke V, p.203.

authority the merchant becomes pitiable and almost human in his fight to save his life. So real are his fears that they cause the failure of his journey and his competitors win the race.

Mauler shares with the merchant the cunning which enables him to ruin his associates. But whereas the merchant's cunning is dictated to him by the force of circumstances, Mauler's springs from his very nature. His success in business, although it appears to be in part the consequence of an excellent intelligence system, is fundamentally a matter of instinct. Graham says of him:

> und so
> Unbändig ist sein Geldsinn, so natürlich
> Ihm diese Unnatur, dass auch er selber
> Nicht diesen Trieb in sich verleugnen könnt. [1]

Mauler's business-instinct, however, does not prevent him from being free from the fears which assail the merchant. He is aware of the dangers of the system. His words are brutal as well as prophetic:

> Was da in unseren blutigen Keller fällt, das
> Ist nicht mehr zu vertrösten, die
> Werden uns, wo sie uns fassen
> Auf die Pflaster schlagen

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1. Stücke IV, p.28.

Wie faulen Fisch.[1]

Brecht, however, is anxious to show that there is a duality about Mauler. Before he meets Johanna his attacks of remorse are purely hypocritical and are designed to hide his further business moves. Even so he is known to his associates as soft-hearted:

> Denn wiss: er selbst ist weich und liebt das Geld nicht
> Und kann nicht Elend sehen und schläft nicht nachts.[2]

Mauler's duality is brought out through his meetings with Johanna. He certainly fears the revolt of the working-classes[3], but he cannot help being moved by Johanna. He looks with awe upon her and admires her because she represents his better self. He hopes and is relieved that she cannot be bribed by money. His lack of wordy sentimentality about her is, perhaps, the best proof of his concern:

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1. Stücke IV, p.82. Like the characters in Mahagonny Mauler endorses a social system where money is a means of attaining happiness:
   "... Geld aber ein Mittel, einiges zu verbessern und sei's
   Für einige nur ..." (IV, p.119)
   Like Begbick and Paul, he damns the system by tenaciously supporting it:
   "... Denn nur durch
   Äusserste Massnahmen, die hart erscheinen könnten
   Weil sie einige treffen, ziemlich viele sogar
   Kurz: die meisten, beinah alle
   Kann jetzt gerettet werden dies System
   Von Kauf und Verkauf ..." (IV, p.186).
2. Stücke IV, p.28.
3. Stücke IV, p.84: "Was ich fürcht, ist anders als Gott ...
   ... Nicht das was über, das
   Was unter mir!"

Also heute nacht
Steh auf, Mauler, zu jeder Stunde und
Sieh durchs Fenster, ob es schneit, und wenn es schneit, dann
Schneit's auf sie, welche du kennst.[1]

Mauler's associates are fully aware of his misgivings about the beef-trust. They have, in fact, a recognised remedy for his scruples - his 'alte Schwäche'.[2] A raw beef-steak has the power to revive the animal - commercial - ruthlessness in Mauler. In the end his business instinct prevails but his amphibious nature persists:

Ach! in meine arme Brust
Ist ein Zwiefaches gestossen
Wie ein Messer bis zum Heft.
Denn es zieht mich zu dem Grossen
Selbst- und Nutz- und Vorteilslosen
Und es zieht mich zum Geschäft
Unbewusst! [3]

Mauler is a sort of commercial Faust who is torn between these two opposing forces. He has his Mephistopheles in the figure of Slift - a caricature of the ruthless businessman - and his Gretchen in the figure of Johanna. Like Peachum and Puntila he is in a false position: he benefits - materially - from the ruthlessness of the system, but he also wants the luxury of sentiment.

The two more important representatives of the working-class in these plays, the coolie and Pelegea Wlassowa, are

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1. Stücke IV, p.122.
2. Stücke IV, p.83.
3. Stücke IV, p.210.

very different from one another. This is mainly because the former is not class-conscious whereas the latter is. Their respective characters are so coloured by this distinction that the one is the exact opposite of the other. The coolie does have the naive outlook of the working-class: pride in his physical strength and endurance, the simple joy in the modest reward to come. But his passivity is so pronounced that he does not really come to life as a character. (Brecht exaggerated this passivity in order to drive home his point more forcibly with the audience.) Where he does show initiative it is in the interests of the merchant. He thinks, for example, of obliterating their tracks in the desert so that bandits cannot trace them.[1] He is submissive and capable of superhuman tolerance and has all the makings of a martyr. Far from cursing the merchant who is responsible for his broken arm, he is distressed by his inability to perform his duties properly.[2]

In contrast to the coolie, Pelegea Wlassowa is neither naive nor passive. She has untiring energy in her fight for the cause and her desire to learn how to read and educate herself - as well as others.[3] Although Brecht tends to make her a paragon, she is endowed with the shrewdness and cunning

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1. Stücke V, p.201 f.
2. Stücke V, p.208: "Hoffentlich merkt er nichts. Ich kann so schlecht Gras schneiden mit dem einen Arm."
3. Stücke V, p.53 ff.

characteristic of Mother Courage and this makes her come to life. Irrespective of the purpose to which they are put, the mother's methods of conversion are at least varied and frequently amusing. She has the quick wit of the obstinate and a sense of humour which contrasts sharply with the rest of the figures in the play. Before she becomes a communist her shrewdness is shown by her intervention when workers are arrested for reading pamphlets which were used to wrap up the cucumber she offers for sale. She cunningly tries to help by an indirect self-accusation:

Der Mann hat doch nur eine Gurke gekauft.[1]

The school teacher Nikolai Ivanowitsch is entirely at the mercy of the mother's tactics; she is able to extort whatever she wants from him by her obstinacy and liveliness.[2] When she is stoned by discontented workers, who take her for a strike-breaker, she exploits her bruises in order to spread the discontent further still.[3] The mother adopts oblique tactics in her anti-war propaganda. By urging that the war should continue, she shows one woman that the copper she is

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1. Stücke V, p.32.
2. Stücke V, p.52 f.: "Ich habe allerdings wenig Lust, mich mit dem Arbeitslosen Sigorski herumzustreiten ... Aber wirklich, Frau Wlassowa, ich habe grosse Bedenken, Sie in der Gesellschaft von so anrüchtigen Leuten zu wissen. Nehmen Sie den Samowar mit und etwas Brot und einige Gurken."
3. Stücke V, p.76 ff.

delivering for munitions will only help to make the war last.[1] Such tactical agility is almost as amusing as the adroitness of the clown who fells one opponent after another with unorthodox blows.

Both Die heilige Johanna and Die Mutter show in their central characters more than a simple representation of behaviour to illustrate social laws. Whereas both Mauler and Johanna adumbrate the duality of many of Brecht's later characters - from Mother Courage to Puntila and Galileo - Pelegea Wlassowa belongs to the race of anti-heroes like Matti and Schweyk.

Language.

The lasting popularity of the Dreigroschenoper compared with the meagre success of Mahagonny is a true measure of the former's superiority. This superiority is obvious enough in the matter of plot, character and dramatic interest, but it is scarcely less marked in the quality of the language, in its poetic appeal and virtuosity. Mahagonny was no doubt intended to repeat and improve upon the technique of the Dreigroschenoper; the satire was meant to be more biting: it succeeds simply in being more crass. The intended

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1. Stücke V, p.110: "Sehen Sie, den Sohn haben Sie schon draussen, das Kupfer geben Sie jetzt auch noch. Dann geht es schon wieder ein halbes Jährchen länger."

advance from ballad opera to a kind of grand opera simply means that the poet relies more heavily on musical resources, that reiteration replaces diversity, that wit recedes into the background. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Brecht was not equal to the 'grand' idiom required. Whereas the Dreigroschenoper retains the vitality and exuberance of Baal or Trommeln in der Nacht, Mahagonny has in its language something of the flatness that points to the Lehrstücke.

There remain, of course, certain things which the two operas have in common: one of these is the fondness for parody - particularly for the parody of religious texts of which the most obvious example in Brecht's work is Die Hauspostille. One of the few highlights in Mahagonny is Paul's hymn, "Lasst euch nicht verführen".[1] Although it is not possible to point to any specific model, this exhortation is eminently baroque in its expression, baroque, too, in its sense of time fleeting and its anacreontic doctrine - but utterly modern in its materialism:

> Ihr sterbt mit allen Tieren
> Und es kommt nichts nachher.

The same baroque tone marks Peachum's Morgenchoral, with its pungent use of biblical language: "Verschacher dein Ehweib,

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1. Stücke III, p.206.

du Wicht"[1], and final chorus sung to the strains of that baroque instrument, the organ.[2]

It is not only in parody, however, that the poet of the Dreigroschenoper demonstrates his power to handle language. He - and the characters in the opera itself - treat cliché, rhetoric and linguistic convention with disdain. Characteristic is the way in which high-sounding lines are 'thrown away' with a laconic 'und so weiter'. Thus Peachum caps Filch's hackneyed phrase[3], and Matthias nonchalantly discards the rhetoric of his wedding speech:

> Gestatten Sie, Captn, dass wir Ihnen am schönsten Tag Ihres Lebens, in der Maienblüte Ihrer Laufbahn, wollte sagen, Wendepunkt, die herzlichsten und zugleich dringendsten Glückwünsche darbringen und so weiter. Ist ja ekelhaft, dieser gespreizte Ton.[4]

With splendid bathetic effect he descends to his natural idiom:

> Kopf hoch, altes Haus![5]

The same bathetic phrase occurs when Macheath introduces Tiger Brown to his gang[6], or, in combination with laconic asides, in the speech celebrating the friendship of the two

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1. Stücke III, p.10.
2. Stücke III, p.140.
3. cf. Stücke III, p.13: "Wie ein Wrack auf hoher See und so weiter."
4. Stücke III, p.29.
5. Ibid.
6. Stücke III, p.43.

villains:

> Selten habe ich, der einfache Strassenräuber, na, ihr wisst ja, wie ich es meine, einen kleinen Fischzug getan, ohne ihm, meinem Freund, einen Teil davon, einen beträchtlichen Teil, Brown, als Angebinde und Beweis meiner unwandelbaren Treue zu überweisen, und selten hat, nimm das Messer aus dem Maul, Jakob, er, der allmächtige Polizeichef, eine Razzia veranstaltet, ohne vorher mir, seinem Jugendfreund, einen kleinen Fingerzeig zukommen zu lassen. Na, und so weiter, das beruht ja schliesslich auf Gegenseitigkeit.[1]

A similarly ironic use of stereotyped language is marked by the use of a word like 'beziehungsweise' which suggests the substitution of one linguistic counter for another:

> Ausstattung E: junger Mann, der bessere Tage gesehen hat, beziehungsweise dem es nicht an der Wiege gesungen wurde.[2]

The bogus nature of such phrases - and the business activities they here represent - is further underlined by Filch's rejoinder:

> Warum kann <u>ich</u> das nicht mit den besseren Tagen machen. [3]

The same contempt for the catch-phrase is expressed in the Peachums' <u>Anstatt-dass-Song</u>, with its references to "der verdammte 'Fühlst-du-mein-Herz-Schlagen-Text'" and "das 'Wenn du wohin gehst, geh auch ich wohin, Johnny'".[4]

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1. <u>Stücke III</u>, p.45.
2. <u>Stücke III</u>, p.17.
3. Ibid.
4. <u>Stücke III</u>, p.22.

Occasionally it is a single word that is held up to ridicule - "Was Ergötzliches? Das ist ein prima Wort"[1] - or a character is so enamoured of a phrase that it must be repeated:

> Mac: Lucy, dir möchte ich mein Leben verdanken.
> Lucy: Das ist wundervoll, wie du das sagst, sag es noch mal.
> Mac: Lucy, dir möchte ich mein Leben verdanken.[2]

The irony may be even more explicit, as when Macheath introduces the sentimental duet between himself and Polly with the words: "Und jetzt muss das Gefühl auf seine Rechnung kommen ..."[3]. On the other hand, the comment may be so cynical[4], or so out of keeping with character or situation[5] that no device is needed to point the irony.

All this argues a detached attitude towards language, a kind of linguistic 'Verfremdung', and this is borne out by the range of idioms which Brecht uses in the Dreigroschenoper. Apart from such ironical uses as those already noted, the contrast of one level of language or of one style with another may serve certain definite functions. It may demonstrate the ambiguity of a character or situation, as when Peachum finishes his 'Morgenchoral' and lectures the audience on the nature of his business; he uses strict logical sequences and supports his argument with examples:

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1. Stücke III, p.32.
2. Stücke III, p.95. cf. also III, 78:

(Mac): Meine Damen, Lange bevor mein Stern über dieser Stadt aufging ...
Vixen: Lange bevor mein Stern über dieser Stadt aufging ...

3. Stücke III, p.47.

4. cf. Peachum's explanation to Filch: "Der Anblick solcher Typen versetzt den Menschen in jenen unnatürlichen Zustand, in welchem er bereit ist, Geld herzugeben" (Stücke III, p.15 f.).

5. Of this kind is the naive comment of Macheath to the audience:
"In diesem Pferdestall findet heute meine Hochzeit mit Fräulein Polly Peachum statt, die mir aus Liebe gefolgt ist, um mein weiteres Leben mit mir zu teilen" (Stücke III, p.23).
Other examples occur in the interview between Polly and Lucy, in which Polly uses phrases taken from a totally different dramatic idiom:
"Die Pfade des Schicksals sind schon furchtbar verschlungen."
or:
"Ich freue mich ja so, dass ich zum Ende dieser Tragödie eine solche Freundin gefunden habe" (Stücke III, p.121).
The incongruity of this last is made obvious when she continues:
"Immerhin. Willst du noch etwas essen, noch etwas Kuchen?"

> ... denn mein Geschäft ist ... Denn der Mensch ... So kommt es zum Beispiel ... Wie hat sich zum Beispiel ... es muss eben ... da muss eben ...[1]

Very different again is the vehement and vulgar tone in which Peachum deals with Filch or with his wife and daughter:

> Celia, du schmeisst mit deiner Tochter um dich, als ob ich Millionär wäre! Sie soll wohl heiraten? Glaubst du denn, dass unser Dreckladen noch eine Woche lang geht, wenn dieses Geschmeiss von Kundschaft nur unsere Beine zu Gesicht bekommt? Ein Bräutigam? Der hätte uns doch sofort in den Klauen! So hätte er uns! Meinst du, dass deine Tochter im Bett besser ihr Maul hält als du? [2]

Contrast in styles is also used, in a traditional way, as a source of humour - for example, throughout the wedding-feast scene, in which the whole technique is neatly epitomised in Macheath's request to Polly:

> Polly, darf ich dich bitten, dass du dich um die Fresskörbe kümmerst.[3]

The same device is used in the interview between Polly and Lucy, where strained politeness repeatedly gives way to unbridled abuse:

> Polly: Die einfachsten Regeln des Anstandes, verehrtes Fräulein, sollten Sie, denke ich, lehren, dass man einem Mann in Gegenwart seiner Frau mit etwas mehr Zurückhaltung begegnet ... Du - hältst du aber deinen dreckigen Mund, du Fetzen, sonst hau ich dir eine in die Fresse, gnädiges Fräulein.[4]

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1. Stücke III, p.11 f.
2. Stücke III, p.19.
3. Stücke III, 27 f.
4. Stücke III, 92 f.

Another sort of change of key may be observed in the incantatory asides of Macheath as he battles for his life; these strangely impressive lines, with their involved rhyme scheme, and the modulation from pleading to frustrated rage, throw light on the inner character of the mountebank, Macheath (who is not nearly as black as he prefers to be painted), on his human frailty and the terrifying nature of his plight.[1] This is one of those instances (Galy Gay's soliloquy is another[2]) where Brecht suddenly shows, in a grotesque context, his awareness of the human condition.

Brecht's attitude to language in the Dreigroschenoper may be observed in the way in which he exploits the ambiguities of individual words. This is sometimes done in a purely superficial way, in the form of puns, as when Peachum remarks: "Naturgrind ist natürlich nie das, was Kunstgrind ist"[3] - or when he threatens Brown: "Die junge Königin sollte auf Rosen gebettet sein und nicht auf Gesichtsrosen".[4] The most characteristic instances, however, are those in which a concrete meaning is contrasted with an abstract meaning, as in Spelunken-Jenny's verse in the second finale: "Ihr,

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1. Stücke III, pp.125, 128.
2. Stücke II, p.266.
3. Stücke III, p.54.
4. Stücke III, p.112.

die auf unsrer Scham und eurer Lust besteht"[1], or in Das Lied von der Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Strebens:

> Der Mensch lebt durch den Kopf
> Der Kopf reicht ihm nicht aus
> Versuch es nur, von deinem Kopf
> Lebt höchstens eine Laus. [2]

The sources on which Brecht draws are highly diverse: he uses the language of the scholar[3], of the official and of the Bible - this latter not only in the obviously ironical fashion in which it is used in Peachum's establishment, but in much less obvious contexts.[4] He revels in slang and shows a much better acquaintance with the vulgar idiom of the Berlin lower classes than he had done in Trommeln in der Nacht.[5]

Besides this mixture of elements borrowed from various spheres and used more or less deliberately, however, there is an undertone that is characteristically and memorably Brechtian: it may be detected in the splendid succinctness of an occasional phrase[6], in a picturesque hyperbole[7], or in a rare metaphor that stands out fresh against the ironical background of cliché.[8] Most characteristic and most

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1. Stücke III, p.100. The intended ambiguity emerges clearly from a comparison with the corresponding line in the previous verse:
"Ihr, die ihr euren Wanst und unsre Bravheit liebt ..."
2. Stücke III, p.111 f.
3. See Peachum's ironic lecture to Brown:
"Der Krönungszug der Thronfolgerin Semiramis wurde, wie es in den Geschichtsbüchern heisst, 'durch die allzu lebhafte Beteiligung der untersten Schichten der

Bevölkerung zu einer Kette von Katastrophen'. Die Historiker sind ausser sich vor Entsetzen, wie furchtbar sich Semiramis ihrem Polizeihauptmann gegenüber benahm. Ich erinnere mich nur dunkel, aber es war die Rede von Schlangen, die sie an seinem Busen nährte" (III, p.98 f.).

4. Stücke III, p.24: "Du sollst deinen Fuss nicht an einen Stein stossen." cf. Psalm 91, 12: "Dass sie dich auf Händen tragen, und du deinen Fuss nicht an einen Stein stössest."

5. cf. junges Gemüse (III, 13); mach mal ein bisschen plötzlich, Kleiner (III, 17); verroll dich (III, 21); Dreckspritzer (III, 25); altes Haus (III, 29); alte Schaluppe (ibid.); Polente (III, 35); Ein ekelhaftes altes Ross (III, 46); Verkitscht Zeug auf eigene Faust (III, 65); Will man Sie hopsnehmen? (III, 68); Warum sollte ich mich um solche ausgelaufenen Eimer kümmern? (III, 70); aus dem Effeff (III, 75); Zaster; eins ins Zahnfleisch gelangt (III, 79); Armleuchter (III, 82); Früchtchen (III, 88), etc., etc.

6. e.g. Da bin ich ein Glacéhandschuh dagegen (III, 30); Man muss sich die Beine ablaufen, damit sie einem nicht gestohlen werden (III, 59).

7. e.g. Ich würde mich nicht getrauen, das Schwarze unter dem Nagel wegzuschenken, ohne den direkten Hungertod herauszufordern (III, 52); ... und ihren Fussboden mit Butter einschmieren können, dass auch die Brosamen, die von den Tischen fallen, noch fett werden (III, 106).

8. e.g. Wenn sie soviel gekostet hat wie ein Segelschiff, dann wirft sie sich selber auf den Mist wie eine faule Gurke (III, 49); Hatte sie ein Kopf auf wie die Königin von England (III, 51); Die Krönung ohne Sie ist wie ein Brei ohne Löffel (III, 68); dünn, wie ein Penny, der schon abgegriffen ist (III, 71); Ihr seht ja aus wie von der Stange gefallen; Aussehen tut ihr wie gespiene Milch (III, 103); du siehst aus wie ein ausgenommener Hering (III, 125); Zerpickt von einer gierigen Vogelbrut / Wie Pferdeäpfel, die am Wege liegen (III, 135) - is this last perhaps Villon?

memorable of all are the songs of the Dreigroschenoper. It is difficult to account for the power these songs have to fascinate: the strictly rhymed ballad form and the force and directness of the language have much to do with it. They vary, of course, in mood, but they all have a down-to-earth quality, a total absence of rhetoric and empty phrase - even of metaphor and simile. Their syntax is simple, they concentrate meaning into single concrete nouns, which thus acquire symbolic significance - Haifisch, Messer, Handschuh, Kopf, Kragen, Wanst, Scham - and into a few basic verbs: tragen, sehen, leben, liegen, gehen, wissen, fragen. As for adjectives - they scarcely figure in the songs at all: all the songs between them can muster a good deal less than fifty different adjectives. Of these, five refer to colours (rot, grün, blau, braun, blass); the majority refer to fundamental human qualities or conditions: gut, schlecht, gross, hoch, arm, reich, bequem, angenehm, lieb, schön, nett, hübsch, neu rein, brav, kühn, weis, eitel, schlau, kärglich, kalt, nackt, kurz, herzlos, tückisch, gierig, lumpig, dreckig, schmierig. It is noticeable that almost all these are monosyllables; compound adjectives are rare (wissensdurstig, beneidenswert, anspruchslos, sonnenklar), and in their starkly simple context inevitably acquire a sardonic ring. It is perhaps significant, too, that nearly all these adjectives are the common currency of everyday speech;

exotic words are rare (simpel, trist). It is perhaps characteristic of the idiom of these songs that the adjectives mostly occur in predicative use.

The mood of the songs varies, as has been said; some have a sinister and menacing tone - the ballad of Mackie Messer, for instance, in which each verse sketches starkly a mysterious (and to the German mind, exotic) crime. Almost equally menacing, but with a suggestion of the hypnotic is the ballad sung by Polly in the character of Seeräuber-Jenny, with its paratactical construction and the repetition of "und - und - und".[1] For all its simplicity of language and syntax, incidentally, this is anything but a ballad in the popular tradition; its rhyme scheme and its rhythms are much too subtle for that.

Other songs, didactic in purpose, have a loud and hectoring tone (Der Anstatt-dass-Song, Die Ballade von der Unzulänglichkeit des menschlichen Strebens), a brutal directness that contrasts ironically with their baroque titles. How much the effect of the songs depends on their exotic aura can be seen by comparing the brilliantly ferocious, captivating, romantic Kanonensong with the later Neuer Kanonensong[2]; in the latter the atavistic charm has gone

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1. Stücke III, p.38 ff.
2. Stücke III, p.161 f.

and the explicit references to a well-worn political reality reduce the song to a propaganda jingle. Much of the effectiveness of these songs and their lasting popularity is accounted for by Weill's music, but to Brecht must go the credit for texts so incisive and epigrammatic, and yet so full of suggestion.

The Mahagonny text cannot compete with this virtuosity; in it we may observe already the etiolation characteristic of the Lehrstücke. Language is barely used for characterization, and there is little attempt to set off one idiom against another. There are, it is true, parodistic passages, particularly in the scenes where Mahagonny is threatened by the hurricane (Scenes 10 and 11). There are biblical cadences here:

> Auf den Bergen stehen die Hurrikane
> Und der Tod tritt aus den Wassern hervor.
> Oh, furchtbares Ereignis
> Oh, grausames Geschick!
>
> Wo ist eine Mauer, die mich verbirgt?
> Wo ist eine Höhle, die mich aufnimmt?
> Oh, furchtbares Ereignis
> Oh, grausames Geschick! [1]

We find, too, the tone of the revivalist hymn:

> Haltet euch aufrecht, fürchtet euch nicht
> Brüder, erlischt auch das irdische Licht
> Wollet nicht verzagen
> Was hilft alles Klagen
> Dem, der gegen Hurrikane ficht? [2]

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1. Stücke III, p.202. This biblical type of parallel construction is a favourite of Brecht's: cf. III, p.191:

"Mit dem Unrecht geht es eben doch nicht
Und wer es mit dem Laster treibt
Der wird nicht alt!"

cf. also the liturgical sequence sung by Jakob, Heinrich, Joe, on the one hand, Paul Ackermann on the other:

Jakob, Heinrich, Joe.
"Wunderbar ist das Heraufkommen des Abends
Und schön sind die Gespräche der Männer unter sich!

Paul.
Aber etwas fehlt.

Jakob, Heinrich, Joe.
Schön ist die Ruhe und der Frieden
Und beglückend ist die Eintracht.

Paul.
Aber etwas fehlt." etc. (III, p.194)

There are other occasional biblical echoes in Mahagonny, e.g.
"Aber hinter uns sind die Konstabler, die uns von Angesicht zu Angesicht kennen." (III, p.170 - cf. 2. Moses, 33, 11.)

Again in reference to the 'Konstabler', there seems to be a perversion of a biblical phrase:
"Erschlagen liegen die Konstabler
Und untergehen die Gerechten mit den Ungerechten.
Sie müssen alle dahin" (III, p.209; cf. Apostelgeschichte 24, 15: nämlich, dass zukünftig sei die Auferstehung der Todten, beides der Gerechten und Ungerechten).

2. Stücke III, p.202.

Again, Paul's address to the audience has a vaguely liturgical flavour.[1]

The Bible is not the sole source of parody. During their imaginary voyage on the billiard table, the 'refugees' from Mahagonny sing - and parody in part - the well-known poem: 'Stürmisch die Nacht'.[2] The ironic intention of Brecht's parody is obvious when Dreieinigkeitsmoses, in his capacity of public prosecutor, is observed to use exactly the same forensic rhetoric in the case of the murderer, Tobby Higgins, and that of the bankrupt Paul Ackermann:

> Niemals je
> Wurde eine Tat verübt
> So voller Roheit.
> Jedes menschliche Empfinden
> Haben schamlos Sie verletzt.
> Aus dem Herzen der beleidigten Gerechtigkeit
> Erhebt sich der Schrei nach Sühne.[3]

There are one or two other minor instances of the ironic use of language, as when the conventional language of the shopper is applied to the selection of a prostitute: "Ich dachte allerdings an etwas Dunkleres".[4]

Mahagonny is designed as a less 'realistic' and more 'poetic' work than the Dreigroschenoper: the naturalistic prose of the latter gives way to a kind of free verse with

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1. Stücke III, p.207.
2. Stücke III, pp.228, 229. This heroic ballad seems to have fascinated Brecht: he quotes it in Dickicht, Stücke I, p.244.
3. Stücke III, pp.237, 240.
4. Stücke III, p.181.

frequent choruses. In spite of Brecht's attempts to heighten still further the exotic atmosphere, however, the general effect is prosaic. Neither the exotic names of the characters (Dreieinigkeitsmoses, Alaskawolf Joe) nor the Whitmanesque evocation of the Wild West[1] - nor for that matter Brecht's painful attempt at an English lyric in the New Orleans idiom - convey the atmosphere of romantic corruption and brutality that pervades the Dreigroschenoper. The simple syntax somehow fails to achieve its effect; words and phrases are repeated to excess (Ruhe, Eintracht, Geld, Whisky, Mädchen) without ever acquiring the symbolic status of such words in the Dreigroschenoper - possibly because they are not concrete and individual enough. The logical style that yet retains colour and life in the Dreigroschenoper becomes here primitive and skeletal: it is interesting to compare Peachum's account of his business with the dialogue which opens Mahagonny:

> Willy der Prokurist: Hallo, wir mussen weiter!
> Dreieinigkeitsmoses: Aber der Wagen ist kaputt.
> Willy der Prokurist: Ja, dann können wir nicht weiter.[2]

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1. cf. III, p.196 f.:
   Tief in Alaskas weissverschneiten Wäldern
   Habe ich in Gemeinschaft mit drei Kameraden
   Bäume gefällt und an die Flüsse gebracht
   Rohes Fleisch gegessen und Geld gesammelt.
   Sieben Jahre habe ich gebraucht
   Um hierherzukommen.
   This is an idiom, incidentally, which goes back to the earliest period of Brecht's career - cf. Die Männer von Fort Donald.
2. Stücke III, p.169.

There are points, however, apart from the parodistic passages already mentioned, where the style does rise above the general dead level, where genuine feeling seems to well up, and to find a powerful symbol. There is, for example, the poignant duet between Jenny and Paul: "Sieh jene Kraniche in grossen Bogen".[1] Here there is no ironic note as in the corresponding duet of Macheath and Polly; the flight of the cranes through the sky symbolises with an intensity of feeling rare in Brecht the passing harmony of two souls.

Except for such occasional passages, Brecht's linguistic virtuosity forsakes him in Mahagonny, and this is even more the case in Happy End. The comparative failure of the former, and the total fiasco of the latter probably convinced the poet that this particular vein of inspiration was worked out, that he had no hope of repeating the phenomenal success of the Dreigroschenoper. As a result, his interest veered increasingly away from the pure opera, first in the direction of a schematic Lehrstück, and then towards a more full-blooded epic drama, where, once again, his linguistic reserves can find full play.

All the Lehrstücke lack the devil-may-care language of the operas and employ a style which, in the prose passages as well as the sections in verse, is stark, succinct and abstract.

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1. Stücke III, p.216 ff.

In view of the didacticism of these plays it is not unnatural that the language should show a prominent use of imperatives.[1] This is particularly obvious in Das Badener Lehrstück:

> Fliegt jetzt nicht mehr.../Dass ihr reglos liegt/Genügt / Nicht oben über uns / Nicht weit vor uns / Nicht in eurem Laufe / Sondern reglos / Sagt uns, wer ihr seid.[2]

The adjective 'reglos' in this passage which refers not only to the situation of the airmen, but the manner in which they have to speak, might be applied to the style of the Lehrstücke as a whole. In Das Badener Lehrstück the static quality of the language derives, on the one hand from the use of rather vague concepts[3], on the other from the use of arguments which are not expressed in the form of a dialogue. A clear example of both these characteristics can be found in the following passage:

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1. In Die Massnahme, Stücke IV, instances of this mood are particularly obvious when the Party makes its commands. "Stellt dar, wie es geschah und warum, und ihr werdet unser Urteil hören", p.258; cf. also pp.277, 299. cf. Die Mutter, Stücke V, pp.8 f., 48, 57, 99, 103, 116. cf. also Die Ausnahme und die Regel, Stücke V, pp.187, 229.
2. Stücke III, 280 f.
3. Klotz described the language of the Lehrstücke in the following way: "Der inhumanen Demonstrationen und Beweisführung sekundiert die Sprache, die in blutleerer abstrakter Begrifflichkeit erstarrt." cf. Bertolt Brecht, Versuch über das Werk, Darmstadt 1957, p.46.

> Um Hilfe zu verweigern, ist Gewalt nötig
> Um Hilfe zu erlangen, ist Gewalt auch nötig.
> Solange Gewalt herrscht, kann Hilfe verweigert werden
> Wenn keine Gewalt mehr herrscht, ist keine Hilfe mehr nötig.
> Also sollt ihr nicht Hilfe verlangen, sondern die Gewalt abschaffen.
> Hilfe und Gewalt geben ein Ganzes
> Und das Ganze muss verändert werden.[1]

Formally, there is almost mathematical precision in the construction of this argument in which the two poles 'Hilfe' and 'Gewalt', as if poised on the extremities of a scale, are gradually reduced to one idea: 'das Ganze'. Similar abstract - and rather obscure - arguments are used in the prose passages of this play:

> Wer etwas entreisst, der wird etwas festhalten. Und wem etwas entrissen wird, der wird es auch festhalten. Und wer etwas festhält, dem wird etwas entrissen.[2]

Brecht is presumably referring here to the "Kampf aller gegen alle" - the battle of each against all. But the logic of experience is expressed in such a way that a case of total ambiguity emerges in the argument. The superficial pattern is that of a paradox which arises because the notion of succession is ignored in such a way that a vast number of discrete events are conflated. The ambiguity is also created by the term 'etwas', the verb 'festhalten' and the use of the present tense. The issue may be made clear simply by translating into English continuous forms ("Whoever is seizing

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1. Stücke III, p.297.
2. Stücke III, p.299 f.

something will hold on to it ...") rather than indeterminate forms ("Whoever seizes something will hold something ..."), but the fundamental ambiguity of these statements remains.

In Die Ausnahme und die Regel the merchant's imaginary fears about the coolie provokes similar kinds of statements which are meant to bewilder before communicating their message:

> Der kranke Mann stirbt und der starke Mann ficht.
> Warum sollte der Boden das Öl hergeben?
> Warum sollte der Kuli meinen Packen schleppen?
> Um Öl muss gekämpft werden
> Mit dem Boden und mit dem Kuli
> Und in diesem Kampf heisst es:
> Der kranke Mann stirbt und der starke Mann ficht.[1]

The opening and final statements in this passage are identical and on the face of it the individual clauses are straightforward enough. "The sick man dies", "the strong man fights" are statements which do not need clarification in themselves. An element of ambiguity is introduced with the conjunction 'and'. It suggests a close link between the two clauses which is not self-evident. In the middle section of the passage the argument seems to go off at a tangent: What has oil got to do with sick men and strong men? This irrelevance is only apparent. Brecht introduces the idea of human exploitation in an indirect way in order to make it all the more obvious when the reader provides the missing links.

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1. Stücke V, p.199.

The terms 'krank' and 'stark' are ambiguous because they are not used in a literal sense: they are meant to be referred to attitudes in the class-struggle.

Paradox and ambiguity are expressed in cruder and more obvious form in Die Massnahme, particularly when the Party explains the tactics which are necessary for spreading communism:

> Wer für den Kommunismus kämpft
> Der muss kämpfen können und nicht kämpfen
> Die Wahrheit sagen und die Wahrheit nicht sagen
> Dienste erweisen und Dienste verweigern ...
> Kenntlich sein und unkenntlich sein.[1]

Again, we may note the abstract nature of these apparently obscure golden rules. Here Brecht uses the same term to refer to very different situations in order to underline the cunning which is necessary for revolutionary work. In this passage the paradoxes reside not only in the series of contradictory statements, but in the reduction of complex ideas to their starkest expression. The same style is used in Die Mutter when Pelegea Wlassowa sings the Lob des Kommunismus:

> Er ist nicht das Rätsel / Sondern die Lösung
> Er ist das Einfache / Das schwer zu machen ist.[2]

The use of paradox is also apparent in Die Ausnahme und die Regel, particularly in the opening and closing passages of

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1. Stücke IV, p.265.
2. Stücke V, p.49.

the play when the actors address the audience directly:

> In solcher Zeit blutiger Verwirrung
> Verordneter Unordnung, planmässiger Willkür
> Entmenschter Menschheit ...[1]

This succession of self-contradictory expressions, which incidentally recurs in Die heilige Johanna[2], is designed not only to provoke the reader, but to unmask the absolute value which concepts like 'Unordnung', 'Willkür' and 'Menschheit' usually have. These are made relative to factors which destroy their truth or indicate that they are dependent on human agency.

In complete contrast to this cerebral and esoteric kind of language, the Lehrstücke also cultivate a more straightforward narrative style. In Die Massnahme it is used to introduce the adventures of the young comrade and the insistence on the past tense in these passages is designed to destroy the immediacy of the subsequent 'dramatizations' of these adventures:

> Aber die Arbeit in Mukden war illegal, darum mussten wir, bevor wir die Grenze überschritten, unsere Gesichter auslöschen. Unser junger Genosse war damit einverstanden. Wir wiederholen den Vorgang.[3]

In the May-day demonstration scenes in Die Mutter an almost purely epic style is also used, partly to overcome the

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1. Stücke V, p.187.
2. Stücke IV, p.14.
3. Stücke IV, p.263.

difficulty of representing these mass-movements, partly to highlight their more significant episodes - namely the determination with which the flag of the revolutionaries is carried. At these points the narrative, which is in the past tense, is interrupted to give way to direct speech:

> Iwan: Und Smilgin sah hinter sich und sah hinter seiner Fahne unsere Transparente und auf den Transparenten unsere Losungen ... und wir sahen hin was er neben uns, einer von uns, mit der Fahne machte.
> Pawel: Zwanzig Jahre in der Bewegung, Arbeiter, Revolutionär ... im entscheidenden Augenblick. Er sagte:
> Smilgin: Ich gebe sie nicht her! Es wird nicht verhandelt. [1]

Brecht also develops in several of the Lehrstücke the expository style characteristic of Der Brotladen.[2] This style in which the characters refer directly to the audience is destined to communicate relevant facts in a succinct and undramatic manner. In the opening scene of Die Mutter Pelegea Wlassowa exhibits her son without actually addressing him. The descriptive quality of her remarks, the fact that she does not voice her worries to her son prevent the dramatization of a quarrel between mother and son.

> Jetzt schnuppert er wieder an der Suppe. Ich kann ihm keine bessere herschaffen. Er wird auch bald merken, dass ich ihm keine Hilfe mehr bin, sondern eine Last ... Was kann ich, Pelegea Wlassowa, Witwe eines Arbeiters und Mutter eines Arbeiters, tun? [3]

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1. Stücke V, p.45.
2. cf. Chapter III, p.
3. Stücke V, p.8.

In Die Ausnahme und die Regel the merchant also addresses most of his remarks to the audience. Initially he does so consciously to simplify the problem of exposition:

> Ich bin Karl Langmann und reise nach Urga, um die Schlussverhandlungen über eine Konzession zu führen. Hinter mir her kommen meine Konkurrenten. Wer zuerst ankommt, macht das Geschäft.[1]

Subsequently, the merchant gives the impression of thinking aloud. His thoughts which are formulated in clear logical terms are meant to throw into relief the short-sightedness and stupidity of the coolie:

> Ein Dummkopf, wer sich nicht vorsieht. Vertrauen ist Dummheit. Der Mann ist durch mich geschädigt worden, unter Umständen für die Zeit seines Lebens. Es ist nur richtig von ihm, wenn er es mir zurückzahlt.[2]

Here, the merchant does not use language to characterise himself as an individual but to expose the enmity between social classes. This is generally true of all the Lehrstücke but it is only in Die heilige Johanna that Brecht comes to exploit a greater variety of linguistic and stylistic devices to communicate his message of social iniquity.

Linguistically and stylistically Die heilige Johanna is, perhaps, one of the most complex of Brecht's works: its texture is richer than almost any of the plays he had hitherto published. Not only is it constructed from verse and prose: in each of these modes of expression there are

1. Stücke V, p.188.
2. Stücke V, p.208.

different levels. A basic feature is the interplay of content and style which creates a subtle pattern throughout the work. The superficial alternation of verse and prose is itself worthy of examination. It is not easy to detect a single principle at work here. The distribution is obviously not on the basis of character, although there are minor figures in the play who speak solely in prose[1] and groups who speak only in verse.[2] The main characters - Johanna, Mauler and Slift, for example - use a wide range of idiom. Nor is the stylistic level determined invariably by the topic: the manipulation of the stock-market is described in a prosaic and didactic style when Slift informs Mauler that he has bought the surplus meat:

> Iss was und überleg dir deine Lage, die nicht sehr gut ist. Weisst du auch, dass du heut alles aufgekauft hast, was in Blechdosen steckt? ...[3]

The reaction of the meat-buyers is expressed in mock biblical language:

> Und ein Schweigen ward über den Bergesgipfeln
> Und die Hotelküchen verhüllten ihr Haupt
> Und die Läden wandten sich schaudernd ab
> Und es verfärbte sich der Zwischenhandel![4]

Graham uses a Homeric style to relate how Slift provokes the financial catastrophe in the stock-market:

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1. e.g. Die Detektive and Die Zeitungsleute.
2. e.g. Die Arbeiter at the beginning of the play and the Kleine Spekulanten.
3. Stücke IV, p.84.
4. Stücke IV, p.60.

> ... Brigham riss sich den Bart aus
> Schreiend: Sechsundneunzig! Zu diesem Zeitpunkt
> Wäre ein Elefant, zufällig hineingeraten
> Einfach zerdrückt worden wie eine Beere.
> Selbst die Stifte, von Verzweiflung erfasst, verbissen sich
> Stumm ineinander, wie die Rosse in alter Zeit
> Unter den kämpfenden Reitern sich in die Flanken verbissen.
> Voluntäre, berühmt durch mangelndes Interesse, hörte man
> An diesem Tage mit den Zähnen knirschen.[1]

In other words the style in these passages fluctuates from an objective to an ironical tone.

Brecht manipulates various styles, in fact, as a means of indicating either the state of mind or the opinions of a character, or of suggesting the attitude which the hearer should adopt to a given statement. The choice of style is, in other words, an instrument of judgment on the part of the playwright. There is no attempt to use language for the creation of illusion: no one in the play actually uses the idiom of every-day conversation: least of all do the workers use an idiom characteristic of class.[2] Not that the language of the play is entirely divorced from experience: on the

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1. Stücke IV, p.180.
2. This is certainly true of the chorus of workers at the opening of the play:
   "Lange schon ist diese Arbeit uns ekelhaft
   Die Fabrik uns die Hölle und nur
   Alle die Schrecken des kalten Chicagos konnten
   Uns halten hier." (Stücke IV, p.10 f.)
   Even the leaders of the working-class movement talk in a dry, non-committal style, and express the need for revolution in succinct language: "In dieser Lage müssen wir erkennen, dass nur mehr die Anwendung von Gewalt uns helfen kann." (Stücke IV, p.136.)

contrary, it has frequently a strict relevance to modes of expression with which we are familiar - but this relevance is often enough that of irony or parody. The extent to which a given speech corresponds to a familiar idiom is in inverse proportion to its value as an indication of the speaker's true mind or the validity of its content in the playwright's estimation. Where a speech is the expression of the lower reaches of personality, or of the playwright's own opinion, it is striking in the originality of its rhythm, vocabulary and metaphor. For Brecht, familiar words, phrases and rhythms of speech are impregnated with modes of thought that no longer correspond to realities. In using these familiar patterns in situations designed to display the world as it really is, he is using a technique of Alienation - 'Verfremdung'.

Consider, for instance, the manifold ambiguity of Mauler's first speech to Criddle:

> Erinnere, Cridle, dich, wie wir vor Tagen -
> Wir gingen durch den Schlachthof, Abend war's -
> An unser neuen Packmaschine standen.
> Erinnere, Cridle, dich an jenen Ochsen
> Der blond und gross und stumpf zum Himmel blickend
> Den Streich empfing: mir war's als gält er mir.
> Ach, Cridle, ach unser Geschäft ist blutig.[1]

Not only does the approach to blank verse, with its classical associations, stand in contrast to 'unpoetic' words like

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1. Stücke IV, p.7 f.

'Schlachthof' and 'Packmaschine'; in view of Mauler's true motive, revealed in the letter he reads[1], the whole passage, with its sentiment, acquires a hollow ring.

Smoothness and regularity of form are used by Brecht to indicate, among other things, an adherence to the established order or an apparent harmony. This is particularly obvious in Slift's rhymed speech to the cattle-breeders when the crisis appears to be solved:

> Nun atmet auf! Nun muss der Markt gesunden!
> Ihr, die ihr gebt und die ihr nehmt das Brot!
> Der tote Punkt ist endlich überwunden!
> Schon war Vertrauen, die Eintracht schon bedroht.[2]

In this respect it is interesting to compare the choruses of 'Arbeiter' and 'kleine Spekulanten'. The former express themselves in a flat tone, little removed from prose[3]; the latter use a kind of dithyrambic style with strong dactylic rhythms.[4] Here, as elsewhere[5], Brecht deliberately applies to economic topics the mode of expression normally associated

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1. He has been advised to keep out of the trade. "Demnach scheint es geraten, die Hand vom Fleischhandel zu lassen, lieber Pierpont." Stücke IV, p.7.
2. Stücke IV, p.80.
3. Stücke IV, p.10.
   "Gehen wir doch alle einfach weg und
   Scheissen auf den Lohn, der täglich geringer wird."
4. Stücke IV, p.126:
   "Wehe! Ewig undurchsichtig / Sind die ewigen Gesetze
   Der menschlichen Wirtschaft!/ Ohne Warnung
   Öffnet sich der Vulkan und verwüstet die Gegend!"
5. e.g. Graham's long speech quoted above. Stücke IV, p.178 ff.

with metaphysical or divine topics - pointing thus to one of the incongruities of modern society. The climax of this technique is the final scene in the play, in which Johanna's burning curse on the idealist view is drowned in the thunderous dactylic choruses modelled on those in the final scene of Faust II:

> Wehe dem, der je sie riefe
> Die unentbehrlichen
> Aber begehrlichen
> Die nicht zu missenden
> Aber es wissenden
> Elemente der untersten Tiefe![1]

Alongside this contrast there is development in the style used by individual characters - by Johanna at least: from the threadbare rhetoric of the pot-gospeller[2] she progresses to a higher degree of insight in the speech where she turns on the financiers.[3] She has abandoned something of her idealistic outlook, having seen the material roots of poverty, but we note that she has been infected by the commercial outlook for she uses its jargon:

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1. Stücke IV, p.203 f. cf. also p.205:
   "Immer mit Gewissensbissen
   Denn als Betrachtender
   Selbst dich Verachtender
   Hast du Gewissen! ..."
2. Stücke IV, p.19 f.: "Ich will es euch sagen: nicht, weil ihr nicht mit irdischen Gütern gesegnet seid - das kann nicht jeder sein -, sondern weil ihr keinen Sinn für das Höhere habt."
3. Stücke IV, p.73 ff.

> Heben Sie die moralische Kaufkraft, dann haben Sie auch Moral. Und ich meine mit Kaufkraft etwas ganz Einfaches und Natürliches, nämlich Geld, Lohn.[1]

The playwright's rejection of this commercial humanitarianism is subtly indicated by the vestiges of high-flown style, the biblical scraps ("ihr Mühseligen und Beladenen"[2]) and the artificial literary device of the adjective following its noun ("von Gütern unentbehrlichen") - a device otherwise characteristic of the capitalist.[3] A further phase in the development of Johanna's character is indicated in the impassioned prose of the scene where she drives the financiers from the temple (i.e. from the Salvation Army headquarters):

> Habt ihr denn gar keine Ehrfurcht mehr vor dem, was Menschenantlitz trägt? Da könnt es passieren, dass man euch auch nicht mehr als Menschen ansieht, sondern als wilde Tiere ... Und ihr traut euch noch in Gottes Haus zu kommen ... [4]

There is nothing here of restraint and polish and her indignation is moral rather than truly religious: the fleeting references to the deity are only the remnants of

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1. Stücke IV, p.73.
2. Stücke IV, p.74.
3. Stücke IV, p.9: "Solange musst du
   Noch dein Gehirn, das listenreiche, üben."
   cf. also p.180 f.: " und also legten sie
   Fleischpacker um Fleischpacker
   Mürrisch die Packhöfe, die still-
   gelegten, nutzlosen
   Euch zu Füssen ..."
4. Stücke IV, p.106.

Salvationist rhetoric - borne on a tidal wave of wrath. For this indiscretion Johanna is expelled from the Salvation Army and she goes to Mauler - "als einfaches Landmädchen"[1]; her loss of authority and sense of mission is reflected in the dispassionate, trivial prose in which she greets Mauler.[2] But her sense of mission returns in even more vivid form - in visionary form: she describes her vision in words free from stereotyped biblical imagery, in long periods of complex structure, strongly dynamic with their succession of participles:

> An eurer Spitze sah ich stumm mich schreiten
> Mit kriegerischem Schritt, die Stirne blutig
> Und Wörter rufend kriegerischen Klangs in
> Mir selber unbekannter Sprache, und da gleichzeitig
> Von vielen Seiten viele Züge zogen
> Schritt ich in vielfacher Gestalt vor vielen Zügen:
> Jung und alt, schluchzend und fluchend
> Ausser mir endlich! ...[3]

Very different again are the terms of Johanna's curses with their elliptical phrasing and their brutal climax:

> Darum, wer unten sagt, dass es einen Gott gibt
> Und kann sein unsichtbar und hülfe ihnen doch
> Den soll man mit dem Kopf auf das Pflaster schlagen
> Bis er verreckt ist.[4]

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1. Stücke IV, p.109.
2. Stücke IV, p.114: "Das ist ein gutes altes Rosshaarsofa, das Sie da haben, aber warum haben Sie denn da ein Leintuch drauf, und ordentlich zusammengelegt ist's auch nicht."
3. Stücke IV, p.124.
4. Stücke IV, p.205 f.

These modulations of style are used by Brecht to indicate the development of a specific attitude. In at least one instance, Brecht has put into Johanna's mouth words which are not truly hers - not in keeping with her awareness as it must be conceived at this stage. This is at the very beginning of the play in Johanna's first speech with the carefully constructed analysis of the social situation, culminating in 'Gott' and descending again to point the remedy:

> In solche Welt, gleichend einem Schlachthaus
> Herbeigerufen durch das Gerücht drohender Gewalttat
> Damit nicht rohe Gewalt des kurzsichtigen Volkes
> Zerschlag das eigene Handwerkzeug und
> Zertrample den eigenen Brotkorb
> Wollen wir wieder einführen
> Gott.
> Wenig berühmt nur mehr
> Fast schon berüchtigt
> Nicht mehr zugelassen
> An den Stätten des wirklichen Lebens ...[1]

The structure of the speech - its pyramidal form, its use of paradox - is reminiscent of Expressionism: its view of the situation is beyond the simple Salvation Army lassie which Johanna is at this point. The suspicion that she is here simply a mouthpiece uttering a comment on the role of the Salvation Army as an ally of capitalism is confirmed when we find Mauler, at the end of the play, repeating Johanna's words almost verbatim.[2]

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1. Stücke IV, p.14 f.
2. Stücke IV, p.189.

Johanna is the only character which so obviously develops. Mauler remains the same, but in his case, as has been indicated, modulations of style are used to suggest a deception or insincerity. In at least one passage there is a strikingly personal note, which falls out of the context in rather the same way in which Galy Gay's monologue falls out of context.[1] This is the passage where Mauler has a vision of human existence as a form of inferno:

> Wenn ich in diesen unaufhörlich
> Brennenden Städten und in dem Sturz der
> Von oben nach unten durch Jahre
> Ohn Unterlass zur Hölle fliessenden
> Brüllenden Menschheit solch einen Stimm hör
> Die töricht wohl, doch ganz untierisch ist
> Ist's mir, als schlüg mich einer mit dem Stock
> Ins Rückgrat wie einen schnellenden Fisch.[2]

This passage, with its strange occult metaphor, is an expression of human feeling hardly to be expected of Mauler and one is tempted to hear the voice of Brecht rather than that of the meat king. Something of the same powerful feeling is evident in the passage where Mauler voices his momentary disgust with the economic system which is in part his own creation.[3]

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1. Stücke II, p.266 ff.
2. Stücke IV, p.83 f.
3. Stücke IV, p.163 f.
   " 's ist schon, als hätt einer
   Ein Gebäud gemacht, das grösste der Welt und
   Das teuerste und praktischste, aber
   Aus Versehen und weil's billig war, hätt er benutzt als
   Material Hundscheisse ..."

It is hardly necessary to point to the fun which Brecht obviously has in parodying the Bible[1] or the classical authors.[2] Of more interest, perhaps, is the way in which certain words are repeated thematically: 'Ochse', 'Wärme', 'Kälte', 'Suppe', 'oben', 'unten'. The characteristic thing here is that these words do not always have an unequivocal meaning: their sense depends on the situation of those who use them. The comparison between men and cattle is implicit in the theme of the play and there are specific references to it. But the interpretation of the analogy depends on whether it is voiced by workers[3], Johanna[4] or Mauler.[5] Similarly 'oben' and

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1. Stücke IV, p.175: "An den Wassern des Michigansees
Sitzen wir und weinen."
cf. also p.195: "Der Ungerechte geht über die Strasse, aber der Gerechte versteckt sich."

2. Apart from the Goethe and Schiller parodies, Graham also parodies Hyperions Schicksalslied: cf. Stücke IV, p.181:
"Den Preisen nämlich
War es gegeben, von Notierung zu Notierung zu fallen
Wie Wasser von Klippe zu Klippe geworfen
Tief ins Unendliche hinab."

3. Stücke IV, p.11: "Wofür halten uns die? Glauben sie
Wir stünden wie Ochsen da, bereit
Zu allem?"

4. Stücke IV, p.106: "Ja, schaut nur nicht so dumm, mit Menschen soll man nicht umgehen wie mit Ochsen, aber ihr seid keine Menschen..."

5. Stücke IV, p.42: "Mit Ochsen hab ich Mitleid, der Mensch ist schlecht." There is an epigrammatic twist in Mauler's comments about his associates; cf. p.134:
"Wer ein Ochse ist, der darf sich nicht wundern, wenn bei seinem Anblick der Appetit wächst!"

'unten' are quite differently interpreted by the capitalists and Salvationists in their sanctimonious choruses at the end of the play[1], and by Johanna who, in her analogy of the see-saw takes them as indicating social levels.[2] 'Wärme' and 'Kälte' as standing for security on the one hand and poverty and hunger on the other[3] are less equivocal, but in references to 'das kalte Chicago'[4] there is more than a mere material implication and possibly an echo of the existential chill of Im Dickicht der Städte.

Finally, it may be worth noting an interesting feature of Brecht's handling of abstract words. Such words, particularly substantival adjectives, are used notably in the concluding choruses:

> Ach, das Reine
> Ohne Fehle
> Unverderbte, Hilfsbereite
> Es erschüttert uns Gemeine! [5]

Such usages are abstract in a highly metaphysical sense -

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1. Stücke IV, p.203: "Soll der Bau sich hoch erheben
   Muss es Unten und Oben geben."
2. Stücke IV, p.150: " ... die oben
   Sitzen oben nur, weil jene unten sitzen."
   cf. also p.203: "Denn es ist eine Kluft zwischen oben und unten ..."
3. Stücke IV, p.27:
   " Bald
   Vergeht vor der alles beherrschenden Kälte seine
   Wenige Wärme."
4. Stücke IV, p.11.
5. Stücke IV, p.210.

they refer to eternal concepts universal in the minds of man. In comparison, however, the use of abstract language in the voices which exhort Johanna - 'Den Gestürzten', 'der Angekommene', 'das Anvertraute'[1] - is quite different. These are terms referring to specific human situations, and used to describe the sum total of such situations. They are abstracted from a host of concrete instances, not creations of the human imagination. This character is even more obvious in the bold passive construction:

Wo gewartet wird, muss angekommen werden.[2]

This is, as it were, abstraction downwards from experience: the traditional form of abstraction, as shown in the final scene of the play, is an edifice raised above experience, a system of ideals to be aimed at, rather than a pattern of social behaviour to be conformed to.

Theatrical Production.

Not all the plays Brecht wrote during this period were produced during the active spate of his theatrical practice at the end of the 1920's and the beginning of the 1930's.

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1. Stücke IV, p.167:
"... Den Gestürzten
Entschuldigt der Stein nicht.
Nicht einmal der Angekommene
Behellige uns mit dem Bericht seiner Schwierigkeit
Sondern liefere schweigend
Sich ab oder das Anvertraute."

2. Stücke IV, p.167.

Die Ausnahme und die Regel was never produced by Brecht and the first performance of the work was given three years after the war.[1] Brecht supervised an amateur production of Die heilige Johanna by the Copenhagen Revolutionary Theatre in 1935, but there is no record of what this performance was like. It is unfortunate that Brecht never did produce this work which is clearly designed for the theatre rather than the concert or lecture platforms on which most of the Lehrstücke were performed. In the 1930's Brecht did not realise on the stage the return to a more theatrical - or dramatic - idiom which is inherent in both Die Ausnahme und die Regel and Die heilige Johanna.

Brecht's theatrical practice during this period culminates in the austerity and economy of the Lehrstücke where scenery, stage-properties, make-up and costumes were reduced to a minimum. The photographs of the performances of Der Flug der Lindberghs (Baden-Baden, July 1929)[2], Das Badener Lehrstück (Baden-Baden, July 1929)[3] and Die Massnahme (Grosses Schauspielhaus, Berlin 1930)[4] show a raised platform or a stage completely bereft of wings or curtains, on which

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1. It was produced in France and the French zone of Germany in 1947 and 1949 by Jean Marie Serreau with Max Barrault's company.
2. Willett, op.cit., p.34.
3. Ibid., p.135.
4. Ibid., p.139.

the performers appear in every-day dress. Bright and visible lights, screens on to which are projected the titles of the scenes dominate this kind of 'theatre'. The extent to which the performers had to act seems to have been reduced to a minimum if one is to judge by the size of the platforms and the number of chairs placed on them.[1]

For Die Mutter, which was first produced in Berlin, 1932, the wings and back-cloth were made up of screens on to which texts, photographs and songs could be projected:

> Ein festes System von wenig übermannshohen Eisenröhren, die in verschieden grossem Abstand senkrecht auf den Bühnenboden montiert waren und in die andere, waagrechte, verschiebbare, also beliebig zu verlängernde Röhren mit Leinwänden eingehakt werden konnten, gestattete in Berlin ein rasches Verwandeln.[2]

More stage-properties were used than in the earlier Lehrstücke but they were limited to what was strictly necessary.[3]

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1. When, however, Die Mutter was performed in 1932 (Gesellschaftshaus, Berlin) the fact that the actors had to act their parts sitting down had nothing to do with Brecht's own advice. This measure was imposed by the police: "Daraufhin mischte sich die Polizei ein und verbot das Auf- und Zuziehen des Vorhangs, ja die Spieler mussten sich schliesslich auf Anweisung der Polizei auf Stühle setzen und ihre Rolle herunterlesen." (Die Rote Fahne, March 1932, quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.418. According to Wolf this performance ended with the arrest of Helene Weigel who was playing the part of the mother. cf. Aufsätze über Theater, op.cit., p.79 f.
2. Brecht, Stücke V, p.119.
3. Ibid. "... auf Gegenstände, die mitspielen, d.h. solche, ohne die die Handlung nicht oder anders verlaufen würde."

Mordecai Gorelik who designed the setting for the production of the play in New York (Civic Theatre, Theatre Union, 1935) commented at length on the function of scenery in the Epic Theatre:

> The task of these designers (Neher, Grosz, Heartfield, Gorelik), when preparing Epic plays, (was) neither to make an exact reproduction of life nor to build up an atmospheric stage picture. Their business was to supply such fragments of environment as were needed to show the meaning of the play.[1]

Brecht himself went to New York to supervise the production of the play and Gorelik was clearly greatly influenced by the playwright in the staging of Die Mutter.

> In Mother the wall between two rooms was indicated by means of a small curtain hung from a metal rod; its only purpose was to mark off space. In the factory scene of the same play the factory was represented not so much by a photograph of the building as by the picture of the owner; the point of the scene was not that the workers were in a factory, but that the factory belonged to Mr Suchlinow and not to them.[2]

As in the earlier Lehrstücke it seems that acting in Die Mutter was also reduced to a minimum - at least, as far as the Berlin production of the play. A critic talked of the mechanical way in which the actors behaved:

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1. M. Gorelik, New Theatres for Old, Dobson Ltd., London 1947, p.418 f.

2. Ibid., p.423.

> Die Spieler, mechanisiert, spielen nicht viel. Sie befinden sich im Zustand gefrorener Bewegung, die nur gelegentlich und stückweise auftaut. In ihrer gezwungenen, starren Haltung und Gruppierung erinnern sie zuweilen an Figuren früherer Malerei (denen Spruchbänder aus dem Mund flattern). [1]

The total destruction of theatrical illusion which culminates in the production of the Lehrstücke was adumbrated in the performances of the earlier plays as well as in the operas. The notes to Die Dreigroschenoper and Mahagonny emphasise the determination with which Brecht set about curtailing the creation of atmosphere.[2] For Die Dreigroschenoper which was first produced in Berlin (1928) Erich Engel placed an organ at the back of the stage and on either side of it screens were hung for the projections:

> Er (i.e. Engel) stellte in der Dreigroschenoper in den Hintergrund der Bühne die stilisierte, bühnenhohe, reliefartig ausgesteifte Orgel, zu deren Seiten der Film lief ... Den einzelnen Szenen schuf er durch heranrollende, aufsteigende, niedersinkende Versatzstücke ein halb stilisiertes, halb realistisch angedeutetes Milieu.[3]

Half-curtains were used to separate the scenes and acts of the play and the rails on which they ran remained visible

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1. A. Polgar, Die Mutter in Die Weltbühne, XXVIII, Jan. 1932, No.4, p.139.
2. Stücke III, p.149 f.: "Der Zuschauer soll nicht auf den Weg der Einfühlung verwiesen werden ... sondern zwischen dem Zuschauer und dem Schauspieler findet eine Verkehr statt"; also p.268: "Alles, was Hypnotisierversuche darstellen soll, unwürdige Räusche erzeugen muss, benebelt, muss aufgegeben werden."
3. Ernst Heilborn in Die Literatur, Jan. 1929, p.184. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.247.

throughout the performance. This was also the case for the production of Happy End (Berlin, 1929) and Mahagonny (Leipzig, 1930).

In the kind of projections used for the production of these last two plays the playwright was indebted to Piscator. In Mahagonny a grotesque photograph of Vielfrass was projected whilst the actor performed the act of over-eating. The projection was meant to emphasise the satirical impact of Vielfrass's death. In Happy End the closing scene of the play, where gangsters and Salvation Army unite, was given an extraneous commentary by the projections of photographs of Ford, Morgan and Rockerfeller as saints. Jhering implied that the way in which this scene was produced was too good for the quality of the work as a whole:

> Die gross konzipierte Schlusszene mit den Heiligenbildern von Ford, Morgan und Rockerfeller wirkt wie das Tableau eines ganz anderen Werkes.[1]

In all the operas a clear separation was made between the spoken word and the singing. In Die Dreigroschenoper whenever songs were sung the organ was illuminated and lights throwing a golden glow were lowered above the heads of the singers.[2] However much Brecht and Engel were intent on

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1. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.423.
2. A similar device is used in the production of Mutter Courage where drums, horns and trumpets are lowered above the actors when they sing.

preventing the creation of atmosphere through these devices, they in no way reduced the popularity of the work.[1] It is doubtful, too, whether these anti-illusiory techniques contributed to the failure of Happy End and Mahagonny (which ended in a scandal). The works themselves are poor and they got the reception which they deserved.

In comparison to the production of the early plays Brecht's theatrical practice in these years does not show anything fundamentally new. It is true, however, that with the Lehrstücke the stage has become a rostrum. The almost fanatical austerity with which Brecht approached social problems between 1929 and 1932 is reflected in the thread-bare quality of the stage he used for the Lehrstücke. It is one in which the written word - titles, projections and placards are devices to communicate this - figures as largely as the actors and takes the place of scenery. The function of this kind of theatre is to eliminate atmosphere in order to convince. Walter Benjamin described Brecht's Epic Theatre in these years as one which bridged the gap created in the traditional theatre by the pit separating stage from audience:

> Das epische Theater trägt einem Umstand Rechnung, den man zu wenig beachtet hat. Er kann als die Verschüttung

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1. Die Dreigroschenoper was performed more than three hundred times. cf. Wolf, Aufsätze über Theater, op.cit., p.74.

> der Orchestra bezeichnet werden. Der Abgrund, der die Spieler vom Publikum wie die Toten von den Lebendigen scheidet, der Abgrund, dessen Schweigen im Schauspiel die Erhabenheit, dessen Klingen in der Oper den Rausch steigert, dieser Abgrund ... hat an Bedeutung immer mehr eingebüsst. Noch liegt die Bühne erhöht. Aber sie steigt nicht mehr aus einer unermesslichen Tiefe auf: sie ist Podium geworden. Lehrstück und episches Theater sind ein Versuch, auf diesem Podium sich einzurichten.[1]

It would be a mistake to think that Brecht had altogether lost interest in all the arts of theatrical production for his didactic theatre. Good acting never ceased to preoccupy him despite the arid and intellectual approach he developed towards the theatre. In the fiasco which Happy End turned out to be, Jhering nevertheless recognised the care with which Brecht had rehearsed his actors.[2] He also paid tribute to the acting of one of the clowns in Das Badener Lehrstück and pointed to Brecht's selection of actors according to their grace of movement. The actor who had played the part of the clown was subsequently involved in the production of Happy End.

> Theo Lingen, unvergesslich als Clown im Baden-Badener 'Lehrstück', spielte hier die körperliche Begleitung zu den Songs, zum Text, tanzend, gleitend, blickend, beweglich und erstarrend - mit bescheidener Unheimlichkeit.[3]

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1. Was ist das epische Theater, in Mass und Wert (Zürich) II, Juli/August 1939, No.6, p.836 f.
2. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.423: "Ein einheitliches Ensemble spielte in einheitlichem Stil."
3. Ibid., p.424.

Chapter V

Brecht's Theories on the Epic Theatre between 1930-36

I. Theory and Practice.

Most of Brecht's theoretical writings during the years 1930 to 1936 are closely related to particular plays and take the form of notes to Die Dreigroschenoper, Mahagonny, Mann ist Mann and Die Mutter. This fact, probably more than any other, has supported the view adopted by many critics - in particular English critics - that the theories are secondary to the plays themselves. Such a view may take different forms: Willet holds that the theories are simply less significant than the plays[1], Esslin affirms that the theories are derived from the plays[2], while Gray argues that the theories have "more often than not hindered rather than helped in the appreciation of his work".[3] It is true that Brecht is dealing with particular theatrical works, but it is questionable to argue from this that he had no general theory or that any such theory would be derived solely and directly from the plays.

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1. The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, op.cit., p.187: "The theory may illuminate his own methods of production, but without some knowledge of these it is a bad guide, easily leading the producer into affectation or tedium."
2. Brecht, A choice of evils, p.107: "The theories he put forward were postscripts to plays or poems rather than a priori principles on which these had been based.
3. Brecht, op.cit., p.60.

In one of the last articles he wrote for the Berliner Börsen-Courier Brecht explained that in practical affairs one has to proceed slowly step by step, while a theory, on the other hand, surveys the process as a whole.[1] In one way it is important to notice that Brecht's theoretical writings during this period constitute a theory as thus defined. For although these notes were attached to particular plays they were, in fact, composed after all the plays he refers to had been written and produced. The notes to Mahagonny were written in 1930/31[2], those to Die Dreigroschenoper and Mann ist Mann in 1931, and those to Die Mutter in 1932 and 1936. Brecht, therefore, was in a position, even in these writings, to survey the whole range of his playwriting and theatrical practice during the period.

Even so, Brecht's theories - as expressed in these notes - cannot be said to provide a complete or even consistent picture relating to all the plays of the period. It is important to bear in mind the wide range of Brecht's work - from satirical opera to didactic plays - and to concede that different points made in these somewhat fragmentary notes cannot reasonably be applied throughout

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1. Über Stoffe und Form, Berliner Börsen-Courier, No.151, 1929: "In der Praxis muss man einen Schritt nach dem anderen machen - die Theorie muss den ganzen Marsch enthalten."

2. cf. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.287 f.

this range. For instance, it is not practicable to reconcile the entertainment value Brecht claims for his operas[1] with the didactic aim of the Lehrstücke.[2] The critic who takes these various notes to be a first stage of Brecht's theories is bound to be confused and to attribute this confusion to the playwright himself. This is where Brecht's contributions to the Berliner Börsen-Courier can help to clear up misunderstandings about the notion 'theory'. From these articles it is clear that Brecht's comments on the epic theatre are related to two distinct fields of activity: on the one hand a pseudo-scientific analysis of society, involving subject-matter very unlike that of traditional plays (Stoffe), on the other, new methods of theatrical production (Form). One cannot ignore the fact that Brecht's first remarks about the Epic Theatre reached the public before the plays which he called 'epic'[3] ever did: for this means that the sociological and aesthetic ideas he had expressed as early as 1927 were bound to influence the subject-matter and form both of his operas and his didactic plays. In this sense

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1. Stücke III, p.263: "Warum ist Mahagonny eine Oper? Die Grundhaltung ist die der Oper, nämlich kulinarisch ... Ist Mahagonny ein Erlebnis? Es ist ein Erlebnis. Denn Mahagonny ist ein Spass."
2. Stücke II, p.276.
3. Die Dreigroschenoper was the first of his works which he referred to as epic. cf. Stücke III, p.156.

these plays might be regarded as fashioned by the theories.[1]

It is obvious that the notes to these plays are primarily concerned with methods of production and presentation. The analysis and criticisms of society are implicit in the works themselves and need no detailed commentary. This is why the notes in themselves cannot be taken as straightforward and all-embracing examples of Brecht's theory. They are rather handbooks offering guidance in the production of each play and in this they are forerunners of Brecht's later Modellbücher.[2]

A large proportion of the notes to Die Dreigroschenoper and Mann ist Mann deals with techniques of acting.[3] The notes to Die Mutter are largely concerned with the productions of the play in Berlin and New York.[4] The notes to Mahagonny, on the other hand, are dominated by Brecht's general table of comparison between the dramatic and epic forms of the theatre.

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1. It must, however, be remembered that these theories grew hand in hand with the fragments Weizen and Der Brotladen.
2. Brecht published three Modellbücher - Antigonemodell 1948, Berlin 1955, Couragemodell 1949, Berlin 1958 and Aufbau einer Rolle. Galilei, Berlin 1958. They consist of the texts of these plays and numerous photographs of their various productions with critical notes appended to them.
3. Stücke II, p.319 ff. Zur Frage der Masstäbe bei der Beurteilung der Schauspielkunst; Stücke III, p.149 ff. Winke für Schauspieler.
4. Stücke V, p.118 ff. Mittelbare Wirkung der epischen Bühne; p.127 ff. Epische Darstellungsweise.

Dramatic form of the Theatre	Epic form of the Theatre
1. Action is performed	Action is narrated
2. Spectator is involved in the action (miterleben)	Spectator observes the action. He stands outside it.
3. His capacity to act is consumed	His capacity to act is awakened
4. He is allowed to identify himself with the actors	He is forced to make decisions
5. Experience is communicated to him	He is given a view of the world (Weltbild)
6. Suggestion	Argument
7. Man is known	He is the object of study
8. Man does not change	Man is changeable and is changed
9. Tension rises to the denouement	Tension is felt from the beginning
10. Each scene is a function of the following one	Each scene exists for itself
11. Events are linear	Events are in curves
12. Man as a fixed entity	Man as a process
13. Evolution as inevitable	Evolution in a series of jerks
14. Thought determines existence	Social existence determines thought
15. Feeling	Reason [1]

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1. Stücke III, p.266 f.

The table is not complete but it will suffice to show that although Brecht is referring to both content and form of the epic theatre - (in the column on the right) - he lays the emphasis of his theatre on methods of production. The reference to the mutability of mankind relates to Brecht's social and political ideas but the statements here are too fragmentary to mean much in themselves. Before examining the methods of productions Brecht advocates for his theatre it seems profitable to see in what ways Brecht's political views changed since his correspondence with Sternberg.

II. Politics, Sociology and Aesthetics: Der Dreigroschenprozess.

Brecht's views on politics, sociology and aesthetics are very fragmentary in the notes to the plays. He did, however, write something which can be counted as a general statement of his opinions on art and society during this period and which, incidentally, satisfies his requirements for a significant theory. This is the Dreigroschenprozess.[1]

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1. Brecht wrote this work in 1931 after he had lost a lawsuit dealing with the filming of Die Dreigroschenoper, while he was still smarting under a sense of personal injustice: its arguments reflect this in their asperity. The tone is frequently querulous and one may accept with reservations Brecht's claim that he was glad to have the opportunity of exposing the rottenness of capitalist justice. cf. Brechts Dreigroschenbuch, op.cit., Der Dreigroschenprozess, p.89: "Das Glück hat uns davor bewahrt, dass durch uns nachgewiesen worden wäre, es gäbe noch Richter im Kapitalismus."

Its subtitle - Ein soziologisches Experiment - points immediately to the interest in social theory, developed first in his correspondence with Sternberg. Much of the essay is uninspired; it wallows in Marxist jargon but, nevertheless, it has significant things to say about the exact nature of a highly industrialised society and the place of the artist in such a society.

The analysis of capitalism in the essay is closely connected with Die Dreigroschenoper: in each case Brecht wished to stress the contradictions between the ideology of capitalism and its actual manifestations. But while the opera offers little in the way of direct political comment, the Prozess tries to explain them specifically from a Marxist point of view. Brecht bases his hopes for social change on the contradictions which he feels to be inherent in capitalism:

> Die Widersprüche sind die Hoffnungen.[1]

The task of the sociologist is not merely to describe social problems but to eliminate capitalism by accentuating its contradictions:

> Das soziologische Experiment zeigt die gesellschaftlichen Antagonismen, ohne sie aufzulösen.[2]

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1. op.cit., p.81.
2. op.cit., p.120.

Der Prozess embodies the act of faith in communism which emerges with such force in Die Mutter and its notes. As a Marxist, Brecht rejects the heresy of 'objectivity' in dealing with social problems:

> Ohne auf diese Methoden (i.e. objective ones) näher einzugehen, ist doch zu sagen, dass sie gerade durch ihre Voraussetzung von etwas nicht mehr Vorauszusetzendem, nämlich eines objektiven Standpunkts in einer Zeit völlig antagonistischer Gesellschaftsform, so wenig Aussicht auf irgendeinen bescheidenen Erfolg haben. Nur das beteiligte, mittätige Subjekt vermag hier zu 'erkennen'.[1]

Brecht does not seem to be any more disturbed than other Marxists by the inconsistency of an ostensibly scientific approach and a 'subjective', in the sense of Marxist, attitude. This subjective attitude finds its clearest expression in the notes to Die Mutter, where Brecht upholds communism as the logical and inevitable continuation of European philosophy:

> Radikal auf die Abschaffung des Privateigentums an Produktionsmitteln ausgehend, steht er (i.e. communism) allen Richtungen, die sich durch was immer unterscheiden, aber in der Beibehaltung des Privateigentums einig sind, als einer einzigen Richtung gegenüber.[2]

In his correspondence with Sternberg Brecht had considered the assimilation of the individual into a mass as inevitable. In Der Prozess this process is now seen as

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1. Ibid.
2. Stücke V, p.176.

essentially rational.[1] (In terms of the Lehrstücke this is expressed in the idea of consent - Einverständnis - which involves the death - physical or metaphorical - of the individual.) Brecht moves from a view in which the antithesis is individual versus mass to one in which the antithesis is individual versus class. The building-up of a class-conscious proletariate, which is the reply to the evils of capitalism, is hinted at more than once in Der Prozess.[2]

This essay testifies to the fact that it was not the communist state as such which fascinated Brecht, but the nature of capitalism and the process of change in it. One suspects that Brecht is more attracted by the monstrous evils of capitalism, rather as a theologian might be more fascinated by the nature of the devil than the nature of God.

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.102 f.: "Wir nähern uns dem Zeitalter der Massenpolitik ... Die Masse denkt nicht im Einzelnen frei ... Jeder, der wirklich zu einer Masse gehört, weiss, er kann nicht weiter kommen, als die Masse kommen kann ... Die von gemeinsamen Interessen dirigierten, sich nach ihnen ständig umorganisierenden, aber einheitlich funktionierenden Massen unseres Zeitalters bewegen sich nach ganz bestimmten Denkgesetzen, die nicht Verallgemeinerungen des Einzeldenkens sind." One may draw attention to the prominence which the word 'denken' acquires in this passage.

2. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.98: "Schicksal, ein ehemalig grosser Begriff, ist längst ein spiessiger Begriff geworden, wo die Selbstabfindung mit den Verhältnissen die gewisse begehrte 'Verklärung' und 'Verinnerlichung' erzeugt - und ein rein klassenkämpferischer, wo die eine Klasse der anderen das Schicksal bereitet." cf. also the notes to Die Mutter, Stücke V, p.171.

For him a depiction of the superficial iniquities of capitalism or the heroism of the class-struggle are not enough - such descriptions are too passive, they offer little scope for his ingenuity and his power of analysis:

> Es genügt nicht zu wissen, dass der Kapitalismus immer unfähiger wird, seine eigenen Angelegenheiten zu ordnen, solange er noch fähig ist, die grossen Massen in Unordnung zu halten, es genügt auch nicht dies zu sagen, denn dieses Wissen und sein Versagen schafft ihm eher Ruhe als Unruhe, man muss ihn dauernd versagen lassen. Er kann nicht sterben, sondern er muss getötet werden. Sind genügend Klassenkampffakten ins Bewusstsein getreten, dann erscheint der Klassenkampf oft als eine natürliche Kategorie und die Handlungen Einzelner wie grösserer Gruppen erscheinen diesen selber als eben von vornherein durch den Klassenkampf bestimmt - wobei eine gefährliche Passivität eintritt.[1]

Such an attitude in the playwright goes far to explain and refute the kind of criticism levelled at him for not representing the social order for which he is fighting. One thinks, in particular, of Herbert Luthy who complained: "Never has Brecht been able to indicate by even the simplest poetic image or symbol what the world for which he is agitating should really look like".[2] There is more fun in describing Hell - or Purgatory - than in attempting to depict Paradise. Brecht wishes to instil in his audience an awareness of the inner nature of capitalism and hence to point ways in which its contradictions may be eradicated.

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.107.
2. Of Poor Bert Brecht, Encounter, July 1956, No.34, p.40.

His view of society is dynamic and he is convinced of the feasibility of radical change.

> Öffentliches Denken wird entfesselt und findet mit verteilten Rollen statt. Es handelt sich beinahe im Wortsinn um einen Denkprozess. Die Materie kommt hier lebend vor, sie funktioniert, ist nicht nur Gegenstand der Schau. Der Sehende selber lebt ebenfalls, und zwar innerhalb, nicht ausserhalb der Vorgänge.[1]

The point at which Brecht, as an individual and an artist, emerges from the welter of Marxist jargon, are the passages in Der Prozess where he discusses the place and function of art in society. Earlier Brecht had already argued that because society had changed, traditional artistic creation, particularly in the drama, had become obsolete.[2] With his complete conversion to Marxism, Brecht now regards Art - in its accepted sense - as embodying the typical capitalist contradictions. Its ideology is at odds with its function. By ideology, here, he means what the work of art stands for in the minds of the middle-classes: the product of an inborn impulse to create, appealing to something eternal and unchanging in man and quite independent of social pressures.

> Vielen dieser Vorstellungen liegt zu Grunde die Vorstellung von einem unverletzlichen Phänomen Kunst, das direkt aus dem Menschlichen gespeist wird, ohne deshalb seiner nicht auch entraten zu können, einem unabhängingen Phänomen gesellschaftlicher Art, das

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.118.
2. cf. Chapter II, p.89 ff.

> sich gegen die Gesellschaft durchsetzen kann, das sich überhaupt und überall manifestieren kann und muss, aller Umwelt sich gleichsam nur als Medium bedienend.[1]

For Brecht a 'work of art' which conforms to these concepts has little or nothing of value to say. The Bourgeois novel, for example, - by which he means the psychological novel - has nothing to offer but information about one particular individual: the author.

> Der bürgerliche Roman gestaltet heute noch jeweils 'eine Welt'. Er tut dies rein idealistisch aus einer Weltanschauung heraus, der mehr oder weniger privaten, jedenfalls aber individuellen Anschauung seines 'Schöpfers'. ... Man erfährt über die wirkliche Welt nur soviel als man über den Autor erfährt, den Schöpfer der unwirklichen, um nicht sagen zu müssen, man erfahre nur etwas über den Autor und nichts über die Welt.[2]

This ideology ignores the fact that art, in a society ruled by money, is bound to be determined by economic factors. In other words, the work of art becomes a commercial product. There can be no exception to the transformation of art into a commodity[3] and it is this very transformation which contrasts so sharply with the ideas traditionally held about art. Saleability alone is what regulates art in the Capitalist State.

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.116.
2. op.cit., p.91.
3. op.cit., p.92: "In Wirklichkeit gerät natürlich die ganze Kunst ohne jede Ausnahme in die neue Situation ... als Ganzes wird sie zur Ware oder nicht zur Ware."

> Der Verkauf, quantitativ so mächtig geworden, regelt nicht nur die alten Beziehungen durch gleichgültige, eben der Zeit entsprechende, Usancen (die 'mitgegangen sind'), sondern er bringt ganz neue Zwecke in die Verwertung hinein und somit auch in die Herstellung.[1]

What Brecht says here applies, in fact, largely to those arts that require some technical organ through which they are communicated, in particular the theatre or films. In these arts the personality of the author who devised the scenario or the drama is quite irrelevant, for his invention must meet commercial demands and becomes in any case dissociated from him in the process which turns it into something of market-value.

> Ein Kunstwerk kann zurückgeführt werden auf die Erfindung einer Fabel, die den Bedürfnissen des Marktes entsprechend erfunden wird. Irgendeine unabtrennbare Tendenz geistiger Art wohnt ihr nicht inne.[2]

Furthermore, Brecht argues that new artistic means of communication, such as radio, photography or technical advances in the theatre are not suited for the kind of raw material - the traditional work of art - which they are customarily used to transmit. He is particularly fierce about those producers who are unwilling or unable to see in art a function different from the bourgeois conception of art.

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1. op.cit., p.117.
2. op.cit., p.106.

> ... was er (der jeweilige Regisseur) durchsetzt, ist das, was er von dem, was er als Dutzendzuschauer unter Kunst versteht, selber machen kann. Was Kunst soll, wird er nicht wissen ... Auf dem Gebiet der Kunst betätigt er den Verstand einer Auster, auf dem Gebiet der Technik keinen besseren. Von den Apparaten vermag er nichts zu begreifen: er vergewaltigt sie mit seiner 'Kunst'. Um mit den neuen Apparaten die Wirklichkeit zu fassen, müsste er Künstler sein, schlimmstenfalls Wirklichkeitsgeniesser, aber keinesfalls Kunstgeniesser, also stellt er, was einfacher ist, mit ihnen 'Kunst' her, die bekannte, erprobte, die Ware.[1]

In short, Brecht is convinced that technical developments have fundamentally changed the function of art. It is a view which he reiterates in Mahagonny where he describes the theatre as part of the existing social structure, supported by it and dedicated to maintaining it. The theatre (in the sense of management and box office) dominates the playwright, whose works are considered acceptable only in so far as they can be produced without imperilling the social structure.[2] The status of the dramatist is depressed to that of a labourer who simply supplies raw material for a kind of industrial process which takes place in the theatre and culminates in a commercial product.

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1. op.cit., p.93.
2. Stücke III, p.261: "Die Gesellschaft nimmt durch den Apparat auf, was sie braucht, um sich selbst zu reproduzieren. Durchgehen kann also auch nur eine 'Neuerung', welche zur Erneuerung, aber nicht Veränderung der bestehenden Gesellschaft führt - ob nun diese Gesellschaftsform gut oder schlecht ist."

> Kunst ist Ware - ohne Produktonsmittel (Apparat) nicht herzustellen.[1]

In other words, the theatre is suffering, Brecht triumphantly concludes, from the universal evil: the means of production are not in the hands of the producers.

We note, here, the convert's zeal in applying Marxism to his native province, the theatre, a zeal which may account for the somewhat specious analogy drawn between the process of industrial and theatrical production. Such an analogy, however, precisely because it is true only up to a point, does tell us something of importance about its author. Underlying it is Brecht's conviction of the complementary functions of the poet and the theatrical producer - or even their identity. The text of the play, however tendentious, is mere raw-material, it is neutral and can acquire significance only through a process of production; the _production_ - not the play - is what counts. _Form_ is, in this sense, more important than _Stoff_.

It is for this reason that his plea in the _Prozess_ for 'realism' in art involves not only the subject-matter but the methods by which it is communicated. As far as subject-matter is concerned Brecht does not consider a straightforward naturalistic representation of life to be truly realistic.

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1. _Stücke III_, p.262.

For such a representation conveys little or no information about the complexities of the social and economic basis of life.

> Die Lage wird dadurch so kompliziert, dass weniger denn je eine einfache 'Wiedergabe der Realität' etwas über die Realität aussagt. Eine Fotografie der Krupp-werke oder der A.E.G. ergibt beinahe nichts über diese Institute. Die eigentliche Realität ist in die Funktionale gerutscht. Die Verdinglichung der menschlichen Beziehungen, also etwa die Fabrik, gibt die letzteren nicht mehr heraus. Es ist also tatsächlich 'etwas aufzubauen', etwas 'Künstliches', 'Gestelltes'. Es ist ebenso tatsächlich Kunst nötig.[1]

The function of art is precisely to expose the economic framework of society despite the opposition from the existing social system. For under this system art and the facts of social life are considered to be quite separate from one another.

> Die Erholung darf nichts enthalten, was die Arbeit enthält.[2]

Brecht developed this view at more length in his notes to Die Mutter and his essay Vergnügungstheater oder Lehrtheater?[3] What is also needed for a new 'realist' theatre is an unlimited use of the means of communicating art - the 'Apparate' - which have been developed through the technical advances in Capitalism. In the Prozess, films, in

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.93 f.
2. op.cit., p.97.
3. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.65: "Nach allgemeiner Ansicht besteht ein sehr starker Unterschied zwischen Lernen und sich Amüsieren." cf. also Stücke V, p.172.

particular, strike Brecht as manifesting a sociological presentation of material which stands in direct contrast to the traditional conception of art. He is undoubtedly thinking of those films which endeavoured either to satirize the effects of the industrial revolution or recalled the events which foreshadowed the Russian Revolution. It is true that films like Modern Times or Potemkin, in the breadth of their subject-matter, were not primarily concerned in developing any particular character. Brecht, not foreseeing that films could indulge in psychological analysis, universalised this feature, however, and concluded rather drastically that films could only present human beings in terms of stereotyped actions and stock situations.

> Für die Dramatik ist die Stellung des Films etwa zur handelnden Person interessant. Er verwendet zur Verlebendigung seiner Personen, die nur nach Funktionen eingesetzt sind, einfach bereitstehende Typen, die in bestimmte Situationen kommen und in ihnen bestimmte Haltungen einnehmen. Jede Motivierung aus dem Charakter unterbleibt, das Innenleben der Personen gibt niemals die Hauptursache und ist selten das hauptsächliche Resultat der Handlung, die Person wird von aussen gesehen.[1]

One can infer from these remarks that the epic quality of films - their concentration on external events - is a consequence of the need to appeal to a vast and unsophisticated audience. The apparatus lends itself to this need

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1. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.91.

and this enables Brecht to come to the conclusion that the attitudes fostered by films contribute to the downfall of Capitalism.

> In Wirklichkeit braucht der Film äussere Handlung und nicht introspektiv Psychologisches. Und in dieser Tendenz wirkt der Kapitalismus, indem er bestimmte Bedürfnisse in Massenmasstab heraustreibt, organisiert und automatisiert, schlechthin revolutionierend. Er vernichtet weite Strecken Ideologie, wenn er, sich nur auf die 'äussere' Handlung konzentrierend, alles in Prozesse auflösend, den Helden als Medium, den Menschen als Mass aller Dinge aufgebend, die introspektive Psychologie des bürgerlichen Romans zerschlägt. [1]

The film magnates by descending, as they imagine, to the level of a mass audience have sealed their own doom, in that they have given the masses a new mode of looking at the social cosmos. The undermining process thus begun might be accelerated by a deliberate use of film techniques for direct political ends.

It is in connection with the revolutionary use to which technical apparatus can be put that Brecht refers more specifically to the didactic purpose of art. He believes that machines put to the uses of art can destroy or overcome un-technical or anti-technical traditional art. It is important to note that Brecht's first Lehrstück - Der Flug der Lindberghs, later re-named Der Ozeanflug - was a radio play. The Radiotheorie appended to the play ascribes an

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1. op.cit., p.98.

importance to radio which is connected with the playwright's belief that any new technical means of communication have an inherent sociological function which must be developed. Thus he considers the Ozeanflug to be didactic not in the obvious sense of instructing a radio audience but in the sense of teaching those who participate how the function of the radio may be changed. It is not just a Lehrstück but a Lehrgegenstand[1], which attempts not only to indoctrinate the listeners but to change the function of radio.

> Dem gegenwärtigen Rundfunk soll der Ozeanflug nicht zum Gebrauch dienen, sondern er soll ihn verändern.[2]

The didacticism which marks Brecht's theoretical writings in these years and which is the most important factor differentiating them from the earlier theoretical writings is two-fold: direct and ostensive in the Lehrstücke, indirect in the operas. This is best understood by returning to the questions of Stoff and Form which are at the basis of the whole idea of an 'Epic Theatre'. When Brecht wrote at the end of the notes to Mahagonny that he was striving after a didactic theatre, the terminology he uses is important.

> In den anschliessenden Arbeiten wurden Versuche unternommen, das Lehrhafte auf Kosten des Kulinarischen zu betonen. Also aus dem Genussmittel den Lehr-

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1. Versuche 1 - 4, op.cit., p.23.
2. Ibid.

> gegenstand zu entwickeln und gewisse Institute aus Vergnügungsstätten in Publikationsorgane umzubauen. [1]

In the first place 'Genussmittel' and 'Lehrgegenstand' are not totally unrelated: one can be developed from the other. Where the Lehrstück is revolutionary - a totally new departure, involving new technical devices and postulating a new function for art - the operas are evolutionary, developed from existing products and merely insinuating a new function of art. He asserts the 'culinary' character of his own operas and by that he means their entertainment value and relates this to the capitalist function of the theatre.[2] The sociological doctrine is still presented in a 'cooked-up' form, as compared with the vitamin pills represented by the Lehrstücke. The operas, however, do have an indirect didactic function mainly in terms of their subject-matter - Stoffe. By presenting social contradictions in a grotesquely unresolved way Brecht is seeking to change society and ultimately social institutions - "Im Provokatorischen sehen wir die Realität wiederhergestellt".[3] In the case of the Lehrstücke the technical apparatus as such - radio, stage-machinery, etc. - is called upon to play

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1. Stücke III, p.276.
2. Stücke III, p.259 ff. Oper aber Neuerung!
3. op.cit., p.266.

its part in teaching the individual to die - or not to die - a subject-matter which, incidentally, is not seen in terms of social contradictions. What is important here is that the Form of the theatre is itself a kind of subject-matter - Stoff: i.e. the attempt to change the function of the theatre by revolutionary formal devices is tantamount to the social changes suggested by the themes of the operas. This accounts for the fact that in the Lehrstücke Brecht shows no interest in refined techniques of stage-production. The Lehrstücke, particularly the earlier Lehrstücke, are meant to be the constructive counterpart to the social criticism that marks the operas. They are unambiguous and unsophisticated because, amongst other things, they are meant, as Brecht says, for performance by unsophisticated people.

> Wir nehmen diese wichtigen Veranstaltungen aus allen Abhängigkeiten heraus und lassen sie von denen machen, für die sie bestimmt sind und die allein eine Verwendung dafür haben: von Arbeiterchören, Laienspielgruppen, Schülerchören und Schülerorchestern, also von solchen, die weder für die Kunst bezahlen noch für Kunst bezahlt werden, sondern Kunst machen wollen.[1]

Their chief value, he ultimately concludes, is to those who participate directly rather than to a possible audience.

> Diese Bezeichnung (i.e. Lehrstück) gilt nur für Stücke, die für die Darstellenden lehrhaft sind. Sie benötigen so kein Publikum.[2]

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1. Notes to Die Massnahme, Stücke IV, p.309.
2. Anmerkung zu den Lehrstücken, Stücke V, p.276.

It is, in fact, possible to regard this implication of the Lehrstücke as an antecedent to the rigorous school of training for the actors of the Epic Theatre. The destruction of illusion, the rejection of identification processes are features common to both the Lehrstücke and 'epic' techniques of acting.

III. Reason versus feeling.

The political, social and aesthetic notions developed by Brecht in the years 1929-1932 led him to give a more specific outline to his 'Epic' Theatre than he had done previously. As early as 1926 he had pointed to the fundamental rationality of his theatre[1] - a view which in the Prozess is related to his rejection of feelings in assessing social realities.

> Denn auch wer von der Realität nur das von ihr Erlebbare gibt, gibt sie selbst nicht wieder. Sie ist längst nicht mehr im Totalen erlebbar. Wer die dunklen Assoziationen, die anonymen Gefühle gibt, die sie erzeugt, gibt sie selbst nicht mehr.[2]

As far as the theatrical practice of the 'Epic Theatre' in these years goes, Brecht's anti-emotionalism is directed towards 'eine nicht-aristotelische Dramatik'. This expression which is referred to both in the Prozess and the notes to

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1. cf. Chapter II, p. 75 f.
2. Der Dreigroschenprozess, op.cit., p.94.

Die Mutter stands, to a certain extent, for the kind of relationship between actor and audience which Brecht commented on in his Dialog über Schauspielkunst. There is one important change of emphasis in this relationship. Whereas earlier the playwright had pleaded for a complete gulf between actor and audience[1], in the notes to Die Dreigroschenoper and Mann ist Mann he now talks of a rapprochement between the two. While there must on no account be identification, there must be constant contact between stage and audience.

> Der Zuschauer soll nicht auf den Weg der Einfühlung verwiesen werden, was die Übermittlung des Stoffes betrifft, sondern zwischen dem Zuschauer und dem Schauspieler findet ein Verkehr statt, und bei aller Fremdheit und allem Abstand wendet sich der Schauspieler doch letzten Endes direkt an den Zuschauer.[2]

What Brecht means by contact, here, is a kind of guidance which is communicated to the audience by the actor through his own detachment from his part. This is, perhaps, best illustrated from Brecht's comments on the performance of Peter Lorre in the part of Galy Gay.[3] On the one hand, Lorre was to give the impression that he was reading a document of self-defence, written in the past, a document which he did not fully comprehend. In other words a certain confusion had to characterise his attitude to the part. On

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1. cf. Chapter II, p.60.
2. Stücke III, p.149 f.
3. This actor played in the production of the play in 1931.

the other hand, he had to present this part, which consisted of a series of mutually contradictory episodes and utterances, as something which had a unity of its own. This was to be achieved by accentuating the contradictions, by using interruptions and jerky delivery to communicate his confusion to the audience. The unity was to be achieved in the mind of the audience by forcing it to draw its own conclusions about Galy Gay's behaviour.

> Die Sätze (Aussprüche) wurden also nicht dem Zuschauer nahegebracht, sondern entfernt, der Zuschauer wurde nicht geführt, sondern seinen eigenen Entdeckungen überlassen.[1]

In other words, the actor must make clear that men are not able to construe their own motives, and he must force the audience to judge for themselves.

Thus Brecht demands an attitude from both spectator and actor that is different from the traditional attitude. The spectator should develop the attitude of an uncommitted observer - 'Die Haltung des Rauchend-Beobachtens'[2] - in order to be objective about what he sees and in order to appreciate the complexities of social situations. He should be as detached from what he sees as the actor is detached about his part. In the relationship between actor and audience detachment is produced by rendering everything striking and

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1. Stücke II, p.321.
2. Stücke III, p.144.

strange. 'Auffällig' is the term Brecht uses and it foreshadows his subsequent term 'Verfremdung'.[1]

It is important to note that when Brecht refers to the presentation of something striking on the stage he is thinking in terms of events or episodes, not in terms of an impersonation of striking virtuosity. The actor is to present events in a striking manner so that the audience is encouraged to think about these events, not about his performance.

> Das Bestreben des epischen Schauspielers, bestimmte Vorgänge unter Menschen auffällig zu machen ...[2]

It is, in fact, because the actor concentrates on why things happen that his function becomes more embracing, becomes 'epic'. His duty is to show and present his material with the appropriate 'Gestus' - a term which it is impossible to translate with all the implications Brecht gives to it. 'Gestus', which E. Hauptmann referred to as early as 1926 as something fundamental to the Epic Theatre[3], is explained at some length in the essay "Über Gestische Musik", which

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1. In his definition of the Verfremdungseffekt in the Neue Technik der Schauspielkunst (Versuche 11, p.102) Brecht uses the term 'auffällig'. "Der V-Effekt besteht darin, dass das Ding, das zum Verständnis gebracht, auf welches das Augenmerk gelenkt werden soll, aus einem gewöhnlichen, bekannten unmittelbar vorliegenden Ding zu einem besonderen, auffälligen, unerwarteten Ding gemacht wird."
2. Stücke II, p.325. A similar idea is expressed in the notes to Die Dreigroschenoper, Stücke III, p.144: "Der Schauspieler müsste jene Vorgänge, die durch die Titel schon angezeigt, also ihrer stofflichen Sensation schon beraubt sind, ganz anders auffällig machen."
3. cf. Chapter II, p.59.

Brecht wrote in 1932. The term means more than gesture or gesticulation for it is meant to embody attitudes in their totality - 'Gesamthaltungen' - and it has social connotations. As Willet points out[1], this conception of 'Gestus' is inseparable from Brecht's sociological ideas in these years. In the above mentioned essay Brecht clarifies the notion with the example of a man chased by a dog. This is not, as such, a social 'Gestus' for the episode could be presented purely in terms of a man who is terrified by the chase, in which case fear alone would be communicated.

> Sein Gestus ist jeder Besonderheit gesellschaftlicher Art entkleidet.[2]

The episode can, however, be turned into a complex social 'Gestus' if external details are made significant - if the episode is presented in terms of a poorly clad man who is being chased by a watch-dog. In this case attention would not be drawn primarily to the man's fear, but to the circumstances of the chase. Poverty would become a factor in the chase, as would the function of the dog as a guardian of property. Brecht concludes that the episode presented in this way would show significant social factors, would show how a man can be 'auf die tierische Stufe heruntergedrückt'.[3]

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1. The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, op.cit., p.175.
2. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.253.
3. Ibid.

'Gestus' thus implies a presentation of human beings and human relationships from without - in the form of demonstration. It stresses the social and economic factors which make someone behave in a particular way and has little or no connection with the 'inner' life of any particular character. Brecht used the term in connection with the presentation of Galy Gay because he wanted to point to something beyond Galy Gay's immediate and contradictory reactions to any given situation.

> Denn hier war wieder über den Einzelsinn der Sätze hinaus ein ganz bestimmter Grundgestus herausgearbeitet, der zu seiner Wahrnehmbarkeit zwar des Sinns der einzelnen Sätze nicht ganz entraten konnte, aber doch eben dieses Sinns nur mehr als Mittel zum Zweck bedurfte.[1]

In the notes to the operas as well as Mann ist Mann the demands made on the actor prepare the way for the politically active rôle assigned to him in those to Die Mutter or in the Rede an dänische Arbeiterschauspieler über die Kunst der Beobachtung.[2] Brecht's conception of 'Gestus' becomes more and more informed with his own personal political beliefs. The actor is nothing more than a class-conscious member of

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1. Stücke II, p.321.
2. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.271:
   Eure Aufgabe Schauspieler, ist es
   Forscher zu sein und Lehrer in der Kunst der Behandlung
   der Menschen.
   Kennend ihre Natur und sie zeigend, lehrt ihr sie
   Sich zu behandeln. Ihr lehrt sie die grosse Kunst
   Des Zusammenlebens.

the proletariate who must communicate the marxist doctrine to the audience. In Die Mutter, for example, the mother's first lesson in economics is a simplification of a great historical event - the awakening of class-consciousness among the exploited - and it must be presented as such with the appropriate typical 'Gestus'.[1] The tendentiousness of Brecht's remarks in these works is only too obvious. It would, however, be a mistake to deplore such statements by Brecht. The propagandist phase was inevitable in the development of Brecht's social conscience and one may do well to remember that this phase occurred at a time when Germany was once again in the throes of political, economic and social ills. Operas, propagandist plays and their theories must all be given their due in that they enabled the playwright to develop features of his theatre, which remain characteristic and valid for the epic theatre as a whole. As far as the actor is concerned, it is clear that in the propagandist phase Brecht credits him with a sense of responsibility, tendentious as it may be, which requires a training not usually expected of actors. Brecht may very well be idealising the rôle of the actor in his theatre -

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1. Stücke V, p.154 f. "Da das Interesse des Zuschauers einzig auf das Verhalten der Figuren gelenkt wird, muss rein ästhetisch gesprochen, der jeweilige Gestus bedeutend und typisch sein... Die kleine Szene zum Beispiel in der die Wlassowa ihre erste Lektion in der Ökonomie empfängt ist keineswegs nur ein Ereignis in ihrem eigenen Leben: es ist ein historischer Vorgang."

and one may not agree with what he is meant to communicate - but the practical result was, at least, a care and precision of acting which is the hallmark of Brecht's later theatre.

For a clear rendering of a 'Gestus' the actors receive help from the new significance which Brecht attributes to the sister arts of the theatre: décor and music. As far as décor is concerned, Brecht placed great importance on the use of placards and slides projected on to a screen. This practice - which Brecht started with Trommeln in der Nacht and never abandoned - was designed to add a further dimension to the events presented on the stage. Titles and placards allow for a presentation of events in such a way that they are not only observed but commented on as they happen. As Brecht explained in the notes to Die Mutter, they can elucidate or contradict events or conversations in a play.[1] They are to the theatre what the footnote is to a book and encourage the audience to see the complexities of any given event.

As far as music is concerned, Brecht demands a break with the Wagnerian operatic tradition which sought a fusion of the arts, and the assimilation of the audience into the

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1. Stücke V, p.119: "Die Projektionen sind keineswegs einfache mechanische Hilfsmittel im Sinne von Ergänzungen, keine Eselsbrücke; sie nehmen keine Hilfestellung für den Zuschauer, sondern Gegenstellung."

spirit of the work. Brecht was not alone in his opposition to this tradition. The place and function he attributes to music in his theatre were strongly influenced by the trend which characterised the German musical world during the decade 1920-1930. The experiments conducted by Hindemith, Darius Milhaud and Strawinski at the musical festivals of Donaueschingen and (later) Baden-Baden[1] sought to produce a kind of fragmentation of the work, similar to that demanded by Brecht in his notes to Mahagonny.

> Musik, Wort und Bild mussten mehr Selbständigkeit erhalten.[2]

There can be no doubt that the formal features of the scenic cantatas of Claudel[3] and Strawinski[4] come close to those of Brecht's operas and didactic plays in these years. Strawinski's Ödipus Rex, for example, which was produced in 1928, made use of a Latin text which was spoken by a commentator. The music did not seek to underline the emotional implications of the text, but made use of the rhythms which did not coincide with the rhythm of the speech.[5] Judging from Jhering's comments

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1. cf. Chapter IV, p.159 f.
2. Stücke III, p.268.
3. Willet has pointed to the formal similarities between Brecht's Lehrstücke and Claudel's Christophe Colomb. cf. The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, op.cit., p.116 f.
4. He was, incidentally, a close friend of Hindemith.
5. cf. Klotz, B. B. Versuch über das Werk, op.cit., p.104: "Hinzu kommt eine antiprosodische Rhythmik: der Gesang verläuft gegen die Betonungsgesetze der Sprache."

on the work a kind of detachment was produced which is close to what Brecht himself had in mind.

> Strawinski hatte als Komponist mit seinem Textdichter Jean Cocteau den Mut, die Tragödie Ödipus Rex lateinisch wie eine antike Liturgie, wie eine geschlossene tragische Opferhandlung vorzuführen, die ein Sprecher unterbricht und erläutert. Die Vorgänge wenden sich nur durch diesen Sprecher an das Publikum: er demonstriert einen episch-dramatischen Ablauf. Er ist der paradoxe und doch erschütternd grossartige Versuch, eine ferne Welt nicht durch Vermenschlichung, nicht durch Verringerung der Entfernung, sondern durch Verhärtung, durch 'Einfrostung' (ein Wort Strawinskis) und durch Vergrösserung der Entfernung näherzubringen.[1]

Brecht himself acknowledged the value of these experiments in his essay Über die Verwendung von Musik für ein Episches Theater.[2] He was, however, convinced that these experiments did not go far enough because the composers did not bother to examine and study the effect which their experiments might have on an audience.

> Unsere Komponisten überlassen das Studium der Wirkung ihrer Musik im Allgemeinen den Gastwirten.[3]

He concludes, rather smugly, that the most promising developments for modern music must come through the Epic Theatre and the didactic play.

> Eine Aussicht für die moderne Musik eröffnet meiner Meinung nach ausser dem epischen Theater das Lehrstück.[4]

Brecht regarded the songs of his operas as having a character

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1. Die Zwanziger Jahre, op.cit., p.159.
2. This essay was written in 1935.
3. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.250.
4. op.cit., p.251.

which was 'gestisch' in that they embodied attitudes which were characteristic of society at large rather than of any particular individual in a particular situation. The cheap and sentimental effect of most of the music to these operas was meant to emphasise the hollowness of pleasures in a capitalist society. Brecht regarded this kind of music as being more revealing than serious music with its emphasis on evocation of emotions.

> Die sogenannte billige Musik ist besonders im Kabarett und Operette schon seit geräumer Zeit eine Art gestischer Musik. Die ernste Musik hingegen hält immer noch am Lyrismus fest und pflegt den individuellen Ausdruck.[1]

The songs in his own operas were meant to be a kind of commentary on middle-class life; they encouraged the actor to adopt and present 'Gesten'. Emotionalism is further curtailed by the manner in which the actor should make the transition from ordinary speech to song. What happens between the spoken word and the song is not a progression but an event, a discontinuity.

> Mündet er in die Melodie ein, so muss dies ein Ereignis sein.[2]

Thus music by its quality of commentary and by the way in which it is presented acquires an 'epic' quality. Brecht was particularly enthusiastic about the music Hans Eisler wrote for Die Mutter as an illustration of the function it

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1. op.cit., p.244.
2. Stücke III, p.155.

should fulfil in his theatre. On the whole he considered it as producing the 'voice of reason', guiding the audience to the acceptance of Communism. Although it was by no means simple music, it simplified complicated political issues.[1]

In all these techniques of acting and stage-production Brecht is guided by his principle of curtailing empathy. It is a Leit-motiv to the essays Vergnügungstheater oder Lehrtheater? and Bemerkungen über die Chinesische Schauspielkuhst which were both written in 1936. In contrast to the notes to Die Mutter these two essays are not dominated by the political considerations which guided Brecht in his defence of the epic theatre before his exile in 1932. The rejection of empathy is seen more and more in terms of an artistic principle.

This development is shown quite clearly in Vergnügungstheater oder Lehrtheater? where the very title of the essay suggests a return to the prime concern of the theatre: entertainment. Referring to the similarities between mystery plays, Jesuit and Spanish drama, on the one hand, and the epic theatre, on the other, Brecht acknowledges that the propagandistic phase of his own theatre was connected

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1. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.247. "Die Musik Eislers ist keineswegs das, was man einfach nennt. ... Sie ermöglichte in einer bewunderungswürdigen Weise gewisse Vereinfachungen schwierigster politischer Probleme."

with political events in Germany before his exile.[1] Although Brecht does not abandon the idea of a didactic theatre he no longer tries to use the theatre as a means to indoctrinate those who take part in plays. It is as if the idea of 'Spass' which he had missed when he first started writing about the theatre[2] had gradually re-stated a claim on him.

> Das Theater bleibt Theater, auch wenn es Lehrtheater ist, und soweit es gutes Theater ist, ist es amüsant.[3]

In the Bemerkungen über die Schauspielkunst the artistic principles which guide the Chinese actor are seen by Brecht to have more worth than the methods advocated by Stanislawski. Although he had given the impression, particularly in the notes to Mahagonny[4], that he rejected feelings altogether for his own theatre, both these essays clarify his attitude towards emotional representation of a part, or emotional

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1. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.72: "Diese Theaterformen entsprachen gewissen Tendenzen ihrer Zeit und vergingen mit diesen ... Nur an wenig Orten und nicht für lange Zeit waren bisher die Umstände eines epischen lehrhaften Theaters günstig. In Berlin hat der Faschismus der Entwicklung eines solchen Theaters energisch Einhalt geboten."
2. cf. Chapter II, p.58.
3. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.66.
4. One left-wing critic reacted very violently to Brecht's table of comparison between the epic and dramatic form of the theatre. cf. Die Linkskurve, Berlin 1932, p.28. Quoted in Schumacher, op.cit., p.158 f. "Der 'Mensch' mit Weltbild ohne Erlebnis, mit Argumenten ohne 'Suggestion', mit 'Ratio' ohne Gefühl ist eine Abstraktion, ein leeres Schema, kein konkreter gesellschaftlicher Mensch ..."

participation in drama. He does not reject the fact that the theatre is concerned with human psychology,[1] but he has no sympathy for the 'creative mood' advocated by Stanislawski as a method for the actor to approach his part in a play. It is the sub-conscious process of trying to live a part which he rejects because he considers this to be unreliable:

> ... die Kreierung des anderen (war) ein 'intuitiver', also dunkler Akt, der im Unterbewusstsein vor sich ging, und das Unterbewusstsein ist sehr schwach zu regulieren: es hat sozusagen ein schlechtes Gewissen.[2]

On the face of it Brecht's distrust of the emotions, which reaches a climax during this period, is connected with his conversion to Marxism and his attacks on the conventional theatre as a tool of capitalism. Schumacher argues that this distrust sprang from Brecht's disgust with the psychological intricacies of middle-class literature.[3] Rühle considers that the toning down of emotions in Brecht's theatre is a manifestation of the playwright's belief in behaviouristic psychology.[4] Gray points to the theatrical

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1. Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.69. "Ein wichtiges Gebiet für die Dramatiker ist die Psychologie ... So wie der gewöhnliche Richter bei der Aburteilung, kann ich mir nicht ohne weiteres ein ausreichendes Bild von dem seelischen Zustand eines Mörders machen. Die moderne Psychologie von der Psychoanalyse bis zum Behaviourismus verschafft mir Kenntnisse, die mir zu einer ganz anderen Beurteilung des Falles verhelfen, besonders wenn ich die Ergebnisse der Soziologie berücksichtige, und die Ökonomie sowie die Geschichte nicht ausser acht lasse."
2. op.cit., p.79.
3. Schumacher, op.cit., p.190.
4. Rühle, op.cit., p.226.

productions of Reinhardt and Piscator as the background against which "Brecht's statement of principles rather arbitrarily arose".[1] In the light of Brecht's earlier comments on the theatre all these explanations have elements of truth. It is, however, misleading to consider Brecht's rejection of emotion purely in the light of his political allegiance or the external factors which might have provoked it. As we have tried to point out, there is something anti-emotional in the playwright himself which finds clear expression not only in the plays of this period, but in the very first plays he ever wrote.[2]

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1. Gray, op.cit., p.61.

2. cf. Chapter I, p. 25 ff.

Chapter VI

The plays of the middle period

Introduction and themes.

Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe (1932-1935); Die Horatier und die Kuriatier (1934); Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar (1937); Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches (1935-1938); Das Verhör / Die Verurteilung des Lukullus (1939) are products of Brecht's period of exile. They are not the only products of this period: Galileo Galilei, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Mutter Courage were conceived and in part written before 1939. It seems convenient, however, to consider the above plays as a group, partly because they belong to the earlier period of exile, partly because they have a common theme: the class struggle in various manifestations. They are all political plays; it is true, of course, that all of Brecht's later works are 'political', but these five plays have, generally speaking, a more obvious and direct relevance to political events of the day - although they do not all have a superficially 'topical' character. They are, in fact, interesting as variations on a theme, displaying a whole range of structures, characterisation, language and theatrical

techniques.[1]

Something of this range we are already familiar with - the grotesque elements of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe (subtitled 'Ein Greuelmärchen'), for instance, links up with Mann ist Mann. The use of court-room scenes and the formalism of the Lehrstücke are also apparent in this group of plays.[2] But there are new elements: an 'Aristotelian' drama, for instance - Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar[3] - and a loose form of reportage, without the unifying central figure of Die Mutter, in Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches; and for the first time Brecht descends into the legendary, as opposed to the criminal underworld in Das Verhör des Lukullus.

The character of all these plays is 'expository' either in the sense of unmasking or of demonstrating - sometimes in both senses: Brecht shares Heinrich Mann's view of society as inscrutable for the mass of its mentors:

> Diese deutsche Gesellschaft kennt sich selbst nicht. Sie zerfällt in Schichten, die einander unbekannt sind, und die führende Klasse verschwimmt hinter Wolken.4

The function of literature is to teach the public to penetrate

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1. This is particularly clear in the case of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe and Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches which treat of the same events in quite a different idiom: in the first as a parable, in the latter as reportage.
2. This particularly true of Die Horatier und die Kuriatier.
3. Stücke VII, p.60 : "Es ist aristotelische (Einfühlungs) Dramatik."
4. H. Mann, Essays, Hamburg 1960 (Claasen), p.275.

these clouds.[1] The essence of exposition is simplification and all these plays seek to simplify issues. In this respect Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe is possibly the least successful. The theme here is the superficiality of the racial issues so loudly enunciated by the Nazis, and here grotesquely embodied in the Roundheads or Tschuchen and the Peakheads or Tschichen: in other words, Rasse oder Klasse. In the court-room scenes with their expedient justice[2], Brecht tries to show that the fundamental issue is not racial but economic, the struggle not between Peakheads and Roundheads but between rich and poor. The plot designed to convey this seems unduly complex, however. The two plots involving de Guzman and his alleged seduction of Nana, on the one hand, and Callas' seizure of de Guzman's horses, on the other, do not seem to be sufficiently clearly related. A positive feature of the work, however, is its ironical humour, exemplified in the attitude of Callas to the seduction of his daughter by the local landowner:

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1. Ibid., p.275: "Nun ist die Sendung der Literatur im Weltgetriebe, zu lehren, das zu durchschauen, was herrscht, und darüber wegzukommen."

2. In Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe the procedure of the first trial is regularly interrupted by bulletins reporting the advance of the insurgents (Die Sichel). The judge is no longer in a position to support de Guzman; as Iberin advises: "Stützen Sie sich lieber auf die Meldungen vom Kriegsschauplatz." Stücke VI, p.69.

> Iberin: Der Pachtherr missbrauchte also seine wirtschaftliche Machtstellung, um die Tochter ins Unglück zu stürzen?
> Callas: Unglück? Den ganzen Vorteil hatte das Mädchen! Sie bekam wenigstens anständige Kleider! Die hat nie gearbeitet. Aber wir! Pflügen Sie einmal ohne Gäule! [1]

Here, as in Die heilige Johanna, Brecht is not afraid to show his audience 'der Armen Schlechtigkeit' in the belief that they will see it for what it is: 'der Armen Armut'.

The theme of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe is 'alienated' by being put in the form of a parable[2], transferred from the Germany of the day to a mythical agricultural colony of vaguely Spanish or South American character.[3] Die Horatier und die Kuriatier employs another kind of 'alienation'. It is based on a historical incident (not a very well known one, it must be admitted: the fight of the three Horatians and the three Curiatians which took place during the reign of the Roman king Tullus Hostilius - 670 B.C. - and determined the supremacy of Rome over Alba). Brecht undoubtedly seized upon this incident because it embodies in the simplest form a conflict of states or classes.

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1. Stücke VI, p.77.
2. The play is provided with a fairly lengthy prologue, where Brecht seeks to guide the audience in the proper interpretation of the play.
3. The names of the country - Jahoo - and the characters, Iberin, de Guzman, Callas, suggest a Latin American background.

His technique here is the opposite of that usually employed in his expository drama: instead of setting up figures representative of a class - like Mauler or the Merchant or the Coolie - he takes from history a number of actual figures and raises them to a higher potential or power in a strictly mathematical sense: each of the Horatier and Kuriatier carries an indication of the numerical strength of the group he represents.[1]

Whereas Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe shows the class-struggle within a single state, Die Horatier und die Kuriatier ostensibly describes an attack by a capitalist state (Kuriatier) on a socialist state (Horatier).[2] In fact, however, little can be done within the limits of the play to show the nature of the two states. The work is not an exposition of ideas - certainly not an unmasking of capitalism - but a demonstration of what Brecht chooses to call 'Dialektik'.[3] It may strike us, in fact, as more like a demonstration of elementary tactics than advanced dialectics. The work involves some of the lessons

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1. The device is Chinese in origin. cf. below under theatrical practice.
2. One could query why the capitalist state should be capable of raising a more powerful army than the communist state, which based on economic solidarity should in theory be competent to defend itself.
3. Versuche 14, p.119: "Die Horatier und die Kuriatier ... ist ein Lehrstück über Dialektik für Kinder."

incorporated in Brecht's earlier work - Lehrstücke and others: the necessity for the sacrifice of individuals for the good of the community (Einverständnis), the wisdom of yielding to superior force, the need to adapt one's tactics to circumstances. All these things are demonstrated in the tactics of the Horatier: the bowman accepts an inferior weapon:

> Frauen: Wenn der Bogenschütze mit dem Bogen nicht einverstanden ist,
> Kann nicht gekämpft werden.
> Der Horatier: Ich bin einverstanden.[1]

The swordsman recognises that the defects of his shield must be compensated for by his skill:

> Ich verstehe. Da er den geraden Stoss
> Nicht aushält, muss ich sorgen,
> Dass der Stoss abgleitet.[2]

The spearman uses his lance for many purposes - "Viele Dinge sind in einem Ding"[3] - in such a way as to compensate for the intrinsic superiority of his enemy's lance. The bowman, however, perishes because he fails to adapt himself to the changing circumstances:

> Unzulänglich bediente unser Bogenschütze die grosse Maschine
> Der sich bewegenden Umwelt.[4]

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1. Stücke V, p.237.
2. Stücke V, p.239.
3. Stücke V, p.251.
4. Stücke V, p.272 f.

Die Horatier und die Kuriatier - like the other Lehrstücke - is not intended for an audience, but is meant to teach the actors. It is not entertainment in any sense, but purely cerebral. Very different is Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar. This work, strongly influenced by Synge's Riders to the sea, simplifies the class-struggle in a fashion different from that of the other plays. It simplifies it by showing the impact of the Spanish Civil War, the clash of Fascism and Socialism, upon an individual, the heroine, who has the meaning of this struggle brought home to her by the death of her son. Carrar acts from emotion rather than from reason, her involvement in the war springs from her maternal love rather than from political conviction, and the play is meant to exercise an emotional appeal on the audience. It stands out among Brecht's works as conventional theatre, and there are signs that he disliked the work and was ashamed of it.[1] It is an overtly topical work, as is Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches, but it totally lacks the epic qualities of the latter. This is a loosely jointed series of scenes in which Brecht's aim is to show how the virus of National Socialism poisons society penetrating to every extremity of the body politic. There are scenes in

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1. See above note 3, p.304.

concentration camps[1], but physical violence plays a comparatively small part. The real horror of the play consists in the exposure of human cowardice and its corrosive effects even in the intimacy of family life.[2]

This work, too, has the character of a demonstration. Brecht breaks down the monolithic phenomenon of Nazism, to show how the state rests on the petty fears and ambitions of individuals representative of their class or profession.[3] None of the great Nazi leaders appears here, as they do in gangster guise in Arturo Ui. Furcht und Elend is the system seen from below in forms of behaviour with which everyone is familiar. For once the technique of 'Verfremdung' is reversed. The monstrous phenomenon of Nazism, strange and forbidding, is shown to consist ultimately of innumerable small acts of cowardice or greed. Only in this sense is the play analytical. It shows the causes and effects of National Socialism without indulging in the kind of cerebral analysis of the Lehrstücke, so that he who runs may read.

Das Verhör des Lukullus differs from both Carrar and Furcht und Elend in that it is not obviously topical. Nor does it deal with the class-struggle as such. Its theme is a universal one: the phenomenon of war as seen from two

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1. Stücke VI, pp.269 ff., 274 f.
2. Stücke VI, pp.315 ff., 326 ff.
3. e.g. Rechtsfindung, Stücke VI, p.276 ff.

angles - the point of view of the general for whom it means fame and wealth, or at least a glorious end - and that of the masses for whom war means privation, suffering and inglorious death. These two points of view are those of the conqueror Lukullus and the court of shades which tries him. In having the mighty Lukullus tried by a tribunal of the poor and the oppressed, Brecht is reverting to a venerable tradition - the political and social interpretation of the Christian notion of the Last Judgement.[1]

Lukullus had a stormy passage: conceived as a radio play, it was turned into an opera, Die Verurteilung des Lukullus (music Paul Dessau), which subsequently gave to the original, which had an inconclusive ending[2], the last scene Das Urteil, in which the general is hurled into the void by the unanimous condemnation of the judges:

Ah ja! Ins Nichts mit ihm! [3]

Even in this form the opera did not satisfy the officials of the East German Ministerium für Volksbildung under whose auspices it was performed in the Berlin Staatsoper in 1951.

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1. This is a tradition which becomes prominent in writers of the Sturm und Drang period - J.H. Voss: Leibeigenschaftszyklus, Bürger, Schubart, Schiller (Der Eroberer, Die schlimmen Monarchen) - who seem to have borrowed the motif from popular tales; cf. Wolfgang Friedrich: Motive des Volksglaubens in der Dichtung der Stürmer und Dränger (Weimarer Beiträge, vii (1961), pp.61-79).
2. Versuche 11, p.155: "Das Gericht / Zieht sich zur Beratung zurück."
3. op.cit., p.153.

Brecht was taken to task for his unequivocal condemnation of war and he consented to change the work so as to exempt the defensive patriotic war from this condemnation. The king conquerred by Lukullus and originally represented as an exploiter is now shown as a liberal monarch. Ostensibly this change was made to explain the presence of the king as a shade (and not as a stone figure in Lukullus' triumphal frieze): had he been an exploiter he would have long been consigned to oblivion.[1] Furthermore, the dead legionaries are made to join in the chorus of condemnation and to express their disgust and remorse for the part they have played:

> Hätten wir doch
> Den Dienst des Angreifers gekündigt
> Hätten wir doch
> Uns den Verteidigern gesellt.[2]

For these changes Brecht produces another reason - namely that the inclusion of three new arias involved in them strengthened the 'court' musically and balanced the musical score on the side of Lukullus.[3] By adducing this second argument he tends to weaken his case rather than

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1. cf. Versuche 11, p.157:

> Der Lehrer: Warum dann
> Bist du hier bei uns, König?
>
> Der König: Weil ich Städte baute
> Weil ich sie verteidigte, als ihr
> Römer sie uns abverlangtet.

2. Versuche 11, p.159.
3. Ibid.

strengthen it. In spite of these concessions, left-wing critics were never happy with the work.[1] The notion of justice being done only in an after-life was naturally anathema to them and they were loath to recognise the solemn power of Brecht's device. As Ernst Krause wrote:

> Wer die Folge der Bilder kritisch an sich vorüberziehen lässt, wird freilich eines bedauern müssen: dass der Blickpunkt des brechtschen politischen Theaters dem Thema entsprechend nicht bei den Lebenden, sondern bei den Toten liegt. Die Anklage wider den Krieg ... dies alles geschieht im 'Totenreich'.[2]

No doubt such critics would have preferred a dramatization of the Nürnberg tribunal.

Structure.

Of these five plays, Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe and Furcht und Elend are most closely related in theme: they both describe the rise of National Socialism. The former does this, however, through a 'Verfremdung' in the form of a parable, the latter in documentary fashion. These

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1. Cf. Esslin, op.cit., p.155 f. who quotes the reaction of the official party organ Neues Deutschland (22.3.1951) - East Berlin - to the revised version of Lukullus: "The world peace camp with its 800 million people, led by the Soviet Union, is not a court of shades, but has the very real power to subject all war criminals to a very earthbound kind of justice. What at the beginning of Hitler's war might have been understood as the expression of the uncertain political position of an exiled anti-Fascist writer appears in 1951 as a relapse into doubt and weakness the poet should have overcome long ago ..."
2. Irrweg des 'Lukullus', Die Weltbühne, VI, No.44 (31 October 1951), p.1453.

different approaches involve quite different dramatic structures. Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe has a co-ordinated plot which develops through the succession of cause and effect; Furcht und Elend takes its shape from a survey of German society; its unity is that of the phenomenon it describes, not an inherent artistic unity.

Both plays are closely concerned with the structure of society, particularly the relationship of classes or groups to one another. This relationship is simply conceived in the agricultural colony depicted in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe: it is that of Pachtherr and Pächter. The plot which illustrates this relationship, however, is relatively complex. It is, incidentally, one of the very few 'plots' in the conventional sense actually devised by Brecht himself. The action involves essentially the tenant-farmer Callas, his daughter Nanna and their landlord de Guzman; its two focal points are the trial scenes[1], in the first of which de Guzman is condemned to death for seducing the round-headed Nanna, and in the second of which Callas loses the horses he had seized from the estate of the imprisoned de Guzman. Beyond this point a new phase begins with the complication by which Callas and Nanna take the place of de Guzman and Isabella in the condemned cell and the bed of Zazarante

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1. Scene 4, Stücke VI, p.62 ff. and Scene 7, Stücke VI, p.121 ff.

respectively. The whole of this action is embraced and determined by the larger action - the revolt of the 'Sichel', the dictatorship of Iberin and the return of the triumphant viceroy. Scene 11 balances Scene 1, just as scene 7 balances scene 4, in that it re-establishes , in the state as a whole, the status quo, which had been re-established in Callas' case when he lost the horses and was returned to his state of economic servitude. To this already complex plot is added the anti-clerical satire involved in Isabella's proposed entry into the Convent of St. Barabas. This plot is constructed so as to abound in the kind of paradoxical situation beloved by Brecht - de Guzman bartering his sister's virginity for his life as Callas had bartered his daughter's for the use of two horses, Nanna prostituting herself to save the life of de Guzman who has been condemned to death for using her as a prostitute.

The complexity of the plot is alleviated in a sense by the pantomimic prologue in which the theme is emblematically put by the weighing of roundheads against peakheads, of fine clothes against ragged clothes, and finally of one balance against the other.[1]

Very different from the elaborately constructed plot of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe is the loose collection of

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1. Stücke VI, p.7 ff.

24 scenes in Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches; these give a kaleidoscopic picture of life in Germany between 30th January 1933 (Hitler's accession to power) and 13th March 1938 (the occupation of Austria). Generally speaking, a chronological order is observed in the printed version, but the fact that there is no logical sequence is shown by the adaptation produced in New York and San Francisco under the title of The Private Life of the Master Race. Here the work was divided into three parts[1], still observing a roughly chronological scheme, preceded and linked by the appearance of an armoured troop-carrier, the occupants of which recited verses describing the extension of Nazi power beyond the frontiers of Germany, thus giving a further dimension to the work. The American version emphasizes a feature already perceptible in the printed work - an impression of increased tempo caused by the accumulation of short scenes in the latter part of the work. The printed version, incidentally, does not lack a certain thematic pattern: scenes 4 and 5, for instance, are glimpses of life in the concentration camps; scenes 6, 7, 8 and 9 show the repercussions of Nazism in the professions; scenes 10, 11 and 12 are concerned with the corrupting influence of Nazi youth organisations; scenes 17,

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1. Part I included scenes 2, 3, 4, 13, 14; Part II: scenes 8, 9, 6, 10; Part III: scenes 15, 19, 17, 11, 18, 16, 20, 24. Scenes 1, 5, 7, 12, 21, 22, 23 were omitted.

18 and 19 describe the difficulties of the small trader and farmer; scenes 13 and 14 show by ironic contrast the implications of Nazi rule for the working class; scenes 22 and 23 demonstrate consequences of the Spanish Civil War.

The episodes vary greatly in length and complexity: some (e.g. 17: Zwei Bäcker) are mere ironical anecdotes, a number of others (3: Das Kreidekreuz; 6: Rechtsfindung; 10: Der Spitzel) are complete little dramas - one (23: Arbeitsbeschaffung) is a miniature Antigone. The three most elaborate items (3, 6, 10) are constructed in terms of the conventional theatre, with rising tension, interaction of character and effective dramatic climaxes. None of them is lacking in a certain grim humour. Das Kreidekreuz, brief as it is, has two rudimentary plots, involving, on the one hand, the SA- Mann and Lincke, on the other, the SA-Mann and his fiancée; the two are linked by the gesture of the slap on the shoulder. Here, too, there is an instance of one of Brecht's favourite devices - the play within a play. In the episode where the SA-Mann encourages Lincke to criticize the Nazis, the playwright obscures the line between reality and charade, frankness and dissimulation, in such a way that neither the characters on the stage nor the audience can be quite certain where this line should be drawn. At one point the action even enters a further dimension when Lincke, pretending to criticize the régime, covers himself still

further by acting out an imagined subversive conversation.[1] Here we have a play within a play within a play. This juggling with illusion and reality may be observed in another form in scene 9 (Die jüdische Frau), where the heroine rehearses in different ways the scene with her husband which is to come.[2] In a sense such tricks are no more than an elaborate use of dramatic irony, but in Brecht's case they seem to be derived from the epic technique of demonstration, and the scenes from Furcht und Elend are interesting examples of how such 'epic' techniques may be assimilated into the more or less conventional drama.

Die Rechtsfindung introduces another favourite motif - that of the law-court. In this instance, however the case is not observed in the court-room, for the real issue is not the law-suit but the state of mind of the judge. The episode is so constructed as to show the increasing demoralisation of the judge as a succession of people put different versions of the case to him. There is irony in the manner in which the judge, pliant as he is, is forced into an impossible situation: once the principle of strict legality is surrendered and

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1. Stücke VI, p.260 f.
2. Stücke VI, p.324 ff.

expediency rules, the judge is lost.[1]

The third of the longer episodes is remarkable for its dramatic tension. In Der Spitzel the fear of the teacher and his wife mounts steadily to the point of panic, only to fall to an effective anti-climax with the return of the boy. The final twist of the screw which restores the tension and substitutes potential tragedy for the comic anti-climax lies in the effective curtain-line: "Meinst du, er sagt die Wahrheit?".[2]

Such episodes in Furcht und Elend are evidence of skill as a dramatic craftsman which Brecht, in his more elaborate works, chose not to use; in other words, the undramatic features in the epic works are not simply a sign of incapacity but the result of deliberate policy.

As far as its structure goes, Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar is in no way epic; based on Synge's Riders to the Sea[3], it

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1. Like Richter Adam in Kleist's Zerbrochener Krug, Amtsrichter Goll can give his judgment 'so jetzt, jetzo so' (1. 635); cf. Stücke VI, p.301: "Ich entscheide so, und ich entscheide so, wie man das verlangt, aber ich muss doch wissen, was man verlangt. Wenn man das nicht weiss, gibt es keine Justiz mehr." Unlike Adam, Goll is not literally the culprit in the case, but he and his like are ultimately responsible, and there is fine dramatic irony in the words of the usher describing the overcrowded court: "Aber da hätten Sie ja die Verhandlung von der Anklagebank aus führen müssen, Herr Amtsrichter (Stücke VI, p.310).
2. Stücke VI, p.343.
3. Schriften zum Theater, p.199: "... das kleine Stück Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar, das B. nach einem Einakter von Synge geschrieben hatte ..."

follows conventional dramatic lines, with a conflict between the heroine and a number of other characters (Der Junge, Der Arbeiter, Manuela, Frau Perez), which rises to a climax and turning point - the bringing in of the dead body of Juan. Beside this main dramatic line, there is a kind of sub-plot in the episode involving the priest; the argument between the priest and the worker parallels the argument between the worker and Carrar, but differs from it in that the priest argues from religious convictions, Carrar from personal motives. The fact that Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar is not constructed on epic lines does not mean that there are not affinities with works that are clearly epic - for instance, in the matter of character - but these affinities will be dealt with below.

Of the structure of Die Horatier und die Kuriatier - as opposed to the theatrical devices which it uses - not much can be said. The phases of the work are obviously determined by the shape of the historical episode with its three combats. These are preceded by a short introduction in which the motives of the Curiatian attack are presented[1] and the arming of the troops and their relative strength are demonstrated.[2] Of the phases of the battle, the second is the most complex, and thus forms a kind of climax to the work. The work is

1. Stücke V, p.233.
2. Stücke V, p.234 ff.

not symmetrical in that - the playwright not being neutral - more prominence is given to the Horatian side; it is the Horatian chorus which gives the commentary. An apparent tension is created when the third Horatian takes to flight and the chorus are deceived by his ruse.[1] In the Lehrstück, however, dramatic tension is not really possible, as the work is not designed for an audience, and the actors are naturally well aware of the outcome.

The essential action of Lukullus, being in the form of a trial, has certain features of the drama - the element of debate or conflict and the approach to a climax represented by the verdict. Apart from this rise towards a climax, Lukullus is characterized by the fact that it involves three levels - partly parallel and partly successive. These levels are that of life on earth[2], which is succeeded by a kind of limbo, to which the action returns in the intervals of the hearing[3], and the third level, on which the tribunal is conducted. The structure of the work is based on the rising pattern of the tribunal scenes, interrupted by the contrasting mood of the shades in limbo. Representation on different levels is a technique used by Brecht elsewhere (e.g. in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe and in Schweyk im zweiten

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1. Stücke V, p.267.
2. Scenes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
3. Scenes 6, 10, 12.

Weltkrieg) but the levels involved are usually those of social or political eminence: this is the only case where the limits of reality are crossed and the levels are metaphysical. It is, correspondingly, about the only case where Brecht openly seeks an absolute standard - that is, a metaphysical or theological standard - by which to condemn social behaviour. In Der gute Mensch von Sezuan such divine judgments are implicitly rejected.

Characterisation.

Although Brecht professed to be more interested in attitudes than in characters, we may still find in his work, viewed as a whole, a number of figures so stable and so constantly recurring that they may well be termed characters. Of these, perhaps the most striking is the mother-figure who figures largely in the plays from Mann ist Mann to Courage. For Brecht this figure may be either selfishly conservative or heroically revolutionary. On the one hand there is the vivandière or prostitute - Begbick, Courage, Shen-Te - dispensing comfort (at a price) and seeking to save her own; on the other hand, there are the heroic Wlassowa and Grusche in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis. Among the plays of this group we find a number of more or less prominent figures who fit somewhere into this pattern: Frau Cornamontis has at least the commercial outlook of Courage (and the sentimentality

of Frau Peachum), Lukullus counts among its shades a sorrowing mother, the woman in the final scene of Furcht und Elend is another Wlassowa. Most striking of all, of course is Frau Carrar, in whom something like a transition from one position to the other may be observed. This does not involve a change of character, strictly speaking, but a change of attitude. Before her husband's death, we gather, Carrar was liberal in her sentiments[1]; the loss of her husband makes her tighten her hold upon her sons, and it takes the death of Juan to bring her back to her former militant attitude. But even in her 'conservative' phase, she is never, like Courage, 'eine Hyäne des Schlachtfelds'.[2] The difference between them is epitomised in the incident of the shirts in both plays.[3] On the other hand, Carrar does not have the rational dedication to the cause that Wlassowa has: in keeping with the 'Aristotelian' convention, her motives are emotional and personal:

> Der Junge: Willst du denn auch mitkommen?
> Die Mutter: Ja, für Juan. [4]

Another recurrent 'character' who is present - at least in a rudimentary incarnation - in this group of plays is the

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1. cf. Manuela: "Und von Ihnen hat es gehiessen, dass Sie Ihrem Mann geholfen haben, als er nach Oviedo ging." (Stücke VII, p.26.)
2. Stücke VII, p.167.
3. Stücke VII, pp.20 and 139 f.
4. Stücke VII, p.60.

class-conscious worker, a shrewd, ironic type, a kind of fleet-footed caveman engaged in a running fight against the mastodons of the dying capitalist age. In a sense this character type is derived from Galy Gay - or even from Kragler - but from being simply a man "der nicht nein sagen kann" he has become one "der gelernt hat, nein zu sagen"[1], who has learned to use passivity as a weapon. Pelegea Wlassowa has something of this cunning, but it is mainly manifested in male figures - Matti, Azdak, Schweyk - and in Lincke in the Kreidekreuz episode of Furcht und Elend. In so far as Brecht ever created ideal working-class figures they are on this pattern - ironical humorists, who, to judge from reports of Brecht's interrogation by the Un-American Activities Committee, have much of Brecht himself in them.

Apart from the mother-figure and the ironist, what we find in this group of plays is attitudes rather than characters. Again, Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe and Furcht und Elend provide an instructive contrast: the latter shows typical attitudes in a familiar and realistic way, and generally in such a way that a given attitude is identified with a given figure on the stage; the former presents attitudes in an exaggerated form, seeks to show their

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1. This attitude is epitomised in the anecdote of Herr Keuner about Herr Egge (Versuche 1-4, Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, 1959. Massnahmen gegen die Gewalt, p.25 f.)

immediate relevance to circumstances, and demonstrates clearly how the same figure may adopt contradictory attitudes, depending on economic circumstances. In Furcht und Elend the playwright's skill consists in finding exactly the right phrase to epitomise a given attitude - the straining at a gnat implicit in the final line of scene 2 (Verrat): "Sie hätten sie (die Jacke) nicht zerreissen brauchen"[1]; the short-sighted selfishness of the teacher's wife in scene 10 (Der Spitzel): "Jedenfalls geht es uns nichts an, schliesslich sind wir evangelisch".[2] Not all the attitudes depicted are as unsophisticated as this or as unequivocally identified with one figure: the heroine of scene 9 (Die jüdische Frau) expresses in her soliloquy a whole flux of emotions - rage, grief, indignation. The interview of man and wife in this episode, incidentally, is striking evidence of Brecht's psychological insight and a refutation of those who believe his characterisation to be invariably crude and schematic.

At first sight, this criticism might seem justified in the case of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe. Brecht himself writes:

> Der bürgerliche Zuschauer würde vermutlich auch bei dem grössten Reichtum gesellschaftlich wichtiger Aussagen die Charakteristik der Figuren für primitiv erklären, da dieselben nicht die konventionellen

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1. Stücke VI, p.243.
2. Stücke VI, p.336.

> Emotionen auslösen; ohne differenzierte Arbeit des Schauspielers tut er dies aber mit Recht.[1]

What Brecht is concerned to do here, above all, is to show how different attitudes - often apparently contradictory - may be evoked in the same character by different social or economic circumstances. These attitudes may alternate, as in the case of Nanna Callas, who is - in different circumstances and by turns - an affectionate daughter, 'ein vernünftiges und ungekünsteltes Wesen'[2], and a calculating prostitute. In the case of Callas himself, the change is of a fundamental moral outlook: in the first trial he can see nothing but advantage in the prostitution of his daughter; later (scene 6), when he believes he has secured the horses and achieved an unassailable economic position, he can allow himself the luxury of defending his daughter's honour:

> Mein Herr, die Zeit, wo ich meine Ehre verkaufen musste, ist vorbei. Ich kann diese Dinge heute nicht mehr von einem so niedrigen Standpunkt aus behandeln. [3]

One is reminded of Shen-Te's comment: "Wie soll ich gut sein, wo alles so teuer ist".[4]

Callas is a figure who both attracts and repels. His matter-of-fact attitude, his healthy materialism contrast to advantage with the evil idealism of Iberin, the readiness

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1. Stücke VI, p.216.
2. Stücke VI, p.216.
3. Stücke VI, p.113.
4. Stücke VIII, p.231.

with which he risks his neck for the smallest possible advantage arouses amused admiration. On the other hand, his selfishness, his readiness to sacrifice others to his own immediate advantage and his shortsightedness are despicable. It is only at the very end of the play that he demonstrates - with the gesture of Johanna Dark - his disgust and disillusion:

Callas hat seinen und Nannas Teller ausgeschüttet.[1]

It is in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe that Brecht first attempts a special kind of characterisation - the representation of actual historical figures. Angelo Iberin is obviously modelled on Adolf Hitler, although Brecht stresses that the figure is 'idealised', that is, that it has only a generalised resemblance to the Führer: 'ein sehr idealisiertes Abbild eines Rassenpropheten'.[2] Nevertheless, certain of the Führer's gestures were reproduced, his hysterical personality was hinted at, as well as what Brecht calls 'die beinahe erotische Beziehung (zum Mikrophon)'.[3] The portrayal of Iberin, and particularly the subordinate rôle he plays in the drama form an interesting contrast with Arturo Ui. Brecht's view of the demonic nature of Hitler and the reality of his political power clearly underwent a

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1. Stücke VI, p.209.
2. Stücke VI, p.219.
3. Ibid.

radical change between the writing of the two plays. In Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe, Brecht - perhaps because of his own devotion to rational principles - seems reluctant to admit the genuine power of the fanatic, and sees the real enemy in the hereditary ruling class represented by the Vizekönig who rules with the laconic self-confidence of his class.

Language.

Within this group of plays Brecht once more shows a wide range of idiom. Again it is Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe and Furcht und Elend which are of primary interest. In the latter Brecht uses the prosaic idiom of everyday life, and shows in particular his skill in reproducing the structure of working-class speech without resorting, generally speaking, to the colouring of dialect.[1] Scenes like Arbeitsbeschaffung and Der Entlassene have the authentic ring of the colloquial. In Stunde des Arbeiters, on the other hand, there is a splendid representation of false speech - the automatic repetition of hackneyed ideas in an unnatural syntax:

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1. Scene 1: Volksgemeinschaft is one of the few instances of the use of local dialect by Brecht in his plays. The aim here is to achieve an ironic contrast between the idealistic content and the vulgar Berlin dialect: "Und nu kommt die Volksjemeinschaft. Ick erwarte mir een seelischen Uffschwung des deutschen Volkes in allerjrössten Massstab"(Stücke VI, p.239). The most notable instance of Brecht's use of dialect for ironic or comic effect is in the figure of Schweyk.

> Und da ist ja auch die Arbeit bei der Ausschmückung des Arbeitsraums, die uns viel Freude bereitet. Das Führerbild ist auf Grund einer freiwilligen Spende zustande gekommen, und sind wir sehr stolz darauf. Wie auch auf die Geranienstöcke, die eine Farbe in das Grau des Arbeitsraums hineinzaubern, eine Anregung von Fräulein Kinze.[1]

In this scene, too, Brecht has captured the false bonhomie of the radio interviewer with his clichés: 'emsig und unverdrossen arbeitende Volksgenossen; fröhliche und zufriedene Gesichter; freudige und unverdrossene Gesichter; muntere Scherzworte; stählerne Maschinengiganten; Blumen, die lieblichen Kinder des Feldes'.[2]

In scene 10 (Der Spitzel) the language of the father is used in near-parodistic fashion to indicate the mode of thought imposed by his profession:

> Das kann doch nicht als Angriff ausgelegt werden. Nicht alles sauber oder, wie ich abschwächend sagte, nicht alles ganz sauber, was schon einen Unterschied macht, und zwar einen beträchtlichen, das ist mehr eine spasshafte Bemerkung volkstümlicher Art, sozusagen in der Umgangssprache, das bedeutet nicht viel mehr, als dass sogar dort wahrscheinlich einiges nicht immer und unter allen Umständen so ist, wie es der Führer will. Den nur wahrscheinlichen Charakter brachte ich übrigens mit voller Absicht dadurch zum Ausdruck, dass ich, wie ich mich deutlich erinnere formulierte, es 'soll' dort ja auch nicht alles ganz - ganz in abschwächendem Sinn gebraucht - sauber sein ... Mehr habe ich nicht angedeutet, und auch das nur in abgeschwächtester Form...[3]

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1. Stücke VI, p.359.
2. Stücke VI, p.357 ff. One wonders whether Brecht was ever struck by exactly the same kind of jargon in current broadcasts from East Germany!
3. Stücke VI, p.340.

Only an Oberstudienrat can speak like this! As opposed to the speech of Fräulein Schmidt (Stunde des Arbeiters) this is an idiom reflecting the speaker's personality and characterising an intellectual subtlety that emasculates its practitioner.

In Furcht und Elend levels of language are used to characterise the attitude and social background of individuals. The situation in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe is rather different: there is not the same linguistic spectrum, the diversity of realistic idiom, but rather a general alternation of prose and verse which involves most of the main characters. Levels of language are not used so much to characterise individuals as to suggest to the audience what attitude they are to adopt to the figures on the stage and the ideas they express. The pattern is one of prose and various types of verse - free, blank or rhymed. To a certain extent these stylistic levels are used to indicate social status: der Vizekönig, Missena and the landowners speak consistently in verse, the petite bourgeoisie always in prose, the peasants mostly in prose, but sometimes in verse. In some cases the choice of prose or verse depends apparently on subject-matter. In the first trial, the lawyer speaks of love in verse[1], while in the suit concerning the horses (scene 7) and the

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1. Stücke VI, p.81 f.

bargain struck with Callas (scene 10) the lawyers use prose. In a rather similar way Iberin drops into verse when he has occasion to expound his racial philosophy. The change may occur quite obviously in the middle of a speech - as when the abbess replies to Isabella's poetic rhapsody on the life of the cloister in verse, only to drop into prose when she turns to discuss financial arrangements with the lawyer.[1] On the other hand, whereas everyone else discusses the horses in prose, the abbess has a passionate speech on their commercial value in verse.[2] Here the aim is presumably to create a comic contrast between content and form, much in the way this was done in Die heilige Johanna.

The prose of the lower-class characters is occasionally heightened to verse, not only in the numerous songs, but also where the playwright seeks a climax, e.g. in the gallows speech of Lopez[3], or where the audience is directly addressed.[4] In the latter cases a kind of four-foot or five-foot Knittelvers is used, mainly with strong masculine rhymes.

It is perhaps only appropriate that, in a Parabelstück, the playwright should make the fullest use of ambiguities.

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1. Stücke VI, p.93 f.
2. Stücke VI, p.136 f.
3. Stücke VI, p.208 f.
4. In the Prologue, by Nanna (Stücke VI, p.179) and Callas (Stücke VI, p.185 f.).

One of the most striking instances of this occurs in scene 9 - a perfect linguistic 'Verfremdung' in that it makes the audience aware, visually and by reference to context, of the ambiguity of a certain vocabulary. Nanna, the prostitute, repeats almost exactly the words of Isabella, the would-be nun.[1] The intellectual game Brecht indulges in here is even more complex than it might seem at first sight. In the first instance Nanna repeats the devout words 'frech', with insolent comments of her own, and with a significant change indicating her personal attitude:

> Ach, gesichert zu leben in reinlicher Kammer vor Mannes-Gier und Roheit, ist, was ich auch einmal möchte![2]

On being reprimanded by Frau Cornamontis she repeats the words unchanged and with an expressionless face, so that the irony is the product only of the spectator's knowledge of her profession, not her own creation. Only in the last line, by one change, does she drop out of her part.[3] The suppression of her individual feelings as a person on the orders of Frau Cornamontis is an illustration of the degree to which - to Brecht's mind - economic power is absolute and arbitrary.

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1. Stücke VI, p.174 ff.
2. Stücke VI, p.174.
3. "Und mir 'nen Zehner von deinem Reichtum gibst." (Stücke VI, p.176.) For the eye of the reader the difference is underlined by the printing of 'du' and 'deinem' with small letters.

There are many minor instances in the play of Brecht's ironic exploitation of ambiguities: Nanna says to the audience: "Schliesslich bin ich auch ein Mensch"[1] (cf. der Mensch and das Mensch). The Iberin soldier warns a woman that "Es gibt auch Leute, die den Spitzkopf im Herzen haben".[2] At times the level is that of mere pun, as when the bandaged landowners reply to Missena's greeting, "Sehr verbunden / Wirklich sehr verbunden".[3]

The minor plays of this group are of less interest linguistically. Carrar is in undistinguished prose, Die Horatier und die Kuriatier in free verse almost equally undistinguished. Lukullus, possibly because it was originally designed as a radio play, has more profile and greater variety of texture. The predominating rhythm is dactylic - especially in the grandiose speeches of Lukullus and the voices of Der Ausrufer, Der Sprecher des Totengerichts and Die fahle Stimme. Das Fischweib, on the other hand, speaks, in her plaint for her dead son, in a marked trochaic rhythm.[4] There are some intriguing individual effects - the contrast, for instance, between the solemn dactylic speech of the soldiers carrying the coffin[5] and the rapid, rhymed chatter

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1. Stücke VI, p.42.
2. Stücke VI, p.36.
3. Stücke VI, p.116.
4. Stücke VII, p.254 f.
5. Stücke VII, p.215.

of the same men as they scamper away after duty.[1] The story of the conquered queen, with its structure in stanzas and its elliptical forms, and its refrain has a distinctly balladesque quality.[2] Although not as distinguished as some of Brecht's work, the language of Lukullus has an exotic quality and a classical ring which represent still another distinct idiom of the playwright.

Stage techniques and production.

In respect of their stage technique these plays are again a very mixed bag. They range from Brecht's most conventional play, Carrar, to the extreme experiment of Die Horatier und die Kuriatier.[3] Furcht und Elend and Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe lie between these extremes, making varying use of the battery of epic devices accumulated by Brecht, and dispensing in varying degrees with illusion. In the case of Die Horatier und die Kuriatier the question of illusion, as already stated, cannot arise. In other respects, however, the play offers an interesting insight into Brecht's thinking on stage representation. It also constitutes an interesting counterpart to the earliest

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1. Stücke VII, p.227.
2. Stücke VII, p.244 f.
3. It is difficult to consider Lukullus under this heading at all, as it was conceived as a radio-play, and even the operatic version has no particularly 'epic' characteristics.

Lehrstücke (Flug der Lindberghs and Badener Lehrstück) in that it tries to put into symbolic visual terms what had there been conveyed by words and music alone. Die Horatier und die Kyriatier is intended to have a ceremonial effect. Its most obvious affinity is with military drill, and here again one may observe the tendency of Brecht to seek forms of representation from extra-theatrical spheres - the boxing-ring, the court-room, even the street accident. In particular, the conversion of 'real' time and space to an artificial scale of stage time and space offers a striking resemblance to systems of 'battle drill' evolved by various armies during the last war.[1]

Of the other works, Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe makes the most extensive use of epic devices. The theatrical illusion is broken repeatedly and in many different ways -

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1. 'Battle drill' was an attempt to bring up to date the ceremonial drill which is a formalisation of 18th century battlefield manoeuvres. It was intended to teach minor tactics by making soldiers rehearse in a restricted space such operations as an attack by a platoon on an enemy machine-gun nest. It included speech - each soldier identified himself and his function aloud, the section leaders gave formalised orders ("Line of my arm, four hundred yards, we will attack and destroy all enemy in that post!"), the attackers announced their actions ("Down, crawl, observe, fire!"), and indicated firing by standing at attention. It is most unlikely, of course, that Brecht could have had any knowledge of this drill, but the affinity is interesting nevertheless. In fact, Brecht's model was the Chinese theatre: the actors representing the armies carried little flags on a yoke to represent their forces, the action was carried on in slow motion - "Die Vorgänge werden so langsam wie unter der Zeitlupe dargestellt" (Stücke VI, p.274), and proceeded on a miniature landscape which, Brecht warned, must not be 'whimsical'.

by exposed lighting equipment, pianos on the stage, etc., rudimentary scenery, grotesque costumes and make-up[1], by demonstration in the prologue, by the way in which actors address the audience[2] and even make their entrances by way of the auditorium.[3] The action is interrupted by songs rendered in the laconic epic style and occasionally accompanied by pantomimic demonstration.[4] For the Parabelstück, as an extreme form of epic theatre, Brecht rejects anything tending to create illusion, mood, atmosphere:

> Das Stück, der Parabeltypus einer nichtaristotelischen Dramatik, erforderte von Bühnenbau und Spielweise einen weitgehenden Verzicht auf Illusionswirkungen.[5]

Another epic device, used already by Brecht in Mahagonny, recurs here: the representation of simultaneous

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1. The huge hands and feet of the Huas are disillusioning features used by Brecht in Mann ist Mann, but the misshapen heads have a more specific significance and are in fact essential to the plot; this might be regarded as a development in Brecht's use of the grotesque. The use of white make-up to denote fear (Isabella in scene 9) goes back beyond Mann ist Mann to the soldiers in Eduard II.
2. Dritter Pächter (VI, p.59); Nanna (VI, p.174); Callas (VI, p.181).
3. Stücke VI, p.213 f.: "Der Pächter Callas kam (in 10) ins Gefängnis durch den ganzen Zuschauerraum."
4. e.g. Das Lied von der Tünche (Stücke VI, p.48); Die Ballade vom Knopfwurf, which is demonstrated on the person of Callas (Stücke VI, p.90) and Das neue Iberinlied, which is demonstrated on the peasant Parr (Stücke VI, p.106).
5. Stücke VI, p.213.

events by means of placards, lantern-slides or broadcasts.[1] A similar kind of parallelism is achieved by the use of a Simultanbühne - the scene in which peakheaded and roundheaded landowners feast against a background of gallows on which peakheaded and roundheaded farmers are being hanged.

The eighth scene of the play is an example of another epic technique - parody. This scene is based on the Claudius and Isabella scene from 'Measure for Measure'[2], and is meant to be acted in the emphatic style of the Elizabethan theatre. In order to point the artificiality of the language used by a particular small class, the Copenhagen production assumed the scene to be taking place in heavy rain and had the actors carry open umbrellas.

This idea Brecht identifies as a 'Verfremdung', and it is associated with a number of other features of the Copenhagen première. Nanna Callas, for example, makes her entrance as a prostitute under the shop-signs:

> Nanna Callas, ihr Auftrittslied singend, trat unter die Strassenembleme des Kleinhandels ..., eine Ware unter Waren.[3]

Other 'Verfremdungen' are the appearance of a nun carrying a gramophone which plays organ music during the first (devout)

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1. Here the Leuchtschrift in scene 4 gives reports on the revolt of the 'Sichel' and underlines thus the influence of this revolt on the course of the trial. Such devices for adding depth to the events on the stage were, of course, common to the practitioners of the Piscator school.
2. 'Measure for Measure', Act 3, Scene 1.
3. Stücke VI, p.226.

part of the interview between Isabella and the abbess (scene 5), and the lowering of a gun-barrel over the banqueting table during the final scene.

The application of epic devices to Furcht und Elend is largely restricted to the framework already mentioned; this framework with the epigrammatic verses that precede each scene tends to give the work as a whole the character of a demonstration. The episodes themselves are in a realistic idiom, however, and there is no attempt to disrupt illusion - unless the very rapid succession of scenes and their wide dispersal through space and time can be considered as such. In only a few instances does Brecht suggest, by peculiar conjunction of word and gesture typical of his epic theatre, the ambiguity of ideas or situations. There are two cases, for instance, where something as hackneyed as the Hitler greeting is given deeply ironic significance by the way in which it is pronounced - by the SA-Mann in scene 3[1] and by the woman in scene 16[2] as she vomits up the apples given to her by the SA men who have subsequently arrested her daughter.

As its climax, Furcht und Elend uses a typical epic device - the simultaneous presentation of contrasting or

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1. Stücke VI, p.241.
2. Stücke VI, p.367.

paradoxical situations or opinions, of which instances have been mentioned in connection with Mahagonny and Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe: this is the scene where a woman reads against the background of a Nazi radio commentary the letter of a condemned worker which gives her and her colleagues the courage to say 'Nein'.[1]

The use of radio in this way to give the audience a kind of stereophonic impression is to be found in a play so essentially unepic as Carrar.[2] This is not the only hint of epic technique in the play: the passing of the national contingents to the accompaniment of their appropriate songs has a formal demonstrative character that somehow falls outside the realistic idiom of the play.[3] There is an instance, too, of the ambiguity of gesture that is a part of Brecht's epic repertoire: the deprecating gesture of the priest is interpreted by the worker as a gesture of surrender:

> Es fiel mir nur auf, dass die Haltung, mit der man etwas missbilligt, so schrecklich der Haltung gleicht, mit der man kapituliert.[4]

Such minor features do not, however, constitute an adequate 'Verfremdung', and Brecht felt that the only way

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1. Stücke VI, p.407.
2. That is, the scene where, to the accompaniment of a broadcast describing anti-clerical atrocities, the priest accepts a cigarette from the worker (Stücke VII, p.31).
3. Stücke VII, p.22.
4. Stücke VII, p.34.

to overcome the disadvantages of the Aristotelian form was to supplement the play with an illuminating and contrasting background:

> Die Nachteile dieser Technik können bis zu einem gewissen Grade ausgeglichen werden, wenn man das Stück zusammen mit einem Dokumentenfilm, der die Vorgänge in Spanien zeigt, oder irgendeiner propagandistischen Veranstaltung aufführt. [1]

From this group of plays it may be observed that Brecht had by now developed an elaborate 'epic' idiom in which a whole play might be cast - e.g. Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe - but that individual features from this idiom have apparently become so ingrained that they find their way into plays which are superficially in a totally different idiom.

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1. Stücke VII, p.60.

Chapter VII

The last theoretical writings: 1940-1953

Introduction.

In one of his last recorded statements on his theory and practice, Brecht wryly confesses that, by attempting to explain his aims and methods, he has broken one of his own favourite principles: the proof of the pudding is in the eating.[1] He traces the stages of his error: in attempting to apply to the theatre the idea that it was more important to change the world than to interpret it, he proposed various changes in methods of acting and producing. Unfortunately, he omitted to mention that the vast mass of theatrical principles and rules would otherwise remain the same. He concludes:

> Ich glaube, die Kalamität begann dadurch, dass meine Stücke richtig aufgeführt werden mussten, damit sie wirken, und so musste ich für eine nichtaristotelische Dramatik - oh Kummer! - ein episches Theater - oh Elend! - beschreiben.[2]

This rueful comment testifies to the prominence that his theories had achieved in the latter stages of his career. This prominence was largely a consequence of Brecht's fame as a dramatist and producer, but it also owed something to the

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1. Gespräch auf der Probe, Schriften zum Theater, op.cit., p.285.
2. Schriften zum Theater, p.286.

publication of a considerable body of theoretical writing composed between 1940 and 1953. It may be said at once that there is practically nothing new in these works, but they are important in that they state coherently and with mature authority what had previously been recorded as notes to individual works, or presented in a brash revolutionary tone.

The final set of theoretical writings falls mainly into two chronological groups: those written in exile about 1940, and those written after Brecht's return to Europe and his establishment at the Schiffbauerdamm, between 1949 and 1953. On the whole they are dominated by Kleines Organon für das Theater, in which Brecht, as he puts it, revokes his decision to emigrate "aus dem Reich des Wohlgefälligen"[1] and attempts to justify his 'epic theatre' on aesthetic rather than social or political grounds. The justification for this lies in the emphasis he once more places on the entertainment value of the theatre - an aspect rather lost sight of in the arid wastes of the Dreigroschenprozess, for instance. The first paragraph of the Organon defines the theatre:

> "Theater" besteht darin, dass lebende Abbildungen von überlieferten oder erdachten Geschehnissen zwischen Menschen hergestellt werden, und zwar zur Unterhaltung.[2]

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1. Schriften, p.130.
2. Schriften, p.130.

The choice of 'theatre' rather than, say, 'drama' as a preliminary definition is significant for what follows, for it implies the notions of performance and audience - in other words the theatre is a function of society. Harking back to his earliest criticisms of the theatre, Brecht insists that its only legitimation is 'Spass':

> Nicht einmal zu lehren sollte ihm zugemutet werden, jedenfalls nichts Nützlicheres, als wie man sich genussvoll bewegt, in körperlicher oder geistiger Hinsicht. [1]

This criterion is applied even to the Greek tragedy, irrespective of its possible origin in religious cults. The nature of the 'entertainment' depends, however, on the particular organisation of a society:

> Und die Vergnügungen der verschiedenen Zeiten waren natürlich verschieden, je nach der Art, wie da die Menschen gerade zusammenlebten.[2]

From the fact that we, in our own age, are capable of deriving pleasure from the products of so many diverse cultures - largely by means of "einer verhältnismässig neuen Prozedur, nämlich der Einfühlung"[3] - suggests to Brecht that we have not yet recognised the characteristic pleasure of the age. The characteristic feature of the age itself is, as Brecht had so frequently stated in the 1920's,

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1. Schriften, p.131.
2. Schriften, p.132.
3. Schriften, p.134.

its domination by the sciences, its pleasure an intellectual matter, the pleasure - seductive in its intensity - of scientific criticism and discovery. Brecht continually stresses the almost sensuous pleasure of intellectual exercise (epitomised in Galilei: "Er denkt der Wollust wegen"[1]). His epic theatre is not, as it has often been represented, an affair of dry reason:

> Es ist nämlich eine Eigentümlichkeit der theatralischen Mittel, dass sie Erkenntnisse und Impulse in Form von Genüssen vermitteln; die Tiefe der Erkenntnis und des Impulses entspricht der Tiefe des Genusses.[2]

The attitude the playwright seeks to engender is exemplified briefly in reference to the story of Prometheus:

> Unser Theater muss die Lust am Erkennen erregen, den Spass an der Veränderung der Wirklichkeit organisieren. Unsere Zuschauer müssen nicht nur hören, wie man den gefesselten Prometheus befreit, sondern auch sich in der Lust schulen, ihn zu befreien. Alle die Lüste und Spässe der Erfinder und Entdecker, die Triumphgefühle der Befreier müssen von unserem Theater gelehrt werden.[3]

It may be seen here how the relatively naive and undifferentiated notion of 'Spass' as it was first developed by Brecht[4] has been particularized by assimilation into the concept of a scientific culture. It should be obvious, too, that this is not an attempt to ban emotion from the

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1. Schriften, p.162.
2. This statement was made in 1951. cf. Schriften, p.105.
3. Schriften, p.127 (written in 1953).
4. cf. Chapter II, p.58.

theatre: in this respect, Brecht has retreated somewhat from the extreme position he was so proud of in the early 1920's. In Die Strassenszene (1940) he disclaims any prohibition on emotion:

> ... das Theater (muss) nur jeweils jene Technik entwickeln, durch welche die Emotionen der Kritik des Zuschauers unterworfen werden. Damit ist natürlich nicht gesagt, dass der Zuschauer prinzipiell verhindert werden muss, gewisse Emotionen, die vorgeführt werden, zu teilen; jedoch ist die Übernahme von Emotionen nur eine bestimmte Form (Phase, Folge) der Kritik.[1]

In Neue Technik der Schauspielkunst (1940) it is stated that even the Verfremdungs-Effekt induces emotions in the spectator[2], and the actor himself may employ empathy at some stage:

> Der Schauspieler wird ... diesen psychischen Akt ebenfalls benützen. Er wird aber, im Gegensatz zu der üblichen Art des Theaterspielens, wo der Akt bei der Vorführung selber vollzogen wird, und zwar zu dem Zweck, den Zuschauer zu einem gleichen Akt zu bewegen, den Akt der Einfühlung nur in einem Vorstadium, irgendwann bei der Rollenarbeit in den Proben vollziehen.[3]

In his discussion of the pleasure derived from theatrical representations Brecht may fairly be said to have returned to the realm of aesthetics, but in other respects his return is more apparent than real: when he considers the nature and function of the play itself, he turns out to be the same 'sociologist' as ever. 'Sociologist', incidentally, is

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1. Schriften, p.98.
2. cf. Schriften, p.114.
3. Schriften, p.108.

Brecht's word for Marxist; he cannot conceive a 'sociology' based on anything other than dialectical materialism. To Brecht's mind, it is for the theatre to apply scientific methods to a sphere where the ruling class has not allowed them to be applied - the social sphere:

> Der Grund dafür, dass die neue Denk- und Fühlweise die grossen Menschenmassen noch nicht wirklich durchdringt, ist darin zu suchen, dass die Wissenschaften, so erfolgreich in der Ausbeutung und Unterwerfung der Natur, von der Klasse, die ihr die Herrschaft verdankt, den Bürgertum, gehindert werden, ein anderes Gebiet zu bearbeiten, das noch im Dunkel liegt, nämlich das der Beziehungen der Menschen untereinander bei der Ausbeutung und Unterwerfung der Natur.[1]

For the benefit of the builders of a new society, the theatre "stellt die Erlebnisse der Gesellschaft aus, die vergangenen wie die gegenwärtigen".[2] It is a vehicle of the dialectic:

> Diese Methode behandelt, um auf die Beweglichkeit der Gesellschaft zu kommen, die gesellschaftlichen Zustände als Prozesse und verfolgt diese in ihrer Widersprüchlichkeit. Ihr existiert alles nur, indem es sich wandelt, also in Uneinigkeit mit sich selbst.[3]

This crucial paragraph of the Organon (paragraph 45) is amplified in the series of notes entitled Die Dialektik auf dem Theater, published from 1951 onwards. The illustration of dialectical principles is shown, for instance, by means of a detailed study of the first scene

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1. Schriften, p.137.
2. Schriften, p.141.
3. Schriften, p.152.

in Shakespeare's Coriolanus.[1] The entertaining representation of paradoxes is what constitutes 'Nicht-Aristotelische Dramatik'.[2] While he criticises Aristotle as a dialectical thinker - "seine Dialektik ist eingleisig"[3] - he is in entire agreement with him that the plot is the most important thing:

> Was den Darstellungsstil betrifft, sind wir mit dem Aristoteles eins in der Meinung, dass das Herzstück der Tragödie die Fabel ist, wenn wir auch uneins sind, zu welchem Zweck sie vorgetragen werden soll. Die Fabel soll nicht ein blosser Ausgangspunkt für allerhand Ausflüge in der Seelenkunde oder anderswohin sein.[4]

The plot, as far as Brecht is concerned, must be so constructed that its links and stages are obvious:

> Die Geschehnisse dürfen sich nicht unmerklich folgen, sondern man muss mit dem Urteil dazwischen kommen können.[5]

It is the plot which gives the actor insight into the figure he represents.[6] In fact, the prime concern of the theatre is to interpret any given plot:

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1. Schriften, p.174 ff. Brecht corrects one of his interlocutors who asks: "Ist es dieser Erkenntnisse wegen, dass wir das Stück spielen wollen?" Brecht replies: "Nicht nur. Wir möchten den Spass haben und vermitteln, ein Stück durchleuchteter Geschichte zu behandeln. Und Dialektik zu erleben." Schriften, p.196.
2. Schriften, p.262.
3. Ibid.
4. Schriften, p.228.
5. Schriften, p.166.
6. "Erst von (der Fabel) vermag (der Schauspieler), gleichsam in einem Sprung, zu seiner endgültigen Figur zu kommen." Schriften, p.164.

> Die Auslegung der Fabel und ihre Vermittlung durch geeignete Verfremdungen ist das Hauptgeschäft des Theaters.[1]

Verfremdung.

It is well-known that the concept of 'Verfremdung' is at the heart of the epic theatre, but it is only in this group of theoretical writings that Brecht makes a sustained attempt to define and describe it:

> Eine verfremdete Abbildung ist eine solche, die den Gegenstand zwar erkennen, ihn aber doch zugleich fremd erscheinen lässt.[2]

This concept in the epic theatre is distinguished from the same technique in the medieval, classical or Oriental theatre:

> Die alten V-Effekte entziehen das Abgebildete dem Eingriff des Zuschauers gänzlich, machen es zu etwas Unabänderlichem; die neuen haben nichts Bizarres an sich, es ist der unwissenschaftliche Blick, der das Fremde als bizarr stempelt. Die neuen Verfremdungen sollten nur den gesellschaftlich beeinflussbaren Vorgängen den Stempel des Vertrauten wegnehmen, der sie heute vor dem Eingriff bewahrt. [3]

There is a clear echo of Brecht's early theories when we read in Neue Technik der Schauspielkunst that 'Verfremdungen' are only possible in a theatre which dispels illusions:

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1. Schriften, p.169.
2. Schriften, p.150.
3. Ibid.

> Voraussetzung für die Anwendung des V-Effekts zu dem angeführten Zweck ist, dass Bühne und Zuschauerraum von allem 'Magischen' gesäubert werden und keine 'hypnotischen Felder' entstehen.
> ... es wurde nicht angestrebt, das Publikum in Trance zu versetzen und ihm die Illusion zu geben, es wohne einem natürlichen, uneinstudierten Vorgang bei.[1]

For the actor, this technique means a strict training in observation: "Die Beobachtung ist ein Hauptteil der Schauspielkunst".[2] He must learn to look upon the figures he represents as strange and unfamiliar - "die Haltung des sich Wundernden einnehmen"[3] - and to act without identifying himself with that figure. As an analogy, Brecht refers to the way in which a producer will act an incident at rehearsal for the benefit of the actor:

> Er unterstreicht das Technische und behält die Haltung des bloss Vorschlagenden bei.[4]

Three simple techniques by which this attitude can be developed in rehearsal are the putting of the part in the third person, its translation into the past tense and the speaking by the actor of stage-directions or the producer's instructions.

'Verfremdung' is an important part of the 'Modell' for the epic theatre which Brecht sets up. This is described

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1. Schriften, p.106.
2. Schriften, p.157.
3. Schriften, p.159.
4. Schriften, p.109.

in Die Strassenszene (1940) which is an elaboration of the poem Über Alltägliches Theater, written as early as 1930. In the acting involved in discussing a street accident, combined with one or two other everyday events, Brecht detects all the essential elements of epic theatre. In the first place there is no illusion; secondly the demonstration of the witness clearly has the character of a repetition of a past event. The demonstrator has a practical, social aim - "seine Demonstration verfolgt praktische Zwecke, greift gesellschaftlich ein"[1] -; he derives the characters he represents entirely from their actions[2] and he will only imitate the emotions of those involved in the accident if he wishes to point his own attitude - that is, by way of parody: "nämlich wenn er zum Beispiel die Fahrer angreift, weil sie zu wenig tun, ihre Arbeitszeit zu verkürzen".[3]

The element of 'Verfremdung' is present in the double rôle of the demonstrator who is at one and the same time himself and a figure in the incident. There is also a

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1. Schriften, p.93.
2. This pre-eminence of actions over 'character' is implied in the function of the epic theatre as an instrument of social change: "Ein Theater, das ihm darin folgt, bricht weitgehend mit der Gewohnheit des üblichen Theaters, aus den Charakteren die Handlungen zu begründen, die Handlungen dadurch der Kritik zu entziehen, dass sie als aus den Charakteren, die sie vollziehen, unhinderbar, mit Naturgesetzlichkeit hervorgehend dargestellt werden." Schriften, p.96.
3. Schriften, p.97.

kind of 'Verfremdung' in the way in which he might be required to repeat (in slow motion, perhaps) an individual part of the incident. It may be, too, that an element of fiction is present in that the demonstrator tries to show what would have happened had certain other action been taken. In order to find in every-day life elements of comic impersonation, disguise, or the use of rhythmic speech, Brecht quotes further common practices - the malicious aping of the landlord, the barrow-boy and the newspaper seller.

In considering this suggested 'Modell', it is important not to interpret it in any way literally: Brecht insists that it contains only the 'elements' of the epic theatre.[1] It may be useful to producers as a guide and a memorandum:

> Das Grundmodell hat praktische Bedeutung. Es setzt Probenleiter und Schauspieler instand, beim Aufbau einer Vorstellung mit oft schwierigen Teilfragen, artistischen Problemen, sozialen Problemen, eine Kontrolle auszuüben, ob die gesellschaftliche Funktion des Gesamtapparates noch deutlich intakt ist.[2]

Nor is it a criticism to suggest that the imagined demonstrator may not be impartial in his description. Brecht had no desire that his actors should be impartial. He wished them to be Marxists. In spite of all laconic effect of the Berliner Ensemble productions, the actors have a clear bias:

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1. cf. Schriften, p.104.
2. Schriften, p.105.

> Freilich habe ich dann noch die verhältnismässig ruhige Art zu erklären, die am Spiel des Berliner Ensembles hier und dort auffällt. Sie hat nicht mit künstlicher (sic?) Objektivität zu tun - die Schauspieler nehmen Stellung zu ihren Figuren - und nichts mit Vernünftelei - die Vernunft stürzt sich niemals kalt in den Kampf - sie entsteht einfach dadurch, dass die Stücke nicht mehr dem hitzigen 'Bühnentemperament' ausgesetzt werden.1

With the establishment of the Berliner Ensemble Brecht found himself in a position to realise to the full his long-held belief that the text of the play was only one element in a complex artistic whole. A dramatic text is, in a sense, a blank cheque for the producer, as no one demonstrated better than Brecht himself in his interpretations and adaptations of classical texts. Certain of his own plays, he admitted, could be produced in the conventional manner.[2] This consideration probably prompted Brecht to introduce the system of Modellbücher, in which fairly rigid instructions for the producer are laid down. These Modellbücher are evidence, too, of Brecht's sincere belief that in the present age, with its technical complexity, artistic creation should be a collective undertaking. This was always true up to a point in the theatre, but Brecht believes in an even closer collaboration of the arts - not in the Wagnerian sense, but

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1. Schriften, p.285.
2. "An und für sich kann Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder auch in der alten Weise aufgeführt werden." Schriften, p.231. This was, in fact, the case with the war-time Zürich production. cf. Notes to the play, Stücke VII, p.205.

as a form of 'Verfremdung', that is as setting each other off:

> So seien die Schwesterkünste der Schauspielkunst hier geladen, nicht um ein 'Gesamtkunstwerk' herzustellen, in dem sie sich alle aufgeben und verlieren, sondern sie sollen, zusammen mit der Schauspielkunst, die gemeinsame Aufgabe in ihrer verschiedenen Weise fördern, und der Verkehr miteinander besteht darin, dass sie sich gegenseitig verfremden.[1]

This practical interest in music, décor and choreography should be enough to defend the playwright against the accusation of being drably rational. Amongst dramatists in German, perhaps only Grillparzer was equally aware of "das bei den Deutschen so beliebte Vorherrschen der Idee". At the end of the Organon Brecht writes:

> Und hier noch einmal, soll erinnert werden, dass es ihre Aufgabe ist, die Kinder des wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters zu unterhalten, und zwar in sinnlicher Weise und heiter. Dies können besonders wir Deutschen uns nicht oft genug wiederholen, denn bei uns rutscht sehr leicht alles in das Unkörperliche und Unanschauliche, worauf wir anfangen, von einer Weltanschauung zu sprechen, nachdem die Welt selber sich aufgelöst hat. [2]

The unit of dramatic expression for Brecht is not the idea, but the 'Gestus' - a concrete situation embodying certain fundamental relationships. Correspondingly the actor must devise visible expression for emotions. It is essential -

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1. Schriften, p.171.
2. Schriften, p.172.

> dass alles Gefuhlsmässige nach aussen gebracht werden muss, das heisst, es ist zur Geste zu entwickeln. Der Schauspieler muss einen sinnfälligen, äusseren Ausdruck für die Emotionen seiner Person finden, womöglich eine Handlung, die jene inneren Vorgänge in ihm verrät.[1]

For all its ideological content and its rationality, the epic theatre is a live theatre - "Kein Herbarium oder zoologisches Museum mit ausgestopften Tieren".[2] Nor can it dispense with beauty, grace and elegance, as Brecht points out with particular reference to Puntila:

> Die Kunst vermag das Hässliche des Hässlichen in schöner Weise, das Unedle des Unedlen in edler Weise darzustellen.[3]

Beauty in the epic theatre is achieved by means of the elegance with which the plot is unfolded: it is the elegance and beauty of a well executed mathematical exercise. In turn, this elegance acts as an alienation by setting off the subject-matter against the form and method of presentation:

> Besondere Eleganz, Kraft und Anmut der Geste ergibt den V-Effekt.[4]

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1. Schriften, p.111. This is akin to Grillparzer's notion of 'Körperlichkeit der Poesie' (cf. Gesamtausgabe, ed. August Sauer & Reinhold Backmann, Abt. II, Vol.8, p.14). Although Grillparzer is speaking more of metaphorical language than of acting, there is ample evidence in his plays of an attachment to theatrically effective symbols: the dagger in Die Ahnfrau, the wreath and the dagger in Sappho, the dagger and the goblets in Traum ein Leben etc. ...
2. Schriften, p.283.
3. Schriften, p.120.
4. Schriften, p.111.

Beauty is present, too, in the theatrical properties - and it is in this that Brecht shows an attractive side of his personality: his devotion to the modest beauty of everyday things - as his motto claimed: "die Wahrheit ist konkret".

> Auf die Requisiten (in Antigone) wurde besondere Sorgfalt verwendet: sie wurden bei guten Handwerkern in Arbeit gegeben. Dies geschah nicht, um sie dem Publikum oder den Schauspielern echt erscheinen zu lassen, sondern lediglich, um dem Publikum und den Schauspielern schöne Gegenstände auszuliefern.[1]

These theoretical writings are those of a mature poet and producer: however much Brecht may have learned from Piscator, from Reinhardt or from the Expressionists, he now felt himself independent and a leader in theatrical theory. In this stage of their development, his theories owe nothing to anyone; they are stated with assurance, and, whatever critics may think, Brecht has a clear idea in his own mind of what epic theatre is. In the 'Grundmodell' of the Strassenszene he has found a way to express in his own concrete terms what his theatre implies - even if he is not satisfied with the term 'epic' itself.[2] No one who studies Die Strassenszene can be in much doubt about Brecht's aims and methods of theatrical production.

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1. Schriften, p.227.

2. cf. Schriften, p.174.

Chapter VIII

Der Aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui. Die Gesichte der Simone Machard. Die Tage der Commune.

Introduction and themes.

These three plays are very different in conception from one another. This is partly because of the gaps in time which separate their composition, and partly because they do not relate equally to Brecht's earlier work.

Arturo Ui was written in 1941, but according to the playwright the play goes back in conception to the winter of 1935/36, when he was in New York producing a translation of Die Mutter.[1] The play, in fact, contains elements that go back to even earlier periods of Brecht's creative career. He describes the play as 'ein Parabelstück', which shows, in the guise of a Chicago gangster-drama, the rise of Hitler to power. The idea of a society dominated by outlaws is as old as Die Dreigroschenoper, the economic jungle of the Middle West and the technique of parody featured in Im Dickicht der Städte and in Die heilige Johanna, while the didactic form of the play, with its announcer, captions and trial scene, goes back to the Lehrstücke. It will be

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1. "Jene Idee ... die ich einmal in New York hatte, nämlich ein Gangsterstück zu schreiben, das gewisse Vorgänge, die wir alle kennen, in die Erinnerung ruft (The Gangster-Play we know)." Sinn und Form, II Sonderheft, op.cit., p.100.

remembered that Brecht had already attacked the Nazi regime - again in parable form in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe, and directly in Furcht und Elend.

Brecht wrote Die Gesichte der Simone Machard between 1942-43 together with Lion Feuchtwanger who claims that the play was in some ways inspired by his book Unholdes Frankreich, which dealt with the French collapse during the second World War:

> Das Buch rührte Brecht sehr an, und wir waren uns, er und ich, als wir den Plan der Simone entwarfen, darüber einig, zum Drehpunkt des Stückes die Erkenntnis der Jeanne D'Arc zu machen, dass sie nicht von Engländern, sondern von Franzosen verurteilt wird. Diese gleiche Erfahrung, dass nämlich die Leute, die sie verderben, nicht Landesfeinde, sondern reiche Franzosen sind - "reich und reich gesellt sich gern" - sollte Simone machen.[1]

In this passage Feuchtwanger mentions features of the play which are related to Brecht's earlier work. The reference to "reich und reich gesellt sich gern" points to the central argument of Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe. Brecht had already travestied the story of Joan of Arc in Die heilige Johanna and Simone Machard, with its indirect reference to German political developments together with its trial scene is clearly related to Brecht's earlier topical plays. For all this, however, Simone Machard marks a change from Brecht's preceding work: it lacks the playwright's

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1. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Stückes Simone, Neue Deutsche Literatur (Berlin), No. 6, 1957, p.56.

customary firm accents and it is composed in a minor key. This may be due to what Feuchtwanger regards as the fragmentary nature of the work[1], but one cannot escape the impression that Brecht's poetic energy is on the wane.

This impression is confirmed when we turn to Die Tage der Commune which is the last of Brecht's original plays. All things considered, one might have wished him a more striking conclusion to his career; for Die Commune is an unvarnished piece of Marxist ideology, demonstrated in the most primitive manner and with none of the poetic flair of Brecht's best work. It was written in 1948-49 at the time of Brecht's return to Berlin and one is tempted to assume that some kind of political directive is involved. This assumption might be supported by the fact that Brecht concerned himself in the last years of his life with an almost equally unpoetic project - an attempt to put the Communist Manifesto into verse.

In Arturo Ui the amalgamation of the German political story with the American gangster story is founded on the Marxist conception of capitalism, that is, on the belief that the whole of capitalist society is moved, from the highest to the lowest level, by uniform economic factors.

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1. "Der Text, in welchem das Stücke 'Die Gesichte der Simone Machard' vorliegt, (muss) als Fragment angesehen werden." Ibid.

This simultaneous double-story technique is a development of the technique of historical analogy used by the Agitprop theatre of the twenties and thirties.[1] The depiction of the class-struggle was not, however, Brecht's only - or perhaps even his main aim. His declared intention was:

> den üblichen gefahrvollen Respekt vor den grossen Tötern zu zerstören.[2]

To this end he uses the 'Verfremdung' implied in the transposition of the events to the Chicago underworld: he goes on to superimpose on the parody a travesty, i.e. to create what he himself calls a 'Doppelverfremdung'.[3] This consists in the employment of blank verse and the production in a 'grand style'. Nor can he resist the temptation to exploit the incongruity even further by parodying scenes from the classical repertoire - the scene in Martha Schwertlein's garden[4] and the wooing scene from Richard III.[5] The object of the successive 'Verfremdungen' is, as usual, to make the audience reflect on what they see:

> Ihr aber lernet, wie man sieht statt stiert
> Und handelt, statt zu reden noch und noch. [6]

Transferring the action to the gangster milieu had the advantage of enabling Brecht to reduce the scale of the work: the mechanics of totalitarianism are demonstrated, as it were, on a working model. It is a model, however, which

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1. In Gewitter über Gottland, written by Ehm Welk and produced by Piscator in 1927, for instance, the class-

struggle was presented in medieval guise. cf. Jhering, Von Reinhardt bis Brecht II, op.cit., p.259: "Ehm Welks Schauspiel spielt im Mittelalter. Erwin Piscators Regie trug den Stoff durch alle Zeiten. Ehm Welk bringt den Kampf zwischen der kapitalistischen Hansa und dem kommunistischen Bund der Vitalianer. Piscator zeigt diesen Kampf unter anderem Namen in allen Jahrhunderten."

2. Stücke IX, p.372.

3. Sinn und Form, Zweites Sonderheft, op.cit., p.100.

4. The identification of Ui with Faust and Givola with the 'Spottgeburt aus Dreck und Feuer' is not as arbitrary as it might seem at first sight. Ui suffers from a kind of demonic wrongheadedness and a craving for absolute power that is not un-Faustian, while Givola is characterised by an ironic brutality that is distinctly Mephistophelian - he is certainly Ui's evil genius, as far as Roma is concerned.

5. cf. Scene 14, Stücke IX, p.339 ff., where Ui makes overtures to Betty Dullfeet at the funeral of her husband - although they are overtures of a commercial rather than an erotic description.

6. Stücke IX, p.365 (Epilog).

incorporates only the factors calculated to produce this one effect. The mass of the working class and the opposition to the totalitarian regime are not represented. In this respect, Arturo Ui is a counterpart to Furcht und Elend, which, in a realistic and epic idiom, shows the reaction of the mass of the population to the Nazi ideology. Where Furcht und Elend deals mainly with the effects, Arturo Ui shows the causes. Consequently, where Furcht und Elend avoids showing the main villains of the piece, Arturo Ui concerns itself almost exclusively with them.

Brecht nowhere takes the opportunity to condemn Ui and his associates directly. He is, in fact, much cooler and more objective in his approach than Marxist writers commonly are. He seeks merely to show how the dictator state is born through a combination of factors - economic crisis, self-interest, civic cowardice - that offers pathological personalities the chance of coming to the fore. Nazism was not simply the creation of a small number of bad men, and no useful purpose would be served in Brecht's eyes by simply condemning these figures - "Auch sollte man nicht offene Türen einrennen"[1]; it is more important to show the causes of the social evil:

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1. Stücke IX, p.369.

> Das überzieht die Stadt jetzt wie ein Aussatz
> Der Finger ihr und Arm und Schulter anfrisst.[1]

The whole point is that the Nazi phenomenon was not unique, that the seeds of the disease are still present:

> Die Völker wurden sein Herr, jedoch
> Dass keiner uns zu früh da triumphiert -
> Der Schoss ist fruchtbar noch, aus dem das kroch.[2]

Willy Haas takes Arturo Ui simply as evidence of the fascination which asocial and unconventional elements had for Brecht. There may be a lot of truth in this, but, on the other hand, it is hardly justified to refer to the play as 'ein kläglicher Versager'.[3] The argument:

> Durch solch ein veraltetes Gangsterspiel im Stil von 1910 oder 1920 kann man auch nicht die leiseste Ahnung von der wahrhaft höllengesandten Erscheinung Hitlers und seines Trosses vermitteln.[4]

represents a total misunderstanding of Brecht's intention. The bombast of the phrase 'wahrhaft höllengesandte Erscheinung' reveals precisely that 'gefahrvollen Respekt vor den grossen Tötern' which it was Brecht's aim to destroy. Arturo Ui is not a 'romantisch-lehrhafte Verniedlichung'.[5] It is an attempt to make clear to a critical understanding the truly despicable nature of a regime remarkable for its

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1. Stücke IX, p.200.
2. Stücke IX, p.365.
3. Bert Brecht, Berlin 1958, p.80.
4. op.cit., p.80 f.
5. Ibid.

lack of imagination. One would expect something much more subtle from an infernal emissary than the mere multiplication of murder. Brecht cuts Hitler down to size, both in the purely dramatic sense and in the moral sense.

Die Gesichte der Simone Machard is also a kind of parable which seeks to show, within the narrow space of a French provincial inn-yard, the causes of the French collapse. The choice of setting is not without significance, for it stands for the high living and mercantilism that helped to sap French morale. The play concerns itself entirely with the internal weakness of France: the Germans make only a fleeting appearance and serve only to motivate the actions of Madame Soupeau and her son, on the one hand, and Simone, on the other. Brecht shows a microcosm of French society as he conceives it, from the arrogant and corrupt ruling class to the disillusioned, apathetic working class; he shows the tensions which exist between the army and the populace and between the civil authority and the wealthy middle class. It is a society where each seeks his own, and of which one might say, "Where there is no vision the people perish". For the only vision, the only spark of idealism and patriotism is in the imagination of a half-grown girl, and she is forcibly removed to a lunatic asylum.

The visions in Simone Machard are something new to Brecht's work but it is questionable whether their treatment

is altogether successful. On the one hand, they are naturalistic up to a point[1], on the other they fall quite outside Simone's grasp of the political situation. In the trial scene[2], for instance, the meticulous theological cross-examination of Joan of Arc is changed, with satirical intent, into a class issue:

> Simone: Der Engel war nur sehr wenig abgebröckelt, am Ärmel.
> Colonel: Aha. Abgebröckelt am Ärmel. Wie wenn er sein Gewand auch bei der Arbeit tragen würde, was? Womöglich zerrissen.[3]

The visions are clearly meant to alienate the events in real life as well as Simone's idealism. And it is this which makes the play indeterminate. On the one hand, Brecht judges Simone's naive patriotism positively: she does manage to set fire to the petrol the Soupeaus are prepared to give the Germans and it is positive and hopeful that the visions are to be found in the younger generation - contrary to Soupeau's contention.[4] On the other hand, however, Brecht seems concerned to show that "patriotism is not enough!"

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1. Like Hauptmann in Hanneles Himmelfahrt Brecht constructs the dreams from elements of the subject's real experience. Simone's visions exhibit an inextricable confusion of the contemporary, situation and the circumstances of the Joan of Arc legend. cf., for example, Stücke IX, p.400 f. "Ich muss sofort zum König nach Orleans, das sind 30 Kilometer, die Tanks machen 70 in der Stunde, und ich habe löcherige Schuhe, die neuen krieg ich erst zu Ostern."
2. cf. Stücke IX, p.460 ff.
3. Stücke IX, p.468.
4. "Diese Jugend weiss ja nicht mehr, was Frankreich ist." Stücke IX, p.384.

Simone's tragedy - and the tragedy of her nation - we may deduce, is that she did not understand that spiritual forces only become effective when they seize hold of the masses, and by this very fact become material forces. This is good Leninist doctrine but it seems unfortunate that Brecht chose to demonstrate this through the shortcomings of a child who would, in any case, never begin to understand the implications of the class struggle.[1]

There are similarities between Simone Machard and Die Commune in that both plays deal with French political situations in the face of German Imperialism. Again, the axiom on which both plays are based is: "reich und reich gesellt sich gern". But whereas in Machard these conflicts are presented with subtlety, in Die Commune the pious reconstruction of an historical episode is accompanied by an unashamed appeal to class emotion and class prejudice. The proletariate, through its organ, the National Guard, is shown in the first scenes as the idealised progenitor of the Commune: in the closing scenes it appears as the ultimate heroic defender of the ruined paradise. At the other extreme, we have brief glimpses of the reactionary opposition - Thiers worrying about his stomach and the

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1. Brecht does indicate that Simone is not class-conscious, but in her visions she has a better grasp of the political issues involved, which is quite out of keeping with her character. cf. the section Characterisation.

temperature of his bath while he plots the massacre of the Communard, Bismarck bullying the French envoy during a performance in the Frankfurt Opera House, the bloated Bourgeoisie scuttling to safety or watching the workers massacred to make a bourgeois holiday. Between these extremes there is the assembly of the Commune, divided in its counsels and dooming the new state to destruction by an adherence still to bourgeois ideals of legality and tolerance.

It is disappointing to see Brecht descend to the level of 'Socialist Realism' in this work. There is plenty of evidence that the repression of the Commune was one of the blackest episodes in French history, but Brecht has succeeded in alienating the sympathy of any but the most primitive political intelligence. The schematism which he employed so effectively in the Lehrstücke stands in jarring contrast to the flatly 'realistic' dialogue and sentimental characterisation. Again, there seems to be inconsistency between the frank appeal to sentiment and the ruthlessness which is advocated not only in the play but in the official Communist doctrine. This is Brecht's most tendentious play: here, he has not only lost his ruthless rationalism but he has sacrificed that original vision and detachment from reality that constitutes his chief poetic merit.

Structure.

The action of Arturo Ui covers a number of years. From the captions to the scenes it is clear that the economic slump depicted in the first scenes of the play correspond to the German situation in 1932 and that the final scenes dealing with Dullfeet's inability to keep Cicero from Ui's hands is a parallel to Hitler's annexation of Austria in 1938. In contrast to the length of the action in Arturo Ui, both Die Commune and Machard cover much shorter periods of time. While the former extends from January to May 1871, the action of Machard takes place within less than a week.

Both Arturo Ui and Machard are parables and are concerned with what Friedrich Wolf calls 'Der doppelte Boden'.[1] This means that, structurally speaking, they are written on two levels so that these plays embody more than a simple straightforward dramatic action. In Arturo Ui both the placards which cover the back-cloth during the play, and the prologue and epilogue make the reference to the German situation clear.[2] In Machard the dream sequences provide commentaries on the actions of the characters in the play[3] and are not

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1. Aufsätze über Theater, op.cit., p.85.
2. This correspondence is also indicated in the names of the characters which are wittily modified to fit the milieu: Arturo Ui - Hitler; Dogsborough - Hindenburg; Ernesto Roma - Ernst Roem; Emanuele Giri - Hermann Goering; Guiseppe Givola - Joseph Goebbels; Ignatius Dullfeet - Engelbert Dollfuss.
3. cf. the section Characterisation in this chapter.

simply climaxes to the dramatic action.

The organic structure of Arturo Ui is determined by six main episodes. The first of these[1], which shows Brecht's skill in analysing the economic slump, develops slowly. But as soon as Ui gains a foothold in the state through the dock-scandal, the events proceed at an ever-increasing tempo. The following five episodes, the trial for arson[2], Dogsborough's testament and the gangsters' quarrel[3], the murder of Roma[4], the murder of Dullfeet and wooing of Betty Dullfeet[5] and the annexation of Cicero[6] show Ui's rapid rise to power and at the same time the growing abhorrence which every section of the population, including his backers, feel for the dictator. The hectic course of the action is only slowed down by two interludes, in the first of which Ui takes lessons in elocution and deportment[7] and in the second of which he is haunted by the murdered Roma.[8]

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1. It includes scenes 1 to 6, Stücke IX, pp.187-255.
2. Scenes 8-9 (IX, pp.265-293).
3. Scenes 10-11 (IX, pp.293-318).
4. Scene 12 (IX, pp.318-326).
5. Scenes 13-14 (IX, pp.326-351).
6. Scenes 16-17 (IX, pp.353-363).
7. Scene 7 (IX, p.255 ff.)
8. Scene 15 (IX, p.351 ff.). Roma's appearance as a ghost was incidentally criticised and Brecht accepted this criticism: "Was die Erscheinung von Röhms Geist betrifft, hat Kusche meiner Meinung nach recht. (So wie der Text jetzt ist, erhält ein fetter, versoffener Nazi Märtyrerzüge.)" In the production of the play in Berlin this scene was cut altogether.

The play ends with Ui rhapsodising on the fields still to be conquered - or, as he puts it, 'protected'. What this protection amounts to is briefly shown in the final scene with the wrecked lorry and dying woman. We are abruptly jerked back from the grotesque gangster milieu to the hard realities of war. The short epilogue is hardly necessary to point the moral.

In Machard the structure of the work is determined by the alternation of dream and reality and at first sight it is tempting to suggest that Brecht used as his model Hauptmann's Hanneles Himmelfahrt. But the pattern of Brecht's work is not as clear as with Hauptmann. Each of the four main sections of Machard embraces a 'real' and a 'dream' sequence, but the relationship between them varies. In the first two sequences - Das Buch and Der Handschlag - the visions[1] constitute a climax: they succeed certain real events and amalgamate them with ideas gathered from Simone's reading. The third sequence - Das Feuer - contains only a brief day-dream[2] which simply registers Simone's speculation on the actions and motives of those around her. The fourth sequence - Das Gericht - reverses the structural order of the first two so that the dream precedes reality. The

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1. cf. Stücke IX, p.398 ff. and p.431 ff.
2. cf. Stücke IX, p.448 f.

impetus of Simone's mission is traced in these visions: the first two inspire her to acts of increasing boldness, the third already registers a certain hesitation, the fourth pictures a mood of despair which is confirmed by what follows and only fleetingly relieved by Simone's brief glimpse of the angel.[1] Thus where Hannele's visions become more and more elaborate and tend towards a poetic and transcendental climax, one might speak, in Simone's case, of an anti-climax. For Brecht is deliberately restrained in his evaluation of Simone's influence; her example does not evoke a great wave of patriotic enthusiasm, although her action is not totally ineffective. The scene in the inn-yard is much the same at the end of the play as at the beginning, but there is a glare in the sky that shows that the refugees have learned from Simone and have set fire to the gymnasium requisitioned by the Germans.

As far as the structure of Die Commune is concerned it most closely resembles Die Mutter except that the later play dispenses with a central figure. Like Die Mutter, it has a prose work as its model - Nordahl Grieg's Niederlage[2] - and like the dramatisation of Gorki's novel, it follows a plain

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1. Stücke IX, p.485.
2. cf. introduction to the play, Stücke X, p.306: "Aus der Niederlage wurden einige Züge und Charaktere verwendet, jedoch sind Die Tage der Commune im ganzen eine Art Gegenentwurf."

chronological course. Broadly speaking the play falls into four parts. The first[1] shows the concluding stages of the Prussian war, which Thiers, in the face of the Communist threat, is determined to terminate. It also depicts the refusal of the people to deliver their arms. The second[2] marks the victory of the people and the birth of the Commune, which is summarised in the song Resolution.[3] The operation of the commune, its deliberations, and the difficulties with which it has to contend are illustrated in the third and longest part[4] of the play. The song Keiner oder Alle marks the transition to the death of the Commune and the last part[5] depicts its death agonies.

Characterisation.

In all these plays characterisation is not very subtle. But whereas in Arturo Ui and Machard this is because Brecht wishes to reveal the motives of his characters in a striking and unusual way, in Die Commune it is because of the propagandistic aim of the work. The 'Verfremdungen' created in Arturo Ui through the gangster-milieu and in Machard through the dream-sequences are primarily meant to

1. Scenes 1-3, Stücke IX, pp.305-339.
2. Scenes 4-6, Stücke X, pp.340-373.
3. Stücke X, p.350 ff.
4. Scenes 7-11, Stücke X, pp.373-420.
5. Scenes 12-14, Stücke X, pp.421-437.

clarify the manner in which the Nazis and the French behave. In Die Commune the intent is to glorify the working classes and the depiction of the proletariate and its arch-enemy, the ruling classes, is strictly in terms of black and white.

The analysis of the characters of leading Nazis which Brecht undertakes in Arturo Ui is not without interest, particularly in the case of the dictator himself. In contrast to the remote and pallid figure of Iberin in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe, Arturo Ui has not only a measure of historical truth, but he is convincing as an example of a pathological personality. He is not only a hysteric[1] but a man with boundless capacity for self-pity and obsessed by his craving for the recognition that will give him power:

> ... Erst brauch ich selber Schutz. Vor Polizei
> Und Richter muss ich erst geschützt sein, eh
> Ich andre schützen kann. 's geht nur von oben.
> (Düster) Hab ich den Richter nicht in meiner Tasche
> Indem er was von mir in seiner hat
> Bin ich ganz rechtlos. Jeder kleine Schutzmann
> Schiesst mich, brech ich in eine Bank, halt tot.[2]

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1. Ui's instability emerges in the scene where Roma reproaches him with his mood of "... braunen Trübsinns und / Untätiger Träumerei" (Stücke IX, p.210) and where Ui leaps to his feet in excitement when Bowl brings him the news of Dogsborough's corruption: "Ui (grossaufbrechend): Haltet ein Aug auf ihn! Komm, Roma! Jetzt / Riech ich Geschäfte" (IX, p.221).

2. Stücke IX, p.212. This preoccupation with his own security is the result of "der kleine Zwischenfall / In Harpers Bank" (p.211), i.e. the abortive Munich Putsch.

The pathological basis of Ui's behaviour is his capacity for self-deception and his conviction of his rightness; he has no moral scruples because he has a perverted moral sense.[1] The conviction of his rightness endows him with a demonic single-mindedness that underlies his hysterical exterior. His interview with Dogsborough[2] is a perfect example of how he pursues his aim through a whole series of emotional convulsions, ranging from tears to threats.

Ui has his share of deliberate cunning. While he is shrewd enough to know where he must seek the real power in the state, he still regards it as expedient to make concessions to 'die kleinen Leute'. Hence the lessons in elocution and deportment: in this scene Brecht caricatures the mannerisms of Hitler with considerable virtuosity - the crossed hands, the self-conscious strut, the meticulously folded arms.

The figures of the other Nazi leaders are much less complex, but they have the life-like quality of well-constructed marionettes. Giri and Givola are, in the play as in reality, foils to one another. The former has no sign of any high intellectual processes - he is a gorilla with a macabre sense of humour. The latter is the

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1. This emerges in Betty Dullfeet's analysis of his character. cf. Stücke IX, p.346 f.
2. Stücke IX, scene 5, p.232 ff.

'smooth guy' in Ui's entourage: his profession of florist indicates his function - the disguising of his comrades' brutality.[1] The leader of the gangsters, Roma, has the not uncommon sentimentality of brutal natures. He is as violent as Giri, filled with hatred and suspicion of his associates, but naive and single-hearted in his devotion to Ui.

Of the other figures in the play only Dogsborough is in any way elaborately conceived. Like his model, Hindenburg, he has enjoyed the confidence of every section of the community. But he has his weakness, and consequently his price: tired of the foetid atmosphere of his canteen and the rough and tumble of political life, he is tempted by the peace and beauty of a country estate.[2] But even here there is no escape from evil: the threat that an investigation into the dock-loan has been set on foot drives him into the villainous hands of Ui. His authentic testament shows him a broken man, fully aware of his guilt:

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1. The flowers are also the symbol of his sadism. cf. Stücke IX, p.336: "Dullfeet: Auch Blumen haben ja Erlebnisse./ Givola: Und ob! Begräbnisse! Begräbnisse!"

2. The sordid milieu from which he has escaped tinges subtly his description of the landscape and makes of it a slightly beer-stained pastoral:
   Es waren die Pappeln, die bei diesem Landsitz
   Mich reizten. Und der Blick zum See, wie Silber
   Bevor's zu Talern wird. Und dass nicht saurer
   Geruch von altem Bier hier hängt (Stücke IX, p.224 f.).

Dies alles wusst ich und dies alles hab ich
Geduldet, ich euer ehrlicher Dogsborough aus Gier
Nach Reichtum und aus Angst, ihr zweifelt an mir.[1]

For his Hindenburg figure Brecht shows an understanding and sympathy that is perhaps unexpected. Apart from the fact that the motivation of the plot requires a certain complexity here, the author seems to have discovered an intrinsic interest in the tragic figure.

Simone is, in many ways, a sister to Kattrin. She is filled with compassion for the evacuees and is deeply patriotic. Like Kattrin she is the only person in the play who is heroic. Her visions which show up her naivety and immaturity are not, however, meant to reveal the psychological intricacies of her mind.[2] The confusion and absurdity of these visions are meant to show the obscurity and inadequacy of her aspirations. It is significant that Maurice's words "Arbeiter kaller Fender, befeinigt kei "[3] are only half comprehensible. The comic mixture of modern and medieval dress underlines the incongruity of her idealism. In short, she suffers from a lack of proper class-consciousness. In order to make this clear Brecht makes Simone's grasp of the situation more cogent in her visions than in

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1. Stücke IX, p.294.
2. cf. Feuchtwanger, op.cit., p.7. "Brecht lag wenig an der Konstruktion, er kümmerte sich nicht um die äussere Wahrscheinlichkeit; auch an der Ausarbeitung der Charaktere lag ihm nicht viel, er hasste alles 'Psychologisieren'."
3. Stücke IX, p.403.

reality. By doing so he places comments in her mouth which go beyond her possible experience and sagacity; she advises the mayor on policy:

> Nur müssten Sie in das Geschaftsleben störend eingreifen, dass die Esskessel immer voll sind.[1]

Here she makes use of the mayor's own words[2], but elsewhere even the linguistic and stylistic resources[3] are beyond what could be expected, with psychological probability, of a girl of her age. The vision within the vision, when Simone sees the approach of the Nazi armies led by figures that are recognisably Goebbels and Goering[4], is quite out of keeping with the real character of the girl. While at points the real Simone coincides with her dream double, there are moments when the two are dissociated, and Simone becomes one of Brecht's 'split personalities'.

Through Simone's visions the other characters of the play are revealed in sharper perspective. The vacillating character of Chavez and the insecurity which motivate his ultimate betrayal of Simone are made clear in her first dream:

> Ich will sehen, was ich tun kann. Allerdings muss ich mich in acht nehmen, sonst streichen sie mir mein königliches Gehalt. Ich bin eben der Mann, der das Auge zudrückt, und da folgt natürlich keiner, wenn ich ihm etwas sage.[5]

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1. Stücke IX, p.406.
2. Stücke IX, p.394.
3. cf. Stücke IX, p.436 f.
4. cf. Stücke IX, p.407 f.
5. Stücke IX, p.406.

In the case of Madame Soupeau the visions bring an even more striking revelation of character: instead of the cold, dignified and calculating woman whom we have seen hitherto, she appears in the last dream as a hysterical creature, passionately uncompromising in her rage and hatred:

> Ich verlange, dass diese Person wegen Ketzerei und Ungehorsam sowie wegen Eigenmächtigkeit sofort hingerichtet wird. Köpfe müssen rollen. Blut muss fliessen. Sie muss blutig ausgerottet werden. Ein blutiges Exempel muss statuiert werden.[1]

This hysterical bitterness is subsequently confirmed at the end of the play when Madame Soupeau sends Simone to the convent.

Madame Soupeau is infinitely more formidable than her son, the inn-keeper, whose blustering manner covers a sentimental nature and a fundamental ineffectuality: he is characterised by his 'Geste der Hilflosigkeit'. His short-sightedness blinds him to the paradox of his sentimental patriotism and his commercialism. Although he claims to be ready to defend Simone after she has set fire to the petrol, he does not raise a finger to save her when it comes to the test.

The other characters are hardly differentiated from one another. The working men - Georges, Maurice, Robert and Père Gustave - are good at heart but disillusioned, capable

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1. Stücke IX, p.466.

of no more contribution to the class struggle than a sullen go-slow movement. As is foreshadowed in Simone's dreams, they are incapable of helping her in her final extremity.

Brecht's characterisation of the ruling classes in Die Commune can only be described as crass. It is, in fact, depicted in the Agitprop style which Friedrich Wolf criticised.[1] Throughout the play the opponents of the Commune are characterised by physical obesity (der dicke Geistliche), cowardice and deceit (de Ploeuc), or blood-curdling ruthlessness (Thiers and Bismarck). Thiers is shown as a sadistic hypochondriac, Bismarck as a Prussian sergeant-major. For both of them affairs of state are so much a matter of cold-blooded routine that they can deal with them incidentally while they discuss food or music.

The villains of the piece are, however, more interesting figures than the heroes: as Walter Jens points out:

> Hass, Kritik und Negation (vermochten) viel schärfer umrissene Figuren auf der kapitalistischen Seite zu schaffen als Liebe, Hymnus und Emphase auf der proletarischen.[2]

It is true that this is one of the few works in which Brecht attempts the difficult task of giving a positive profile of

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1. Aufsätze über Theater, op.cit., p.27. "Der Fabrikant ist durchaus nicht 'die vollgefressene Wurst' ... Man muss grade dem qualifizierten Arbeiter nicht ein abgedroschenes Schema seiner Feinde zeigen, sondern im Gegenteil die verfeinerte Maske, in der heute der Kapitalismus und seine Helfer ihm entgegentreten."

2. Statt einer Literaturgeschichte, op.cit., p.166.

the proletariate. He succeeds at most in indicating different shades of opinion amongst its representatives. Whereas 'Papa' and Jean Cabet are the most violently class-conscious and hence the most radical and dogmatic in their outlook, Geneviève and François, with their intellectual pretensions, are more subtle and less impulsive. Madame Cabet embodies pre-eminently the virtues of bravery and generosity, but all of them suffer from congenital soft-heartedness. Even the blood-thirsty 'Papa' cannot bring himself to shoot the spy Guy Suitry, not because he is Geneviève's fiancé, but because one does not do that sort of thing 'devant les enfants'.

In his attempt to impart human interest to the struggle of the proletariate, Brecht indulges in unwonted sentiment. The final scenes in which his workers - including Jean and Babette with her unborn child - die a glorious death on the barricades is anything but a 'Verfremdung': from it emanates a rank sentimentality which compares ill with the death of Kattrin in Mutter Courage.

Language.

It is possibly in their language that the differences in quality of these plays are most noticeable. The style of Die Commune fluctuates between the improbable and grotesque curses of Thiers and Bismarck -

> Die Schweinerei hat mich schon einige Nächte gekostet, verdammt schlechtes Beispiel für Europa, muss man ausrotten wie Sodom und Gomorrha mit Pech und Schwefel[1] -

and the hack revolutionary jargon of the working-classes:

> Tragen wir die Flamme des Aufstandes in das Land: sprengen wir den eisernen Gürtel um Paris, entsetzen wir die grossen Städte! [2]

The two songs Resolution and Keiner oder Alle do not rise above the propagandistic level of the play as a whole. On the contrary they emphasise it by the dull repetition of 'key' lessons:

> Keiner oder alle. Alles oder nichts.
> Einer kann sich da nicht retten.
> Gewehre oder Ketten.
> Keiner oder alle. Alles oder nichts.[3]

The language in Machard is of greater interest. The provocative impact of Brecht's style emerges with particular force in the case of Soupeau who unmasks the hollowness of his idealism by his purely material considerations:

> Wo der Geist fehlt, gibt es immer eine Ausrede. (Über die Schulter zurück ins Haus): Hast du von den portugiesischen Sardinen genommen, Jean? [4]

The language of the dream sequences is also meant to reveal among other things the shortcomings of Simone's patriotism and it is for this reason that it is no more poetic than the language of the real sequences. The impact of the style in

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1. Stücke X, p.404; cf. also p.320.
2. Stücke X, p.394; cf. also pp.355, 367.
3. Stücke X, p.419.
4. Stücke IX, p.385.

the visions is grotesque partly because some of the language is incomprehensible[1], partly because scraps of conversation heard in reality are placed in an incongruous context in the dreams. When Simone, for instance, asks the king (Chavez) for an army to conquer Paris, the mayor replies to her with words formerly used by Mme Soupeau in connection with Simone's dismissal from the inn:

> Liebe Johanna, wir sind sehr mit dir zufrieden.
> Das bedeutet viel aus unserm Munde. Lass es nun
> genug sein. [2]

Not even the passages in verse of the angel are poetic, despite his exhortations to action:

> Johanna, Tochter Frankreichs, es muss etwas geschehen
> Sonst muss das grosse Frankreich in zwei Wochen
> untergehen.
> Drum hat Gott, der Herr, nach einer Hilfe herumgefragt
> Und ist auf dich gekommen, seine kleine Magd.[3]

With the possible exception of Simone's vision within the vision[4], where a more urgent and forceful note is struck, the language of Machard cannot really compare with the stylistic experimentation Brecht undertook in Arturo Ui.

The verse of Arturo Ui incorporates a 'Verfremdung' analogous to that involved in the contrast of theme and

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1. cf. Stücke IX, p.409:
   "Simone: Okler greischt Burlapp ...
   Maire: Kladder dunk frier! Kauke dich!"
2. Stücke IX, p.433. cf. IX, p.430 ff.
3. Stücke IX, p.398 f.
4. Stücke IX, p.407 f.

verse form as such. That is, there is an initial contrast between gangster theme and iambic form: on examination the blank verse itself proves to contain a further contrast: the verse form, noble in itself and fraught with classical associations, is syncopated, 'jazzed up' and generally handled in such a cavalier fashion that Brecht himself referred to it as 'schlampig', while one of his collaborators, Margarete Steffin, reckoned that 45% of the lines were irregular.[1] Even allowing for a later polishing process the effects remain 'verstümmelt, gestreckt, verhunzt'.[2] This is deliberate, an element of the travesty, but also, Brecht claims, an experiment in a new verse style:

> Einen modernen Vers mit unregelmässigen Rhythmen, aus dem noch allerhand werden kann.[3]

The irregular verses are not scattered haphazard throughout the play. It is possible to distinguish different styles which serve, in part at least, to characterise: Ui's 'knapper und rauher Ton'[4] issues in irregular, stumbling verses which reveal the poverty of his rhetoric. The contrast with the regular iambics of Mark Antony's speech from Julius Caesar[5] is most striking:

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1. cf. Sinn und Form, Zweites Sonderheft, op.cit., p.101.
2. op.cit., p.102.
3. Ibid.
4. Stücke IX, p.263.
5. Stücke IX, p.263 f.

Kurz, es herrscht Chaos
Denn, wenn ein jeder machen kann, was er will
Und was sein Egoismus ihm eingibt
Heisst das, dass alle gegen alle sind
Und damit Chaos herrscht. Wenn ich ganz friedlich
Meinen Gemüseladen führ oder sagen wir
Mein Lastauto mit Karfiol steuer oder
Was weiss ich, und ein andrer, weniger friedlich
In meinen Laden trampelt: "Hände hoch!"
Oder mir den Reifen platt schiesst mit dem Browning
Kann nie ein Friede herrschen.[1]

There is just sufficient rhythmic pattern here to reveal ineptitude, enough attempt at rhetoric to underline the amorphous sentences and the wretched stop-gaps like 'sagen wir' and 'was weiss ich'.

Even where the scansion is more regular, Brecht often favours the breaking up of the lines by enjambement and caesura: an extreme example may be found in a speech by Sheet:

Der Bruder, eh er seinen Bruder trifft
Kauft sich beim Trödler alte Stiefel, nur
Nicht angepumpt zu werden! Alte Partner fürch-
Ten einander so, dass sie vorm Stadthaus
Einander ansprechen mit erfundenen Namen.[2]

A totally different, much smoother iambic form may be found, for instance in the oration of the parson at Dullfeet's funeral:

So kommt der sterbliche Rest Ignatius Dullfeets
Zur Ruhe hier. Ein Leben arm an Gewinnst,
Doch reich an Müh ist um.[3]

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1. Stücke IX, p.265 f.
2. Stücke IX, p.197 f.
3. Stücke IX, p.339.

Or, more marked still, in the long monologue of the murdered Roma, whose promotion to an underworld of another kind seems to have done his iambics a world of good:

> Und all dies wird dir doch nichts nützen. All dies
> Gemetzel, Meucheln, Drohn und Speichelspritzen
> Ist ganz umsonst, Arturo. ...[1]

An even stricter form may be observed in the rhymed epigrammatic exchanges of the parodistic 'Martha's Garden' scene. Apart from this scene and the Prologue, Brecht generally uses rhyme only in the Elizabethan manner, to point the end of a scene:

> Giri brüllend: Ja, ruf ihn nur! Der Pneu ist platt
> Wollen sehn, wer Herr ist in dieser Stadt.[2]

The main quality of Brecht's blank verse in Arturo Ui is its rapid and restless movement which makes it an effective dramatic instrument. It seems a pity that the playwright made no subsequent attempt to develop this form, but tended, in keeping with the more naturalistic idiom of his remaining works, to fall back mainly on prose as his medium.

Theatrical production.

Arturo Ui was first performed in Stuttgart (1958) and the Berliner Ensemble produced the play in 1959. Perhaps,

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1. Stücke IX, p.351.
2. Stücke IX, p.292. cf. also p.326:
"Givola: Mein Bein ist kurz, wie? So ist's dein Verstand!
Jetzt geh mit guten Beinen an die Wand."

the most notable feature of the later production was the manner in which the prologue was staged. The proscenium was like a race-show with coloured electric lights, on which glass-cases with wax effigies of Hindenburg, Goebbels, Goering and Hitler were placed. At the opening of the play, the counterparts to these figures stood behind the cases and stepped out when they were summoned.

The play was produced by Peter Palitzsch and Manfred Wekwerth and the 'grand style' Brecht had advocated for the work was reflected in the way in which most of the sequences were performed on raised platforms with the minimum of stage-properties. The hectic tempo of the work was sustained by the music Hans-Dieter Hosalla wrote for it. Before and after each sequence loud jazz rhythms, both harsh and unexpected, echoed round the theatre.

The actor taking the part of Ui (Ekkehard Schall), although he adopted some of Hitler's mannerism, did not attempt simply to caricature the dictator. The production, for all its references to recent German history, remained well within the compass of the theatre. This was, above all, a comedy - however gruesome - and the model which sprung to mind was Chaplin's The Great Dictator.

Die Gesichte der Simone Machard was first performed in West Germany (Frankfurt 1957) by Harry Buckwitz and even East German critics praised this production:

> In Frankfurt erlebte man eine Aufführung, die berechtigerweise zu den besten Brecht-Interpretationen gehört, die nach 1945 auf einer deutschen Bühne zu sehen waren.[1]

Harry Buckwitz had the difficult task of training an 11 year old girl for the part of Simone - for, shortly before his death, Brecht had explicitly stated that the part should only be played by a child:

> --- das wichtigste für eine Aufführung der Simone ist, dass die Hauptrolle unter überhaupt keinen Umständen von einer jungen Schauspielerin gespielt werden kann (auch nicht von einer, die wie ein Kind aussieht), sondern nur von einer elfjährigen.[2]

Brecht, no doubt, made this recommendation in order to prevent a psychological rendering of the part and the Frankfurt production was apparently successful in this:

> Im Spiel der Dorothea Jecht wurden alle jene Vorteile und Vorzüge produktiv, die ein Laienspieler gegenüber einem Berufsschauspieler hat. Ihr Spiel war frei von den Tricks der Routiniers, frei von selbstgefälliger Virtuosität ... Naiv und direkt zeigte sie reale Vorgänge, die Überflüssigkeit psychologischer Tiefenlötungen wurde nie so deutlich wie hier.[3]

The connections between the real and the dream worlds, which Brecht symbolised by the clanging of the empty messtins as bells for King Charles' coronation and by the transformation of Madame Soupeau's key into Simone's sword, were

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1. Joachim Tenschert, Jeanne D'Arc 1940. 'Gegen den Teufel in Frankreich', Theater der Zeit (East Berlin), No.5, Mai 1957, p.51.
2. Quoted by Lion Feuchtwanger in Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Stückes Simone, p.58.
3. Joachim Tenschert, op.cit., p.51.

made clear in Teo Otto's settings for the production of the play. The front of the stage was dominated by the inn and the garage and at the back there were three large pieces of canvas arranged in the form of a medieval triptych. Pictures of ruined and bombed sites as well as the broken rosette of a cathedral were projected onto these screens.

There are no records of the production of Die Tage der Commune in Karl-Marx-Stadt (1957) and it is difficult to imagine that subtle techniques could have been employed. The few stage-directions given in the play are all too obviously connected with the message of the work as a whole. One need only mention the apple-tree which is meant to be in full bloom during the last stages of the Commune.

Chapter IX

The plays of Brecht's maturity

Introduction and Themes.

With the exception of Der kaukasische Kreidekreis (1943-45), the plays of Brecht's maturity were conceived within a very short time of one another. The first version of Galileo (1937-39), Mutter Courage (1938-39), Der Gute Mensch von Sezuan (1938-41) and Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti (1940) were written against the ominous background of the second world-war. In contrast to the feverish political urgency of Brecht's work in the 1930's, which grew with the rise of Fascism in Germany, these plays seem almost divorced from the impending catastrophe. Yet they are no more dissociated from social realities than any other of Brecht's work. As in Das Verhör des Lukullus, however, the problems raised in these plays are seen against backgrounds which, on the face of it, have little or no connection with topical affairs.

The settings of these plays allow Brecht freedom to put forward his themes in a poetic rather than a political idiom. Both Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Der kaukasische Kreidekreis are set in imaginary Eastern lands. The province of Sezuan, although it is in the last instance a country where capitalism rules, remains remote from 'every-day' life

through the regular appearance of the gods. This setting enables Brecht to present the problem of Good and Evil, which is the central theme of the work, in a striking form, to alienate the action of the play. The land of Grusinien in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is similarly represented as far away. The events of the play are given a legendary character which alienates its action not only in place but time. This is made clear through the prologue to the play where the settlement of a dispute between communist farmers is to be celebrated by performing the legend:

> Der Alte rechts: Wird es eine der alten Sagen sein?
> Der Sänger: Eine sehr alte. Sie heisst "Der Kreidekreis" und stammt aus dem Chinesischen.[1]

Throughout the action of the play this remoteness is preserved by the singer (cf. his function under heading of structure).

In the case of Mutter Courage and Galileo Galilei the issues of the plays are presented through the setting of a 17th century European background. The broad canvas of the Thirty Years War in Mutter Courage enables Brecht to simplify his analysis of the phenomenon war and at the same time to present it in its starkest form. The Italian Renaissance setting of Galileo is used to alienate the social, economic and political problems which Brecht wishes to relate to the

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1. Stücke X, p.145.

place and function of the scientist in society.

Puntila appears to be something of an exception in its setting, for Brecht does not transfer the action of the play to the past or to a distant land. Yet here, too, he succeeds in evoking a poetic setting which stands in sharp contrast to the exploitation to which the rich land-owner Puntila subjects his chauffeur Matti. Finland is not seen in industrial terms, but as a land of pastoral and natural beauty, which Brecht describes in almost lyrical tones in the prologue to the play:

> Sie sehn dies Tier, sich ungeniert bewegend
> In einer würdigen und schönen Gegend
> Wenn sie aus den Kulissen nicht erwächst
> Erfühlt ihr sie vielleicht aus unserem Text:
> Milchkesselklirre im finnischen Birkendom
> Nachtloser Sommer über milden Strom
> Rötlicher Dörfer, mit den Hähnen wach
> Und früher Rauch steigt grau vom Schindeldach.[1]

All these plays are related to the problems raised in Brecht's earlier work. From Baal to the operas, from the Lehrstücke to the later plays like Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe, there are a number of themes which crystallise in the plays of Brecht's maturity. The theme of the coldness of the universe, which goes back to Brecht's very first plays and looms up in Die heilige Johanna, forms the background to the situations depicted in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Mutter Courage.

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1. Stücke IX, p.7 f.

In the poverty-stricken province of Sezuan, where as in Die heilige Johanna Brecht points both to the wretchedness and poverty of the poor[1], Shen Te, for all her goodness, is forced to adopt the ferocious guise of Shui Ta to protect her tobacco-shop. Despite the latter's ruthlessness, he is aware of the freezing numbness of city life. His remedy for this coldness is expressed in the following metaphor:

> Der Gouvernör, befragt, was nötig wäre
> Den frierenden der Stadt zu helfen, antwortete:
> Eine zehntausend Fuss lange Decke
> Welche die ganzen Vorstädte einfach zudeckt.[2]

This theme is epitomised in Das Lied vom Rauch which is sung by Shen Te's poor relatives and friends at the very beginning of the play:

> Und so, sag ich: lass es!
> Sieh den grauen Rauch
> Der in immer kältre Kälte geht: so
> Gehst du auch.[3]

Mutter Courage is pervaded with the same atmosphere of coldness to underline the misery and suffering entailed in war. This theme emerges with full force in the song Courage and Eilif sing when they meet for the last time:

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1. cf. Shen Te's addresses to the audience:
   Sie sind ohne Obdach. Sie sind schlecht.
   Sie sind ohne Freunde. Sie sind niemandes Freund...
   Sie brauchen jemand. ...Wer könnte sie schelten
   Wie könnte man da nein sagen. (VIII, p.238)
   (VIII, p.235)
2. Stücke VIII, p.253 f.
3. Stücke VIII, p.246.

> Kühl stand der Mond überm Schindeldach weiss
> Doch der Soldat trieb hinab mit dem Eis
> Und was sagten dem Weib die Soldaten?
> Er verging wie der Rauch, und die Wärme ging auch
> Denn es wärmten sie nicht seine Taten. [1]

It is, in fact, mainly through the songs in this play that Brecht communicates a kind of craving for warmth and comfort which affects the cook, in particular. When he sings the Salomo-Song, he intersperses its verses with bitter comments on life; the yearning for security and peace comes to the fore through the emphasis he gives to the injustice of life:

> Alle Tugenden sind nämlich gefährlich auf dieser Welt, wie das schöne Lied beweist, man hat sie besser nicht und hat ein angenehmes Leben und Frühstück, sagen wir, eine warme Supp. Ich zum Beispiel hab keine und möchte eine, ich bin ein Soldat, aber was hat meine Kühnheit mir genutzt in all die Schlachten, nix ...[2]

Unlike the earliest plays, the insistence on the coldness of life in these two plays is related to economic factors which are the fundamental elements on which Puntila, Kreidekreis and Galileo are also based. In these last three plays Brecht does however go back in some sense to his earlier work. Puntila returns to the theme of anarchy in Baal, but here it is treated in a comic vein. As in the case of Der gute Mensch von Sezuan Brecht presents his main character in terms of a 'split' personality. Puntila's schizophrenia, however, is not effected by

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1. Stücke VII, p.91.
2. Stücke VII, p.185.

desperate economic stress like that of Shen Te's. It is a consequence of his insatiable thirst for aquavit, which recalls Baal's alcoholism. In his sober moments Puntila is nothing but a ruthless exploiter, when he is drunk he is a warm-hearted boon companion. Puntila, himself, points to this paradoxical situation when he talks of being 'stinking sober' and of having fearful bouts of sobriety:

> Es ist so: die ganze andere Zeit bin ich vollkommen normal, so wie du mich jetzt siehst. Ich bin im vollen Besitz meiner Geisteskräfte, ich bin Herr meiner Sinne. Dann kommt der Anfall. Es beginnt damit, dass mit meinen Augen irgend etwas nicht mehr stimmt. Anstatt zwei Gabeln ... sehe ich nur noch eine. ... Ich seh nur die Hälfte von der ganzen Welt. Aber es kommt noch böser, indem ich während dieser Anfälle von totaler sinnloser Nüchternheit einfach zum Tier herabsinke.[1]

The alienation of Puntila's behaviour, the fact that his drunkenness is made to appear normal and his soberness abnormal, is an organic part of the play devised to provoke the reader into thinking about this behaviour. It is doubtful whether the Communist critic Rilla is altogether right when he claims that this alienation was meant to stress Puntila's ruthlessness all the more clearly:

> In der Tat tyrannisiert Puntila im Suff die Menschen mit seiner warmen Menschenliebe noch schlimmer, als er sie nüchtern mit seiner kalten Besonnenheit tyrannisiert.[2]

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1. Stücke IX, p.15.
2. Rilla, Essays, Henschelverlag, Berlin 1955, p.407 f.

Puntila is a figure for whom Brecht seems to have much affection and it is significant that most of the action of the play revolves round the drunken Puntila.[1] In his drunken moments Puntila shows the same disrespect for social conventions as Baal, except that here the anarchy is related more particularly to a society seen as a system of classes. Puntila tramples on this system when he re-employs the communist labourer Surkalla[2], and when he creates a scandal about his daughter's marriage to the Attaché whom he soberly regards to be a good match for her.[3] In Puntila Brecht fuses not only his delight in anarchy, but his fascination for the figure of the capitalist, which goes back to Weizen and Die heilige Johanna. Puntila's sense of property, his delight in dominating and outwitting the members of his own class is similar to Mauler's.[4]

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1. Of the twelve scenes which make up the play only two - cf. Scene 5, Stücke IX, p.55 ff., Scene 7, p.92 ff. - are entirely devoted to Puntila's soberness.
2. cf. Scene 4, p.52, "Der Probst soll mich am Arsch lecken, dem verbiet ich mein Haus wegen Unmenschlichkeit, der Surkalla ist ein prima Arbeiter".
3. cf. Scene 9, p.115 ff., where Puntila takes an intense dislike to the Attaché's face and becomes more and more irritated - justifiably so! - by his stupidity and lack of humour: "Einen solchen Menschen brauch ich nicht zu dulden. Fredrik, du verweigerst mir die grade Antwort auf meine ernste Frage, was du zu einer solchen Visage sagst, wenn ich sie in die Familie krieg. Aber ich bin Mann genug, mir schlüssig zu werden: Ein Mensch ohne Humor ist überhaupt kein Mensch." (117 f.)
4. cf. Scene 5, p.59 ff. where Matti relates how Puntila rudely interferes with the dealings of another land-owner in the labour market.

Brecht also resorts to the theme of anarchy in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis but in a very different way from that in Puntila. Here it is a whole society which is seen to break away from its moorings through the failure of a palace revolution.[1] On the one hand the Governor of Grusinien is murdered and his child, Michel, rescued by a kitchenmaid, Grusche; on the other, the unscrupulous Azdak - who belongs to the lower ranks of society - is elevated to the post of judge in Grusinien. The advantages which the poor derive from this social unrest and anarchy is something unique in Brecht's work and has no connection with the deliberate provocation of political unrest in the Lehrstücke. It is, however, related to Brecht's interest in justice and court-scenes. Brecht, in fact, bases his plays on the old Chinese legend of Der Kreidekreis[2] where the test of the Chalk-Circle - the equivalent of Solomon's Judgment in the Old Testament - represents the climax to the trial of two mothers who quarrel about the possession of a child. Brecht completely reverses the traditional outcome of the test whereby the child is returned to the mother who

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1. A number of Princes object to the Great Prince's running of the country by a system of governors and attempt to take over power. Their rebellion fails because they do not succeed in capturing the Great Prince.
2. The original is a Chinese didactic play written by Li-Hsing-Tao in the thirteenth century.

gave birth to it.[1] By handing the child to its foster-mother Brecht underlines his contempt for traditional laws and justice. This is emphasised by the way in which Azdak uses the law-book; he does not consult it but uses it as a cushion:

> Azdak: Das ist das Gesetzbuch, und ich habe es immer benutzt, das kannst du bezeugen.
> Schauwa: Ja zum Sitzen.[2]

Paradoxically, the unscrupulous, cowardly Azdak is the only just judge because he is in sympathy with the poor:

> Als die Obern sich zerstritten
> War'n die Untern froh, sie litten
> Nicht mehr so viel Gibber und Abgezwack.
> Auf Grusiniens bunten Strassen
> Gut versehn mit falschen Massen
> Zog der Armeleuterichter, der Azdak.
> Und er nahm es von den Reichen
> Und er gab es Seinesgleichen...[3]

When Azdak is called upon to return the governor's child to its rightful mother he uses the test of the Chalk Circle which enables him to reveal the motives of both Natella, the Governor's wife, and Grusche. The force with which Natella draws her son out of the circle epitomises her greed: she only wants the child in order to inherit her husband's

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1. Brecht was not the first to be interested in the dramatic possibilities of the test of the Chalk Circle and it is likely that he was drawn to the subject through the adaptations of both Klabund (1925) and subsequently Johannes von Günther (1941) who conform to the traditional outcome of the test.
2. Stücke X, p.274.
3. Stücke X, p.266.

fortune. Grusche's inability to pull for fear of hurting the child underlines her devotion to it:

> Ich hab's aufgezogen! Soll ich's zerreissen?
> Ich kann nicht.[1]

This prompts Azdak to proclaim Grusche the true mother of the child.

Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is a parable used to demonstrate the marxist proposition:

> Dass da gehören soll, was da ist, denen, die für es gut sind, also
> Die Kinder den Mütterlichen, damit sie gedeihen
> Die Wagen den guten Fahrern, damit gut gefahren wird
> Und das Tal den Bewässeren, damit es Frucht bringt. [2]

Both the prologue to the play Der Streit um das Tal and the parable are meant to be closely linked according to the singer[3], but if there is a correspondence it is only in the very broad outlines of the disputes: two opposed parties claim the possession of the same thing. But here the similarity ends. In the prologue there are no class distinctions and no trial is necessary to settle the dispute. Furthermore, the objects of the dispute are so different that it makes the nature of the respective

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1. Stücke X, p.298.

2. Stücke X, p.301.

3. Stücke X, p.145: "Wir hoffen ihr werdet finden, dass die Stimme des alten Dichters auch im Schatten der Sowjettraktoren klingt."

settlements completely antithetical.[1] One wonders, incidentally, how many of its communist admirers have realised what a splendid argument this play is for Colonialism?

Der gute Mensch von Sezuan also ends in a trial: Shui Ta is accused of murdering Shen Te and the gods who had originally helped her by paying for her hospitality to them, return to Sezuan to conduct the trial. They do not, however, pass a verdict on the cruelty and selfishness Shen Te has been forced to employ to safeguard her shop and protect the child she is expecting. It is left to the audience to pass sentence, to find a solution to the problems Brecht raises in the play.

These problems are concerned with Good and Evil, on the one hand, and Wealth and Poverty, on the other. Shen Te who is considered to be the best soul in Sezuan does not, however, share this view because she finds that her poverty sets limits to her generosity:

Wie soll ich gut sein, wo alles so teuer ist?[2]

Yet as soon as she derives capital from her charitable

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1. In the prologue the appeal to sentiment of the unenlightened farmers is dismissed, whereas in the parable Grusche's sentiments for Michel win her the case.

2. Stücke VIII, p.231.

deeds[1] she begins to realise that she cannot indulge her altruism without destroying the means of doing good. This emerges with full force during the trial scene when Wang accuses Shui Ta of frustrating Shen Te's generosity:

> Wang: ... Und immer wollte sie Gutes tun, und immer kamst du und hast es vereitelt.
> Shui Ta (ausser sich): Weil sonst die Quelle versiegt wäre, du Dummkopf.[2]

By Christian ethics - and the gods largely embody this criterion - Shen Te's charity is an expression of inborn goodness.[3] By these same standards Shui Ta's ruthlessness which makes him ignore the claims of the poor[4] is utterly despicable and evil. But as the play proceeds, it becomes increasingly more difficult to judge Shen Te / Shui Ta by these absolute standards, for it is Shen Te's very goodness which ultimately must be held responsible for all the unfortunate incidents in Sezuan. It is because of her goodness that she has to adopt the guise of Shui Ta.[5]

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1. It is not only the gods who recompense her; the barber Shu Fu gives her a blank cheque because he is impressed by her altruistic nature and is in love with her. cf. Stücke VIII, p.342 f.
2. Stücke VIII, p.399.
3. Shen Te's hospitality to the poor (cf. Stücke VIII, p.235 ff.), her concern about Sun's attempt to commit suicide (cf. VIII, p.270 ff.) or Wang's broken hand (cf. VIII, p.292) are examples of her kindness.
4. His treatment of the carpenter Lin To (cf. Stücke VIII, p.254 ff.) or of Wang with regard to his broken hand (cf. VIII, p.311 f.), for instance, is brutal and callous.
5. There is much justification for Gray's interpretation of the play when he argues that "the moral of the parable is.. that the competitive society is a concomitant of the quest for absolute goodness", Brecht, op.cit., p.79.

Shen Te's altruism is irresponsible, the actions which derive from it short-sighted, her promises worthless. This is clearly illustrated by the way she hands over the money lent to her by the Dengs' for her rent in order to help her lover, Sun, to get a job as a pilot:

> Wie dürfen sie einen hindern, sich nützlich zu machen! ... Nur, für den Laden werde ich zu wenig bekommen und die 200 Silberdollar Bargeld hier sind bloss ausgeliehen. Die freilich können sie gleich mitnehmen.[1]

This action proves to be disastrous for it not only ruins the Dengs but aggravates Sun's disillusionment when Shen Te cannot provide him with the rest of the money. Shui Ta, on the other hand, is not blindly ruthless[2] and he is infinitely more reliable than his cousin.

Although Brecht leaves the solution of the play to the audience, he is quite clear in his own mind about the verdict: if in a competitive society no one can indulge virtues without falsifying them and without distorting behaviour, then that society must be changed.

Mutter Courage also constitutes a harsh indictment against a competitive society and the technique Brecht uses here goes back to the operas. The play is a biting satire, which depends on hyperbole, exaggeration and grotesqueness

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1. Stücke VIII, p.294 f.
2. He does give Shen Te's parasites a chance to escape before calling in the police. cf. Stücke VIII, p.256 f.

to drive home its lesson, to communicate its plea for unconditional pacifism. 'Krieg ist Gewinn' is a principle Brecht assumes to be operating at a high level of society - and we may well agree with him. But it is a principle which rarely reaches the level of consciousness of the war-lords who practise it. Brecht illustrates this principle satirically, as an image of a perverted society, in which the unwritten principles of power-politics are seen to operate down to the lowest levels. There is practically no conflict in the play, in that most of the characters subscribe to the belief that 'Krieg ist Gewinn'. Here it seems almost as if Brecht were inverting his alienation technique - with equal effect. We had seen that the 'Verfremdung' consisted in making something familiar appear unfamiliar. In Mutter Courage the contrary is the case: the characters' abnormal belief that war is the desirable state in which to live is made to appear normal. This is made quite clear at the beginning of the play:

> Man merkts, hier ist zu lang kein Krieg gewesen. Wo soll da Moral herkommen, frag ich? Frieden, das ist nur Schlamperei, erst der Krieg schafft Ordnung.[1]

In a society in which war is regarded as the ideal state traditional moral values are inverted and perverted and Brecht illustrates these distortions through the way

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1. Stücke VII, p.63 f.

Mutter Courage loses her three children. Eilif dies for an action committed in the wrong moral context. His theft of cattle had been considered heroic during the war because it provided food for his general and his soldiers.[1] When Eilif repeats his performance in peace-time, he pays for it with his life. With the advent of peace the normal - traditional - order is restored and his deed is a crime.[2]

The circumstances which lead to the death of Schweizerkas are as ironic as those leading to the death of Eilif, but the point about Schweizerkas is that he is a completely innocent victim. His honesty and loyalty to his regiment and family make him incapable of following the ethics of war. He refuses to hand over the regiment's cash-box to the enemy and to save his skin by confessing. He is finally shot because Courage haggles with his captors for too long.

Kattrin is killed because like her brother Schweizerkas she has principles which clash with the aims of the war-mongers. Her feelings of compassion for her fellow human beings drive her to warn a town of the pressing danger of an attack. But her death is, at least, not as senseless

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1. cf. Stücke VII, p.83 f.
2. cf. Stücke VII, p.174 f. We may also note how this brief period of peace meets with little enthusiasm on the part of the warriors. It provokes a series of quarrels between Mother Courage, the army chaplain, the cook and Yvette Pottier.

as her brother's. Whilst she beats her drum to rouse the defenders, the soldiers' promises and threats cannot silence her. Amid growing confusion and panic the climax is reached when Kattrin is shot, but the scene ends with the tribute of her enemy: "Sie hat's geschafft".[1]

In the manner in which Schweizerkas and Kattrin meet their end Brecht is not relying merely on provocation to achieve condemnation of war. Their death is a plea for humanitarianism and serves to illustrate the suffering which war imposes on its victims as well as on its protagonists.

> Humpty-Dumpty sat on a wall,
> Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall,
> All the King's horses and all the King's men
> Cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again.

These are the words in which Brecht chose to describe the essential action of Galileo Galilei, seeking to stress, no doubt, the simplicity and irrevocability of the catastrophe. The fact of the matter is, however, Humpty-Dumpty did not fall - he was pushed, and it was Brecht who pushed him. His portrayal of this founder of modern physics is deliberately iconoclastic, he sets out to demythologise Galileo, to debunk the legend of the defiant old man and his 'e pur si muove'. He does not set out to glorify the cause of science but to warn the audience of its dangers. To this

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1. Stücke VII, p.201.

end he makes Galileo a much more complex figure than the legend would have him - "ein Förderer der Wissenschaft aber ein sozialer Verbrecher"[1] - a great teacher but in the final analysis, "ein völliger Lump".

Galileo is the first of a new class - the empirical scientist - who is fired by the lust to destroy prejudice, to replace belief by doubt and who proclaims his faith in human reason:

> Ja, ich glaube an die sanfte Gewalt der Vernunft über die Menschen. Sie können ihr auf die Dauer nicht widerstehen. Kein Mensch kann lange zusehen, wie ich - (er lässt aus der Hand einen Stein auf den Boden fallen) - einen Stein fallen lasse und dazu sage: er fällt nicht.[2]

His astronomical researches, however, come to clash with the doctrines of the Church. The skill which Brecht had shown in depicting political forces in such plays as Die heilige Johanna is employed with more subtlety here. The opposition to Galileo is analysed into its various components. They range from ignorant ridicule[3], through the fanaticism of the fundamentalists[4], to the arrogant prejudice of the very old

1. Käthe Rülicke, Leben des Galilei: Bemerkungen zur Schlussszene, Sinn und Form, II Sonderheft, op.cit., p.280.
2. Stücke VIII, p.49.
3. cf. Stücke VIII, p.86: "Ein zweiter Mönch: Wenn wir nur nicht auf den Mond geschmissen werden! Brüder, der soll scheusslich scharfe Bergspitzen haben!"
4. cf. Stücke VIII, p.88: "Ein sehr dünner Mönch: ... Was steht hier in der Schrift? 'Sonne, stehe still zu Gibeon und Mond im Tale Ajalon!' Wie kann die Sonne stillstehen, wenn sie sich überhaupt nicht dreht, wie diese Ketzer behaupten? Lügt die Schrift?"

cardinal. Galileo also encounters the more serious opposition of the intelligent cynics. Bellarmin and Barberini, who recognise the truth of his theories but wish to suppress them for reasons of expediency. They represent the view that religion and the church provide an explanation for social injustice:

> Bedenken Sie einen Augenblick, was es die Kirchenväter und so viele nach ihnen für Mühe und Nachdenken gekostet hat, in eine solche Welt (ist sie etwa nicht abscheulich?) etwas Sinn zu bringen ... Wir haben die Verantwortung für den Sinn solcher Vorgänge (das Leben besteht daraus), die wir nicht begreifen können, einem höheren Wesen zugeschoben, davon gesprochen, dass mit derlei gewisse Absichten verfolgt werden, dass dies alles einem grossen Plan zufolge geschieht.[1]

Galileo also listens to the sincere misgivings of the monk, Fulganzio, who fears the social consequences of the new science and who argues from the point of view of the poor. The case he makes for the comforts of religion is both earnest and valid even though Galileo refuses to share his view:

> Zum Teufel, ich sehe die göttliche Geduld Ihrer Leute, aber wo ist ihr göttlicher Zorn? [2]

The opposition between Galileo and the Church reaches a climax when the new pope Barberini consents to threaten Galileo with torture in order to make him recant his

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1. Stücke VIII, p.100.
2. Stücke VIII, p.116.

theories. Galileo who had once told a renegate student that it was criminal to conceal the truth -

> Wer die Wahrheit nicht weiss, der ist bloss ein Dummkopf. Aber wer sie weiss und sie eine Lüge nennt, der ist ein Verbrecher! [1]

is incapable of living up to this principle. His recantation is a betrayal of all that science stands for. No one is more conscious of this than Galileo himself: in the vital 14th scene he gives Andrea a ruthless analysis of his own case. The supreme importance of this scene for the play as a whole is indicated by the different versions of it which Brecht composed.[2] Here the author wrestles with the ambiguity of his hero's action. The earliest version tends to be more sympathetic to the old scientist.[3] The final interpretation, however, influenced by scientific and political developments since the war, seeks to show in the fate of Galileo the scientists' original fall from grace.

Viewed in this light, the play acquires tremendous topicality. Galileo's announcement, prompted by pique and vanity, that he finished the Discorsi and concealed

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1. Stücke VIII, p.120.
2. cf. Sinn und Form, op.cit., p.271 ff.
3. It shows him as a cunning strategist who has retreated where necessary, and who is now concerned to circumvent the vigilance of his goalers. He tries, in fact, to smuggle his Discorsi out of the house with the help of a workman, Hafner. The latter, however, has to return them because suspicion is too great: "Sie sind hinter uns her. Villagio ist verhaftet", Leben des Galilei, MS., AN 418/77.

a copy of the manuscript, is greeted with rapture by Andrea, who views Galileo's recantation now as an astute piece of strategy and, along with other dubious episodes, as part of 'eine neue Ethik'.[1] The new unscrupulousness which serves the ends of pure science. For Andrea, 'der wissenschaftliche Beitrag' is all that counts.[2] Here Galileo is offered an excuse and a justification but he cannot accept it. The new age cannot be based on this corrupt new morality and his contributions to knowledge are cancelled by the fact of his betrayal, by the way he has relinquished control of his discoveries. His was a crucial case - had he had the physical courage to stand up to threats, the power inherent in his new discoveries would have remained in the hands of the disinterested seekers after truth instead of becoming the object of a political struggle. The scientist, in other words, must be concerned with the application as well as with the acquisition of knowledge:

> Die Atombombe ist sowohl als technisches als soziales Phänomen das klassische Endprodukt seiner wissenschaftlichen Leistung und seines sozialen Versagens.[3]

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1. Stücke VIII, p.181.
2. Galileo expresses a similar view after his conversation with Vanni: "Ich habe ein Buch geschrieben über die Mechanik des Universums, das ist alles. Was daraus gemacht wird oder nicht gemacht wird, geht mich nichts an." Stücke VIII, p.151. This is also an addition to the original version of the play.
3. Sinn und Form, op.cit., p.271.

As things now stand, the most that can be hoped for is "ein Geschlecht erfinderischer Zwerge, die für alles gemietet werden können".[1] There could hardly be a more biting indictment of our present condition.

Structure.

In most cases the actions of these plays extend over a long period of time and this contributes to their episodic structure. It is possibly in Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti that the passage of time is reduced to a minimum. In Der gute Mensch von Sezuan the action must cover at least six months so as to allow for the stages of Shen Te's pregnancy. Der kaukasische Kreidekreis relates incidents which develop over a period of two years. Mutter Courage is a chronicle play which begins in 1624 and ends in 1635, thirteen years before the end of the Thirty Years War. Galileo Galilei which is biographical covers at least twelve years of the scientist's life.

The episodic structure of all these plays does not prevent Brecht from achieving an impression of balance in the manner in which he presents his material. In Puntila the structural pattern of the work is determined by a number of parallel situations. Puntila's suggestion that Eva

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1. Stücke VIII, p.187.

should marry Matti[1] is matched by his courting of the four working-class girls in the following scene.[2] Eva and Matti's romance reaches a climax when Puntila creates a scandal about his daughter's engagement to the Attaché.[3] This scandal is matched by the one Eva and Matti try to engineer as a counter to Puntila's sober plan to marry Eva to the Attaché.[4] This plan is paralleled by his subsequent dismissal of his four 'brides' when they come to celebrate on Puntila's estate.[5] The play opens and ends with Puntila in a drunken state and a line of continuity is sustained between the first scenes in the play and the last but one. The re-employment of the communist worker Surkalla on Puntila's estate[6] ends Puntila's first bout of drunken behaviour; the dismissal of this worker[7] immediately precedes Puntila's climb up the Hatelmaberg.

Structurally speaking Der kaukasische Kreidekreis, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Galileo Galilei fall into two main parts, both of which rely for their start on

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1. Stücke IX, p.25: "Nimm den Matti. Mit dem unterhält sich jede ".
2. Stücke IX, p.32 ff.
3. Stücke IX, p.113 ff.
4. Stücke IX, p.56 ff.
5. Stücke IX, p.103 ff.
6. Stücke IX, p.52.
7. Stücke IX, p.156.

similar situations, viewed in different circumstances. This is particularly obvious in Kreidekreis where the second part of the parable returns to the initial unrest in Grusinien. Although Grusche's flight to the mountains[1] and Azdak's move to the heart of the unrest[2] are antithetical, Brecht constructs parallel situations for their first appearance on the stage. Grusche is given the opportunity to save the governor's child[3] and Azdak holds the life of the Great Prince at his mercy.[4] Brecht gives the play an organic balance by sustaining the antithesis between Grusche and Azdak.[5]

In Der gute Mensch von Sezuan the money Shen Te receives from the gods in the first scene of the play[6] is used to demonstrate the increasing difficulties she has to be good towards herself as well as others. These difficulties culminate in her decision to sell the shop[7]

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1. Stücke X, p.177 ff.
2. Stücke X, p.244.
3. Stücke X, p.175 f.
4. Stücke X, p.243 f.
5. We may contrast, for instance, Azdak's examination of the Great Prince's hands with the examination to which Grusche is submitted when she tries to impersonate a lady of leisure. Whereas Grusche is chased away because her hands are 'rissig' (IX, p.186), Azdak threatens to throw out the Great Prince because his hands are 'weiss' (IX, p.240).
6. Stücke VIII, p.226.
7. Stücke VIII, p.331 f.

which threatens to put her back to the position she had at the opening of the play. The situation is, in fact, rather worse now that, being pregnant, she has not even the chance of reverting to prostitution for a living. Shu Fu's offer of the blank cheque[1] not only recalls the gift of the gods but acts as subtle commentary on the parallel Brecht no doubt meant us to draw between the gods and the capitalists. From the moment Shen Te makes use of Shu Fu's cheque the second part of the play becomes antithetical to the first because Shen Te is driven by her impulse to protect her child rather than the poor. The hopelessness of Shen Te's situation after the miscarriage of the plans for her marriage to Sun is intensified in the final scene of the play where she is last heard crying for the help of the gods.[2]

Galileo Galilei is also constructed on the repetition of two crucial situations for the play as a whole. Galileo, who is first seen cramped by his economic problems in the pursuit of his research, is offered his chance of overcoming these difficulties by the appearance of Ludovico. By his mention of the telescope, which he ironically does not begin to understand[3], Ludovico sets the wheels of the action in

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1. Stücke VIII, p.333.
2. Stücke VIII, p.396.
3. Stücke VIII, p.19 f.

motion. The telescope dominates the first part of the play and serves a threefold function. In the manner of its exploitation it indicates Galileo's unscrupulousness[1]; it serves to show, by the experimental use to which he puts it, the fundamental nature of his scientific curiosity[2]; finally, it has intrinsic significance as the symbol of the new age.[3] The telescope provokes a bustle of activity which is reflected in Galileo's move from Venice to Florence[4] and his visit to Rome.[5] The decision of the Inquisition to put Galileo's work on the Index[6] puts an abrupt end to this activity. The period of calm which follows is again broken by Ludovico with the news that the pope is dying and that the enlightened Barberini is likely to succeed him.[7] This news once more provokes Galileo to action - but only, in the end, to silence him for good. The play ends[8] as it began, with Galileo teaching Andrea -

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1. Priuli's indignation at having been swindled by Galileo provokes on the latter's part the laconic 'Tatsächlich' (VIII, p.39).
2. Stücke VIII, p.42 ff.
3. Stücke VIII, p.10 ff.
4. Stücke VIII, p.55.
5. Stücke VIII, p.82 ff.
6. Stücke VIII, p.91 ff.
7. Stücke VIII, p.125 f.
8. Stücke VIII, p.164 ff. Scene 14. Scene 15 was not included in the production of the play and indeed Andrea's escape to safety with the Discorsi is not essential to the play.

only this time he is teaching something much more problematic than the rotation of the earth round the sun. This time it is not morning, the dawn of a new age, but evening and the eclipse of a new epoch.[1]

The structure of Mutter Courage is rather different from that of the last three plays. In one way the first scene of the play contains all the elements of the tragedy and the subsequent events serve to demonstrate more fully the points raised in the conversation between Courage, the Werber and the Feldwebel. The most significant episode in this scene is Mother Courage's fortune-telling. It is quite clear that the heroine does not believe in such superstitions and that she uses them for her own ends. By a superb piece of irony, Courage draws crosses - which signify death - on all her slips of paper in order to keep her children away from the war, but she is, in fact, showing, without realising it, the part she is going to play in the death of her children. The second point about this opening scene is that Eilif is finally enrolled whilst she is busy

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1. The parallel but different situations of Galileo before and after his recantation are also reflected in his relationship to Virginia. On the night of his great discovery Galileo had replied to Virginia's question: "Wie war die Nacht?" with the significant word 'Hell' (VIII, p.50). In the last scene it is his turn to put the question, as he sits crouched over his food, and it is Virginia, the spy of the Inquisition!, who answers 'Hell' (VIII, p.183).

bargaining with the Feldwebel.[1] Her responsibility for the death of Schweizerkas and Kattrin is a repetition of this scene. But the play is more than demonstrative in structure, for while all her children die, the death of Schweizerkas and Kattrin form an ascending dramatic line. Schweizerkas perishes because he lives up to his principles and his behaviour foreshadows his sister's heroic action at the end of the play.

Apart from the organic balance Brecht gives to the events in his plays, he makes use of a number of devices to disrupt the continuity of their actions and to allow for extraneous commentaries. His use of titles and songs, which goes back to the operas, is particularly elaborate in Mutter Courage. In this play the titles constitute more than a brief summary of the events in the play.[2] They refer to historical figures that took part in the Thirty Years War[3] - figures that have, in fact, little or no connection with Courage's adventures - and thus offer a more embracing view of the war than emerges in the play itself. As Hinck points out:

> Dennoch wird der Relationspartner: der Krieg in seinem ganzen, schrecklichen Ausmass, in der Courage-Handlung quantitativ und qualitativ immer nur als Teilgrösse

1. Stücke VII, p.78.
2. In contrast the uses of titles in Galileo, Der gute Mensch and Puntila have very little to offer by way of comments on the respective plays.
3. For example, Tilly, Oxentjerna and Gustav Adolphus.

> erfahren, nämlich an einzelnen, ausschnitthaften Punkten des Gesamtgeschehens - während ihn der Kommentar als ungeteilte Grösse bewusst macht.[1]

The songs, too, interrupt the course of the action much as they do in Brecht's earlier work. They epitomise and drive home the lessons of the play - heighten the dangers of the attitudes adopted by the characters in the play. This is particularly true of Courage's Lied von der grossen Kapitulation where the heroine traces the steps in the policy of laissez-faire and sings in the refrain:

> Und jetzt das Ganze schwenkt!
> Der Mensch denkt: Gott lenkt!
> Keine Red davon! [2]

A song does occasionally have a part in moulding the action of the play as is shown in the second scene where Das Lied vom Weib und dem Soldaten[3] provides a dramatic motive for re-uniting Courage and Eilif.

In Der gute Mensch extraneous commentaries are not only introduced through the songs but through the regular appearance of the gods between the sequences of the play. At first sight the gods seem to fulfil the same function as the choruses in the Lehrstücke in that they offer judgments on the events in Sezuan. But these events also determine the way in which the gods are to be judged: they are

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1. W. Hinck, Die Dramaturgie des späten Brechts, Göttingen 1959, p.38.
2. Stücke VII, p.135 f.
3. Stücke VII, p.90 f.

themselves an object of criticism. There is a constant contrast, too, between what they stand for and what they are or appear to be. In their search for good souls their mission is purely passive:

> Wir sind nur Betrachtende. Wir glauben fest, dass unser guter Mensch sich zurechtfinden wird auf der dunklen Erde. Seine Kraft wird wachsen mit der Bürde... [1]

The shortcomings of their idealism are reflected in the fact that the gods themselves are anything but idealised. Their first concern on arrival in Sezuan is purely materialistic: they want a place to rest. The second god has a purely human aversion to spiders. All three suffer from the strains of their journey through the world. Their inefficacy culminates in their disappearance on a pink cloud at the end of the play.

Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is, perhaps, one of Brecht's most truly epic works in that the singer and his musicians never allow the audience to forget that they are witnessing a re-enacted tale. This in no way excludes the possibilities of dramatic moments. At the very beginning of the parable the singer creates an atmosphere of suspense:

> Die Stadt liegt stille, aber warum gibt es Bewaffnete?
> Der Palast des Gouverneurs liegt friedlich
> Aber warum ist er eine Festung? [2]

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1. Stücke VIII, p.339.
2. Stücke X, p.154.

The main function of the singer, however, is to act as an intermediary between the events of the parable and the audience. He intervenes at every turn of event either to repeat and summarise what has taken place[1] or to introduce what is to happen.[2] At the same time he expresses the thoughts or feelings of Grusche and Simon at crucial dramatic points. As, for example, when they meet after the rebellion is over.[3] This is clearly destined to prevent empathy: through this technique the actors have no means of being explosive about their emotions and they can only demonstrate what the singer relates.

Time is treated in a purely epic fashion in the play for the singer interrupts the Grusche action to go back to the past. He introduces the idea of 'Meanwhile ...' when he inserts the story of the judge between Grusche's loss of the child[4] and the trial at the end of the play. The singer does not relinquish the expository tone of the choruses in the Lehrstücke, but his comments are in no sense didactic. The only exception might be when he refers to the shortsightedness of the wealthy:

> O Blindheit der Grossen! Sie wandeln wie Ewige
> Gross auf gebeugten Nacken, sicher

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1. cf., for example, Stücke X, p.226.
2. cf., for example, Stücke X, p.155.
3. cf. Stücke X, p.233 ff.
4. Stücke X, p.236.

> Der gemieteten Fäuste, vertrauend
> Der Gewalt, die so lang schon gedauert hat.
> Aber lang ist nicht ewig.
> O Wechsel der Zeiten! Du Hoffnung des Volks![1]

Galileo is the least 'epic' of these works, partly because the songs do not figure in the scenes themselves, partly because it is Brecht's theatrical sense which guides him in incorporating comments to the play. This comes clearly to the fore in, for instance, the scene where Barberini, the new pope, is persuaded by the cardinal Inquisitor to threaten Galileo with torture. The sound of shuffling feet - those of the clerics assembling to hear the verdict on the new theories - and the growing weight of the papal vestments in which he is progressively clothed during the scene ultimately smother the liberal sentiments he initially feels:

> Das Alleräusserste ist, dass man ihm die Instrumente zeigt.[2]

In the scene in which Galileo recants, Virginia's mumbled prayers for her father's salvation are matched by Andrea's fervid recital of the new scientific doctrines. Both act as a commentary on one another as well as on Galileo's action. The pressures of the Church on the one hand, and the hopes of the scientists on the other, are seen in a highly dramatic fashion to be completely irreconcilable.

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1. Stücke X, p.157 f.
2. Stücke VIII, p.160.

Characterisation.

As in the earlier plays the insistence on behaviour is apparent in the characterisation of the figures in Brecht's mature plays. The playwright's belief that nothing is stable in the world, that even the personality of man is fluid, part of the 'Fluss der Dinge', is reflected in the inconsistent behaviour of figures like Puntila, Shen Te, Courage and Galileo. It is, however, through these very inconsistencies that Brecht establishes their unity.[1] They are the last of a line of paradoxical, ambiguous or flexible figures, more naturalistic and more subtle than Galy Gay or Mauler, perhaps, but just as much dominated by instinct and impulse.

Puntila is, perhaps, the least problematic of these figures because his impulses do not come into violent conflict with one another. In his sober moments he is prepared to play the capitalist game and to exchange property for diplomatic advantages by Eva's marriage to the Attaché; he is furious when Eva and Matti threaten to wreck the plan:

> Ich richt dir eine Hochzeit für 6.000 Mark und tu alles, dass du in die besten Kreise einheiratest, das kost mich einen Wald, weisst du, was ein Wald ist? [2]

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1. As Brecht says in the Organon: "Die Einheit der Figur wird nämlich durch die Art gebildet, in der sich ihre einzelnen Eigenschaften widersprechen." Schriften, p.157.

2. Stücke IX, p.93.

Under the influence of drink Puntila reveals a lyrical attachment to his woods which makes him recoil from parting with them.

> Was den Wald verkaufen? ... Weisst du was ein Wald ist? Ist ein Wald etwa nur 10.000 Klafter Holz? Oder ist er eine grüne Menschenfreude? Und du willst eine grüne Menschenfreude verkaufen? Schäm dich! [1]

In both states Puntila, in a sense, remains a capitalist, the difference between the two is only one of degree.

Puntila is not subject to the kind of conflict which makes both Shen Te and Mutter Courage quasi-tragic figures. Both these characters are torn between love, on the one hand, and self-interest on the other. Both want the luxury of sentiment in circumstances which do not allow for this and both come to grief because they are forced to support the system in which they live in order to survive. Despite these similarities in their situations Shen Te and Mutter Courage differ considerably from one another as characters.

Shen Te in her goodness is naive and undiscriminating. She is as willing to provide for the poor as she is to hide stolen goods. As Wang points out, she has the inability to say no which marked Galy Gay:

Die Prostituierte Shen Te, die kann nicht nein sagen.[2]

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1. Stücke IX, p.20.

2. Stücke VIII, p.225.

Shen Te's goodness is essentially emotional and instinctive and it is because of this that she is irresponsible, rather like the Young Comrade in Die Massnahme. Criticism of this behaviour, however, is not so stark as in the Lehrstücke. Brecht could not mean that we should not feel in sympathy with She Te when she exclaims:

> Ach
> Welche Verführung, zu schenken! Wie angenehm
> Ist es doch, freundlich zu sein! Ein gutes Wort
> Entschlüpft wie ein wohliger Seufzer.[1]

Shen Te can resist the seduction of altruism when she is overcome by stronger instincts: those of self-preservation and mother-love. Even in the guise of Shui Ta, however, when she is more rational and discriminating, she is very different from Mutter Courage. Shui Ta is aware of the tragic implications of Shen Te's love:

> Die Zeiten sind furchtbar, diese Stadt ist eine Hölle, aber wir krallen uns an der glatten Mauer hoch. Dann ereilt einen von uns das Unglück: er liebt. Das genügt, er ist verloren. Eine Schwäche und man ist abserviert. Wie soll man sich von allen Schwächen freimachen, vor allem von der tödlichsten, der Liebe? Sie ist ganz unmöglich! Sie ist zu teuer! [2]

The complex Shen Te / Shui Ta forms a character which is deeply earnest and whose deceit is not so much innate cunning as a product of necessity.

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1. Stücke VIII, p.349.

2. Stücke VIII, p.308 f.

This is not true of Mutter Courage who remains unaware of her tragic condition because of her over-developed commercial instinct. She is completely unsentimental and extraverted and her motives remain clear from the beginning to the end of the play. For her "Der Krieg ist nix als die Geschäfte"[1] and she identifies her motives with those of the leaders. Although Courage does live from the war and is, as the Feldprediger says, "eine Hyäne des Schlachtfelds"[2], she cannot, as Brecht intended, forego our sympathy. Her keen practical sense which may derive from her mode of existence is also related to her devotion to her children. When she smears Kattrin's face with dust to protect her from the soldiers this comes clearly to the fore. Her untiring energy and sense of humour are, perhaps, her most endearing qualities. Even her complete lack of idealism makes her sympathetic as, it emerges when, for example, she warns Kattrin of the dangers of love:

> Er sagt, er möcht den Boden küssen, über den deine Füss gehn, hast du sie gewaschen gestern, weil ich grad dabei bin, und dann bist du sein Dienstbot.[3]

It is true that despite her strong maternal instinct Courage is ultimately responsible for the death of her

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1. Stücke VII, p.158.
2. Stücke VII, p.167.
3. Stücke VII, p.98.

children: she loses Eilif whilst she is bargaining with the Feldwebel, Schweizerkas is killed because she is reluctant to part from her waggon and Kattrin perishes whilst she is away buying goods. But as in Der gute Mensch, the ethics of pure self-interest are seen to be a condition of life itself in a competitive society. Courage's predicament in having to choose between love and business is illuminated in the scene where she loses Schweizerkas:

> Du brauchst nicht drängen, du kommst schon zum Wagen, er ist schon weg, ich hab ihn siebzehn Jahr gehabt. Ich muss nur ein Augenblick überlegen, es kommt ein bissel schnell, was mach ich, zweihundert kann ich nicht geben, du hättest doch abhandeln sollen. Etwas muss ich in der Hand haben, sonst kann mich jeder Beliebige in den Strassengraben schubsen.[1]

However much her suffering is of her own making, Courage remains a sympathetic character because she pays so dearly for her shortsightedness.

It is also on the level of instincts that we must look for the unity of Galileo's personality - for it has a unity. Galileo is an instinctive hedonist, differing only from the common breed of hedonists in that his hedonism is that of the intellect as well as of the senses. For him the satisfaction of physical thirst and the thirst for knowledge are one and the same. If the former is a vice, then so is the latter. He is a kind of intellectual dipsomaniac who

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1. Stücke VII, p.126.

speaks of "Die Verführung, die von einem Beweis ausgeht".[1] When he hears that Barberini may become pope he says:

> Barberini im Aufstieg! Das Wissen wird eine Leidenschaft sein und die Forschung eine Wollust.[2]

Galileo's craving for knowledge makes him selfish and unscrupulous. He plagiarises the invention of the telescope and sells it to the Venetian state as his own - not for any credit it might bring him, but for the advantage he can derive from the instrument in his work and for the money he needs for his research and food. With equal lack of scruple he sacrifices the marriage prospects of Virginia. His defensive reaction to his daughter's despair when she realizes she has lost her betrothed is an obsessional: "Ich muss es wissen".[3]

The thirst for knowledge and the chronic itch of doubt - 'die Krätze' as Barberini calls it - make Galileo a 'new man'[4], the representative of the 'new age' which he describes in the opening scene of the play.[5] He is fired with the lust to destroy prejudice and economic suffering, not from altruism or political enlightenment, but because

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1. Stücke VIII, p.49.
2. Stücke VIII, p.131.
3. Stücke VIII, p.140.
4. As Brecht commented in rehearsal: "Galileo darf nicht ein Mann sein, der neue Ideen hat, sondern ein neuer Mann". cf. Sinn und Form, II Sonderheft, op.cit., p.283.
5. Stücke VIII, p.9 ff.

of his obsessional rationality.[1] His progressive beliefs are the fruit of instinct, and as such can be driven out when a stronger instinct, that of self-preservation, is invoked. His sensuality, which is the source of his scientific genius, makes a coward of him. By his recantation before the mere threat of physical suffering he betrays his science, his class, his nation and the whole of posterity.

Galileo is not a tragic figure and we have Brecht's word for this.[2] After his recantation and his imprisonment Galileo does not give way to despair or remorse. He finds refuge in sardonic humour. Virginia says, when her father calmly declares himself unworthy of the scientific calling, "Du bist aufgenommen in den Reihen der Gläubigen"[3], to which Galileo succinctly replies, "Richtig. Ich muss jetzt essen".[3] He is not a broken man by any means, for he rejoices still in the acuteness of his mind, mocks his solemn daughter and cynically offers reactionary political counsel to his former enemies. He is not a hero and he is denied a tragic apotheosis; for that very reason, perhaps, he does not entirely forfeit our sympathy. There is

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1. In many ways Galileo fuses into a satisfying poetic amalgam of the analysis of personality that we find in Baal and Eduard II.
2. cf. Sinn und Form, II Sonderheft, op.cit., p.270: "Das Leben des Galilei ist keine Tragödie."
3. Stücke VIII, p.188.

something immensely attractive about his utter freedom from humbug and false pathos. The play condemns not only Galileo but also the society which forced him into his situation. As Galileo says after his recantation:

> Unglücklich das Land, das Helden nötig hat.[1]

The two central characters in Der Kreidekreis, Grusche and Azdak, bear some resemblance to the figures we have dealt with so far. Grusche is like Shen Te in that her goodness is instinctive. She takes Michel away against her own better judgment and because she succumbs to pity. The singer stresses the impulsiveness of her action:

> Schrecklich ist die Verführung zur Güte!
> ... Zu lange sass sie,
> Zu lange sah sie -
> Das stille Atmen, die kleinen Fäuste
> Bis die Verführung zu stark wurde gegen Morgen zu
> Und sie aufstand, sich bückte und seufzend das Kind nahm
> Und es wegtrug.[2]

Like Shen Te, Grusche is unable to indulge her maternal instincts without sacrificing her plans to marry the man she loves. Unlike Shen Te, however, Grusche does not change her personality through her love for Michel; impulsive as is her goodness, it does not obscure her common sense or sense of responsibility. As she proceeds on her journey Grusche's integrity is put to the test - a technique which

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1. Stücke VIII, p.167.
2. Stücke X, p.174.

goes back to the Lehrstücke. The greater her ordeals and the more she has to sacrifice for Michel, the stronger is her love for the child:

> Weil ich dich zu lang geschleppt
> Und mit wunden Füssen,
> Weil die Milch zu teuer war
> Wurdest du mir lieb.
> (Wollt dich nicht mehr missen.)[1]

Stupidity is coupled with Shen Te's goodness and this is also the case with Grusche who is considered to be obtuse by the servants of Abaschwilli's household:

> Grusche, du bist eine gute Seele, aber du weisst, die Hellste bist du nicht.[2]

Nothing could be further from the truth: Grusche may not be cunning, but she has a wealth of common sense and her resourcefulness never fails her. In the trial scene she is a good match for Azdak: she replies to his testing questions with disarming artlessness:

> Azdak: Ich mein: Hat es frühzeitig verfeinerte Züge gezeigt?
> Grusche: Es hat eine Nase im Gesicht gezeigt.[3]

As a contrast to Grusche's calm fortitude stands the fascinating figure of the judge Azdak who is of the same flesh as Puntila and Galileo. He has the same scorn for law and order as Puntila and the same calculating shrewdness

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1. Stücke X, p.199.
2. Stücke X, p.171.
3. Stücke X, p.290.

as Galileo. Azdak's decision to hide the Great Prince demonstrates these two facets of his character. In the first place the deed is motivated by Azdak's delight in defying the law:

> Aber ich könnte diesem Vieh von einem Polizisten nicht einmal eine Wanze ausliefern, es widerstrebt mir. [1]

In the second place he knows that the escape of the Great Prince is a guarantee that the rebel-princes will not be in a position to enforce their rule and that they will have to make concessions to the population. His oblique tactics are shown in his public self-accusations and his demands for his trial: these are cunning moves destined to draw him nearer to the heart of the unrest without imperilling his skin. He knows that there will be no judge to sentence him:

> Städter, wo ist seine Exzellenz, der Herr Gouverneur? (Er zeigt auf den Galgen): Hier ist seine Exzellenz, Fremdling. Wo ist der Obersteuereintreiber? Der Profoss Werber? Der Patriarch? Der Polizeihauptmann? Hier, hier, hier, alle hier. Brüder, das ist es, was ich mir von euch erwartet habe.[2]

Azdak is a figure that shimmers with ambiguity. On the one hand he is nothing but a time-server, a cunning egoist and adventurer, on the other a humanitarian at heart. He is the last person who should be a judge because he ignores the judicial code and is open to bribe - at the

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1. Stücke X, p.241.
2. Stücke X, p.244.

beginning of each case he handles he utters his demand for baksheesh: 'ich nehme'. At the same time his sentences have more than a grain of justice about them. In the case of the doctor, the cripple and the invalid Azdak sees to it that the exaggerated avarice of the man who financed the doctor is punished. The singer stresses the heterodoxy of Azdak's behaviour:

> Und beschirmet von Gelichter
> Zog der gute schlechte Richter
> Mütterchen Grusiniens, der Azdak.[1]

Azdak is one of Brecht's anti-heroes, who like Galileo fears for his skin when things take a turn for the worse. When order threatens to be re-established Azdak trembles with fear:

> Aus. Aber ich werd niemand den Gefallen tun, menschliche Grösse zu zeigen. Ich bitt dich auf den Knien um Erbarmen, geh jetzt nicht weg, der Speichel rinnt mir heraus. Ich hab Todesfurcht.[2]

It is of the essence of Brecht's theatre that a coward like Azdak should ultimately prove to be in a better position to do good than Grusche with her moral courage. The kitchen-maid for all her noble sacrifices to Michel would never have gained recognition of her goodness if Azdak had not been there to handle her case.

The other figures in these plays are more sketchily

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1. Stücke X, p.266.
2. Stücke X, p.275.

drawn than the central ones. While Frau Sarti in Galileo has much of the common sense which characterises Mutter Courage, the latter's daughter Kattrin is cast in the same mould as Shen Te and Grusche. Despite the fact that she is condemned to isolation, she communicates her fundamental goodness and disinterested nature through her attempt to save her brothers and through her infinite compassion for children. As her mother says: "Die leidet an Mitleid".[1] Figures like Eilif in Mutter Courage and Sun in Der gute Mensch have much in common in their brutal egotism and pride in their own aptitudes and they owe something to Puntila's behaviour. Matti in Herr Puntila has the same shrewdness as Galileo and Azdak to cope with his master's fluctuations of mood. By complying to the whims of the enemy he contrives to confuse him. As Eva says: "Mit Ihnen ist man nicht sicher".[2] Matti, however, is less flexible than Azdak or Galileo since he finally leaves his master.

Although many of Brecht's minor characters are caricatures - and this is particularly true of Shu Fu in Der gute Mensch and Natella in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis - most of them do come to life on the stage, which Brecht creates for them. It is, in fact, up to the actors to

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1. Stücke VII, p.184.
2. Stücke IX, p.69.

turn figures like Virginia in Galileo into more than what they are in the text. Virginia may be stupid but the play offers scope to represent her suffering.

Language.

The range of style deliberately manipulated that is characteristic of nearly all Brecht's plays is sufficiently obvious in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis and Der gute Mensch von Sezuan which are both examples of a pattern of verse and prose. The songs in Mutter Courage, Puntila and Galileo, being more or less self-contained interpolations, do not sustain the same kind of balance between prose and verse.

The epic quality of Der kaukasische Kreidekreis is largely attributable to the verse of the narrator; with its predominant use of the past tense and its poetic descriptions it places the action in perspective, and makes the work as a whole almost a dramatized novel. At one point the essential difference between the epic attitude and the dramatic situation is splendidly fixed: the narrator can comment on the beauties of nature which can have no meaning for Grusche in her terrifying situation:

> In den Maisfeldern die rosige Frühe
> Ist dem Übernächtigen nichts als kalt. Der Milchgeschirre
> Fröhliches Klirren im Bauerngehöft, von dem Rauch aufsteigt

Klingt dem Flüchtling drohend. Die das Kind schleppt
Fühlt die Bürde und wenig mehr.[1]

Although it is fundamentally the narrator's function to describe, his language frequently conveys involvement - not merely sympathy, as shown above. The injunction to Grusche to flee from the soldiers, for instance, indicates that the narrator is not indifferent to her fate:

Lauf, Freundliche, die Töter kommen!
Hilf dem Hilflosen, Hilflose! Und so läuft sie.[2]

At points, the narrator becomes even more closely involved: he actually constitutes a mouthpiece for the expression of feelings which the characters themselves are not in a position to express.[3] In this way, the narrator acts almost as the author of a novel.

It is Azdak's language which provides the most obvious contrast to the narrator's measured tones.[4] Azdak's style is that of the popular wit, the wise comedian, an Otto Reuter

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1. Stücke X, p.190.
2. Stücke X, p.194.
3. cf. Stücke X, p.295: "Der Sänger: Hört nun, was die/ Zornige dachte, nicht sagte."
4. cf., for example, the characteristic anapaestic rhythms of the following:
   "O Blindheit der Grossen! Sie wandeln wie Ewige
   Gross auf gebeugten Nacken, sicher
   Der gemieteten Fäuste, vertrauend
   Der Gewalt, die so lang schon gedauert hat."
   Note, incidentally, the suggestion of duration contained in the level stresses of the last line; how many other writers would have succumbed to the temptation to conclude:
   Der Gewalt, die so lange gedauert.

or Karl Valentin. His coarseness he shares with Galileo and Puntila. Commenting on the alleged rape of Ludowika, he remarks:

> Meinst du, du kannst mit einem solchen Hintern herumgehen und es geht dir bei Gericht durch? Das ist ein vorsätzlicher Angriff mit einer gefährlichen Waffe.[1]

In spite of its earthy humour, Azdak's language is not always on a prosaic or realistic plane. Uninhibited, as always, by considerations of consistency in character-drawing, Brecht can place in his mouth the - admittedly parodistic - hymn to 'Mutter Grusinien'.[2]

In Der gute Mensch there is no narrator to provide a kind of verse frame-work, but verse is used on occasion as a commentary when Shen Te or Shui Ta address the audience directly. In such cases, it might be said to have a distinct formal function, marking off comment from dramatic action. At other times, it has what appears to be a more conventional function as a means of 'heightening' speech;

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1. Stücke X, p.265. cf. Galileo's reaction to Ludovico's doubts about the match with Virginia:
"Was hat meine Astronomie mit meiner Tochter zu tun? Die Phasen der Venus ändern ihren Hintern nicht. (Stücke VIII, p.132.)
The ambiguities of this remark are best left unexplored; in terms of character and outlook, however, it reveals Galileo's naivety - or his refusal to recognize facts. For him marriage is essentially the satisfaction of physical needs, it has no political or social implications. It is only later that he is forced to see that everything has social or political implications.

2. Stücke X, p.270.

it is used in this way when the characters are moved, as when Shen Te, for example, voices her pity for the poor:

> Sie sind ohne Obdach.
> Sie sind ohne Freunde.
> Sie brauchen jemand.
> Wie könnte man da nein sagen?[1]

It is in verse, too, that she characterises her love for Sun:

> Ich habe ihn nachts die Backen aufblasen sehn im Schlaf: sie waren böse.
> Und in der Frühe hielt ich seinen Rock gegen das Licht: da sah ich die Wand durch.
> Wenn ich sein schlaues Lachen sah, bekam ich Furcht, aber
> Wenn ich seine löchrigen Schuhe sah, liebte ich ihn sehr.[2]

Shui Ta's poetic passages, which are not unnaturally less frequent than Shen Te's, have a fierce and indignant tone that contrasts with the lyricism of Shen Te:

> Was ist das für eine Welt?
> Die Liebkosungen gehen in Würgungen über.
> Der Liebesseufzer verwandelt sich in den Angstschrei.[3]

The narrative commentary is not entirely lacking in Der gute Mensch; it is provided, for instance, by Frau Yang when she describes her son's career as an overseer in Shui Ta's tobacco factory[4], but in a straightforward prosaic idiom, which does not compare with the commentary of the narrator in Der Kreidekreis.

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1. Stücke VIII, p.235.
2. Stücke VIII, p.343. cf. also p.319.
3. Stücke VIII, p.309.
4. Stücke VIII, p.362.

Underlying this diversity of style is the familiar ironical tone, the critical attitude towards language as the mirror of a society full of incongruities and ambiguities. Here, as in earlier plays, Brecht is fond of inserting venerable language or situations into farcical contexts. In his drunken bout Puntila quotes Scripture and compares himself to Christ walking on the Sea of Galilee.[1] A particularly sardonic light is cast on Scriptural authority by the exchange of texts between Barberini and Galileo[2]: not only do the texts cancel each other out, they are used by the protagonists entirely for their own ends. Brecht seems to have been particularly fond of such proverbial wisdom even though he satirised it by stressing its stereotyped character. There is a similar logomachy, fought with rather more exotic weapons, in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis.[3]

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1. Stücke IX, pp.9, 11.
2. Stücke VIII, p.97 f.
3. Stücke X, p.291 : Simon laut: "Als sie das Ross beschlagen kamen, streckte der Rosskäfer die Beine hin", heisst es.
   Azdak nimmt die Herausforderung eifrig auf: "Besser ein Schatz aus der Jauchegrube als ein Stein aus dem Bergquell."
   Simon: "Ein schöner Tag, wollen wir nicht fischen gehn? sagte der Angler zum Wurm."
   Azdak: "Ich bin mein eigener Herr, sagte der Knecht und schnitt sich den Fuss ab."
   Simon: "Ich liebe euch wie ein Vater, sagte der Zar zu den Bauern und liess dem Zarewitsch den Kopf abhaun."
   Azdak: "Der ärgste Feind des Narren ist er selber."
   Simon: "Aber 'der Furz hat keine Nase!'"

Mutter Courage is full of such popular 'wisdom', and Das Lied von der grossen Kapitulation is provided with a bitter running commentary in such terms[1], culminating in the popular version of Goethe's Entsagung: "Man muss sich nach der Decke strecken".

We have observed how Brecht alienates religious texts and themes by placing them in incongruous contexts; in Der gute Mensch he employs the opposite technique when he makes the water-seller Wang advertise the gods as if they were goods - in huckster's jargon:

> Gehen Sie nicht weiter! Überzeugen Sie sich selber! Ein Blick genügt! Greifen Sie um Gottes willen zu! Es ist eine einmalige Gelegenheit! Bitten Sie die Götter zuerst unter Ihr Dach, bevor sie Ihnen jemand wegschnappt, sie werden zusagen.[2]

The ambiguity of 'um Gottes willen' and 'Gelegenheit' is sufficiently obvious and points to the fundamental issue of the play - the relationship of ethical and commercial values. This issue is incorporated even in the ambiguous adjective 'gut'.[3]

Rhetoric and cliché are once more the mark of hollow sentiment and hypocrisy. Puntila, whose own behaviour belies every word of it, exhorts Matti:

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1. Stücke VII, p.135 f.
2. Stücke VIII, p.223.
3. cf. Stücke VIII, p.235: "Die Frau: Ach meine liebe Shen Te, wir haben gehört, dass es dir jetzt so gut geht"; and Stücke VIII, p.237: "Die Frau: Die kann nicht nein sagen! Du bist zu gut, Shen Te!"

> Aufzuschauen hast du zu der Tochter von deinem Brotgeber wie einem höheren Wesen, das hernieder-gestiegen ist.[1]

and the phrase - for that is what it truly is - loses nothing of its hollowness by being woodenly repeated by Matti. In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis Natella and her lawyers employ high-flown conventional rhetoric:

> Der Erste Anwalt verbeugt sich: Danke, Euer Gnaden. Hoher Gerichtshof! Die Bande des Blutes sind die stärksten aller Bände. Mutter und Kind, gibt es ein innigeres Verhältnis? Kann man einer Mutter ihr Kind entreissen? Hoher Gerichtshof! Sie hat es empfangen in den heiligen Ekstasen der Liebe, sie trug es in ihrem Leibe, speiste es mit ihrem Blute, gebar es mit Schmerzen. Hoher Gerichtshof! Man hat gesehen, wie selbst die rohe Tigerin, beraubt ihrer Jungen, rastlos durch die Gebirge streifte, abgemagert zu einem Schatten. Die Natur selber ...[2]

To this oratory, Grusche's reply is: "Es ist meins". Not that Grusche lacks her own brand of rhetoric: her 'Schimpfrede' to Azdak is a splendidly vigorous piece of popular rhetoric:

> Und wenn's 30 werden, ich sag dir, was ich von deiner Gerechtigkeit halt, du besoffene Zwiebel. Wie kannst du dich unterstehn und mit mir reden wie der gesprungene Jesaja auf dem Kirchenfenster als ein Herr? Wie sie dich aus deiner Mutter gezogen haben, war's nicht geplant, dass du ihr eins auf die Finger gibst, wenn sie sich ein Schälchen Hirse nimmt irgendwo, und schämst dich nicht, wenn du siehst, dass ich vor dir zitter? Aber du hast dich zu ihrem Knecht machen lassen, dass man ihnen nicht die Häuser wegträgt,

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1. Stücke IX, p.79.
2. Stücke X, p.285 f. The reference to "rastlos durch die Gebirge streifte" has, incidentally, a striking relevance - not to Natella, but to Grusche!

> weil sie die gestohlen haben; seit wann gehören die Häuser den Wanzen? Aber du passt auf, sonst können sie uns nicht die Männer in ihre Kriege schleppen, du Verkaufter.[1]

It is not only the wealthy and privileged, however, who use bombast and rhetoric. Galileo is not above introducing his scandalously plagiarized invention with a bombastic speech - although in his case his tongue is firmly in his cheek:

> Mit tiefer Freude und aller schuldigen Demut kann ich Ihnen heute ein vollkommen neues Instrument vorführen und überreichen, mein Fernrohr oder Teleskop, angefertigt in Ihrem berühmten grossen Arsenal, nach den höchsten wissenschaftlichen und christlichen Grundsätzen, Frucht siebzehnjähriger geduldiger Forschung Ihres ergebenen Dieners.[2]

This compares with his laconic comment to Andrea at the end of the preceding scene:

> Das bringt uns 500 Skudi.[3]

In these plays, no less than in the earlier ones, Brecht employs paradox to startle and provoke; Courage's praise of corruptibility may stand for a host of similar examples:

> Die Bestechlichkeit ist bei die Menschen dasselbe wie beim lieben Gott die Barmherzigkeit. Bestechlichkeit ist unsre einzige Aussicht. Solangs die gibt, gibts milde Urteilssprüch, und sogar der Unschuldige kann durchkommen vor Gericht.[4]

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1. Stücke X, p.292 f.
2. Stücke VIII, p.31 f.
3. Stücke VIII, p.30.
4. Stücke VII, p.124 f.

Courage's world of expediency and materialism could hardly be better characterised. On occasion, her over-developed sense of material values is employed in ironical fashion to deflate pretentiousness:

> Der Werber: Feldwebel, ich spür einen unbotmässigen Geist heraus bei der Person. Im Lager da brauchen wir Zucht.
> Courage: Ich dacht Würst.[1]

It is somehow a peculiarly poignant feature of Brecht's poetic outlook that emotions or intellectual values, in the society he describes, can always be put into material terms: Grusche offers the child milk out of her immeasurable love and comments:

> Schluck, Michel, das ist ein halber Wochenlohn.[2]

Galileo complains about the meagre return for his intellectual efforts:

> Vier Klafter Brennholz für zwei Vorlesungen über Mathematik. [3]

Strangely enough, this materialism is not repulsive; it is a poetic materialism, in the sense that Brecht is

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1. Stücke VII, p.67. cf. also p.153:
   Feldprediger: Courage, ich hab mir oft gedacht, ob Sie mit Ihrem nüchternen Reden nicht nur eine warmherzige Natur verbergen. Auch Sie sind ein Mensch und brauchen Wärme.
   Mutter Courage: Wir kriegen das Zelt am besten warm, wenn wir genug Brennholz haben.
   The ambiguity of the word 'Wärme' is utilised here to outline opposing systems of values; this exchange of views is, as it were, a fulcrum on which the play as a whole and the character of Courage is balanced.
2. Stücke X, p.178.
3. Stücke VIII, p.43.

constantly aware that mother love, the love of woman for man, or the hard labour of thought are not a matter of mere words - they are linked to the material world. Consequently, the language of Brecht's plays can never stray far from the image of material things, the trend of his poetry is not away from the concrete to the abstract, but always from the abstract to the concrete, for

"Die Wahrheit ist konkret."

Theatrical production.

Although none of these plays were first produced in the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm[1], it was in this theatre that Brecht was able to realise fully his gifts as a producer and the following section will be based on the Berliner Ensemble's performances of these plays.

The artistic principle which characterises these productions is summarized in the following passage:

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1. Galileo Galilei was first performed in Zürich in 1943. It was also produced in America in 1947. The Berliner Ensemble gave its first performance of the play in 1957. Mutter Courage, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti were also first produced in Zürich in respectively 1941, 1943 and 1948. Puntila was subsequently produced by Brecht in Deutsches Theater, Berlin (East), 1949. The Berliner Ensemble first gave Mutter Courage in 1951 and Der gute Mensch von Sezuan in 1957. Der kaukasische Kreidekreis received its first performance in America in an English translation by E. Bentley (Northfield 1948). The play was produced by the playwright in the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm in 1954.

> Der Gegensatz zwischen Kunst und Natur kann dann fruchtbar gemacht werden, wenn er im Kunstwerk zwar zur Einheit gebracht, aber nicht ausgetilgt wird. Wir sahen eine Kunst, die sich ihre eigene Natur schuf, eine eigene Welt, eben die der Kunst, eine Welt, die mit der wirklichen Welt nur noch sehr wenig zu schaffen hatte und zu schaffen haben wollte und wir sahen eine Kunst, die sich lediglich darin erschöpfte, die wirkliche Welt zu kopieren und dabei ihre Phantasie nahezu völlig einbüsste. Wir brauchen eine Kunst, die die Natur meistert, wir brauchen die künstlerisch gestaltete Wirklichkeit und die natürliche Kunst.[1]

The relationship between art and reality is viewed in a characteristically Brechtian manner: something of a paradox emerges in his claim that art and reality are divorced and yet closely related to one another. But what Brecht means is clearly illustrated in his theatrical practice where the kind of stage he uses comes nowhere near reality but where his selection of properties and the kind of behaviour he presents through his actors are deeply connected with a shrewd observation of the details of every-day life.

Although the décor used for these five plays shows considerable variety, there is a common and uniform characteristic in its being neither naturalistic nor purely expressionistic. For Mutter Courage, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti and Der kaukasische Kreidekreis grey linen back-cloths and wings form the permanent background to the stage. This

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1. Über das Volksstück, Theaterarbeit, Dresdner Verlag, Dresden 1952, p.14.

décor which is used for rehearsals as well as public performances is as non-committal as a blank piece of paper and emphasises the height and depth of the stage. It forms a kind of theatrical frame-work which is never eliminated by the settings which are superimposed on it. In Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, for instance, much of the action takes place in Shen Te's tobacco shop. The stage, however, is not used primarily for this shop. There is an enormous contrast between the compact space used for representing it and the vastness of the stage as a whole. The purpose of such a representation is two-fold. The minute tobacco shop into which Shen Te's relatives and friends[1] are packed is meant to suggest the overwhelming number of the poor who cling to whatever warmth and security they can find.[2] But this crouching, grovelling human mass is not singled out by spotlights. The whole of the stage remains bathed in light so that one is forced to view the tobacco shop through the theatrical frame-work, to take in the stains on the back-cloth as well as the movements in the shop.

The prime function of these settings is to suggest without creating atmosphere, never to obliterate the fact

1. cf. Stücke VIII, p.229 ff.
2. In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis Brecht also presents the scene of Grusche's wedding (cf. Stücke X, p.218 ff.) to Jussup in a similar way. The guests who come to mourn the passing of Jussup are crammed into a tiny space.

that what is presented is simply theatre, not reality. Mutter Courage, for instance, is produced in a strictly utility décor. The half-curtains, the tattered and stained pieces of linen which are used to delineate the general's tent[1], the harsh texture of the wooden huts which house those who do not participate in the war[2], all these details are meant to emphasise - without creating - the suffering inflicted by war. The gloom, despite the brightly lit stage, is communicated through the various shades of greys and blacks in the décor. In the scene where Schweizerkas is killed, for instance[3], a large piece of black cloth is hung at the back of the stage.

For Puntila Caspar Neher drew a number of amusing pictures which suggested either the pastoral background to the play[4] or the savagery of Puntila's changing moods.[5] These drawings were not only meant to have a value of their

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1. cf. Stücke VII, p.83 ff.
2. cf. Scene 9, Stücke VII, p.180; Scene 10, p.190.
3. Scene 3, Stücke VII, p.93 ff.
4. A large drawing with trees was used in scene 7, Stücke IX, p.92 ff., and the picture was no doubt meant to contrast with the ruthlessness - soberness of Puntila in this scene.
5. The drawing for the scene when Puntila climbs the Hatelmaberg (Scene 11, Stücke IX, p.144 ff.) consisted of a number of wild animals, which again were meant to be a commentary on Puntila's behaviour.

own but to underline the comic nature of the play.[1] In Der kaukasische Kreidekreis the adventures of Grusche's journey to her brother were accompanied by the unfolding of light curtains at the back of the stage on which drawings suggested natural surroundings.

The mobility of the stage which is particularly obvious in Courage and Der Kreidekreis[2], the economic use of space within the theatrical framework in both Sezuan and Puntila are not apparent in the production of Galileo, where the setting has a more static and grandiose quality. A rich brown décor with provisions for various openings surrounds the stage. It extends to half the height of the grey back-cloths of the stage. The floor is covered with grey flag-stones which give a sharp ring when Galileo drops his 'Beweisstein'. Against this background the costumes of the actors stand out in clear outline. The rich deep reds of Priuli's vestments, the brighter reds of the old cardinal clothes, the green of Sagredo's coat or the white vestments of the pope cannot fail to leave a permanent impression on the eye. This impression of luxurious colour reaches a climax in the Fastnacht scene[3] where it is as if a Breughel

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1. As Caspar Neher explained in Theaterarbeit, Dresden 1952, p.44: "Dazu müssen die Bilder künstlerischen Wert haben und individuelle Handschrift zeigen. Phantasie und Witz des Bühnenbaus sind besonders der Komödie willkommen."
2. For both these productions a revolving stage is used.
3. cf. Scene 10, Stücke VIII, p.141 ff.

painting had come alive.

The costumes the Berliner Ensemble use for these plays always tone in with their various settings. The clothes which Mutter Courage or Pfeifen-Peter wear, for instance, have the same tattered and threadbare quality as the setting. Again the clothes which Natella and the governor wear in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis pick out the colours in the back-cloth. With the exception of Courage Brecht made use of masks for all these plays. These masks have a uniform function in that they are used to exteriorise the harshness of those figures moved by self-interest.[1] The clearest example of this is the grotesque white mask Shen Te wears in the guise of Shui Ta. In Der Kreidekreis both Natella and the Iron-shirts wear distorting masks to show their ruthlessness. When Puntila was first produced (Zürich 1948) the actor taking the part was in no way disguised. For the Berliner Ensemble production of the play the same actor distorted his features to prevent a sympathetic presentation

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1. There is a parallel between the use of masks in the Commedia dell' Arte and in Brecht's theatre. In both cases they are used to exteriorise villainy and they are limited to a particular group of people. But this parallel cannot be drawn too far as Hinck (cf. Dramaturgie des späten Brechts, op.cit., p.104 f.) points out: "Aber die Zuordnung des Grotesken und der Masken steht in der Commedia dell'Arte unter einem wesentlich anderen Prinzip als bei Brecht. In der Komödie der Italiener blieben die jungen Liebhaber und Liebhaberinnen unmaskiert, die eigentlich groteske Darstellung war den komischen Typen des höheren, d.h. bürgerlichen wie des Dienerstandes vorbehalten."

of Puntila:

> In Zürich spielte er (i.e. L. Steckel) ihn fast ohne Maske, und es entstand bei den meisten Zuschauern den Eindruck eines sympathischen Menschen ... In Berlin, belehrt durch diese Wirkung, wählte er einen ekelhaften geformten Kahlkopf und schminkte sich verlebte und niedrig aussehende Züge. Erst jetzt wirkte sein Scharm in der Trunkenheit gefährlich.[1]

In Galileo the scene in which Bellarmin and Barberini appear masked as a lamb and a dove[2] has a rather different significance than that in the other plays. While they unmask their real motives by dropping their masks, they also give Galileo a veiled warning of the danger in which he stands when they use their masks again. As they depart Barberini remarks:

> Gut, nehmen wir unsere Masken vor. Der arme Galileo hat keine. [3]

Both settings and costumes do not constitute in themselves the real merit of Brecht's theatrical practice. In writing these plays it is clear that he had his gaze fixed on their production. For they all revolve around a number of concrete objects which can only acquire their real and full significance in terms of the stage. Puntila's bottles of aquavit, the child in Der Kreidekreis - who, incidentally, never says a word - Shen Te's tobacco shop, Mutter Courage's waggon and Galileo's telescope provide an

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1. Theaterarbeit, op.cit., p.22.
2. cf. Scene 7, Stücke VIII, p.97.
3. Stücke VIII, p.104.

indication as to how stage properties are to be selected and are at the same time nuclei around which the actors must build up their parts.

Brecht's stage sense, his ability to invest simple objects with a pregnant meaning, is particularly obvious in the productions of Mutter Courage and Galileo. Mutter Courage's waggon is almost as important as the heroine herself: she is never seen without it because it is meant to epitomise her materialistic outlook as well as the insecurity of her life. It is the constantly developing symbol of the state of her prosperity. Towards the end of the play the vehicle has ceased to be the heroine's pride, it assumes an aspect of decrepitude which corresponds to Courage's weariness. Brecht describes the changing aspect of the waggon in the following way:

> Der Wagen wird sich während der Historie mehrmals ändern. Er wird voller und weniger voll mit Waren behängt, die Blache wird beschmutzter oder reinlicher, die Schrift des Firmenbretts verblasster und dann wieder neu gemalt sein, je nach gutem oder schlechtem Geschäftsgang.[1]

In the third scene[2] of the play where Courage loses her son Schweizerkas a cannon looms in the background - as a symbol of destruction. At the same time Courage's washing is seen hanging on a rope tied to her waggon and the cannon. This

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1. Theaterarbeit, op.cit., p.230.
2. Stücke VII, p.95 ff.

device demonstrates in a simple and striking way how Mutter Courage has learned to turn the instruments of war to her own advantage.

The virtuosity of Brecht's theatrical imagination is also apparent in Galileo where the objects which the scientist uses are subjected to what the playwright would call a 'Verfremdung'. Galileo's empirical attitude, his grasp of reality are epitomised in the pebble which he constantly carries with him and uses for demonstrations.[1] In the manner in which Galileo constructs his first telescope Brecht succeeds in capturing in a concrete image the importance of Galileo's hedonism and thirst for knowledge. Galileo demonstrates the Copernican theory by means of an apple and subsequently he uses segments of this apple to hold the lenses of his improvised telescope.[2] The fundamental sensual nature of all Galileo's undertakings is demonstrated again and again. In the last scene of the play[3] we see him seated between Virginia, who is holding a

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1. cf. Scene 6, Stücke VIII, p.89 f. where the prelates mock Galileo's discoveries and he unmasks their stupidity by dropping his pebble: "Der erste Gelehrte: Herr Galilei, Ihnen ist etwas hinabgefallen. Galileo (der seinen Stein während des Vorigen aus der Tasche gezogen, damit gespielt und ihn am Ende auf den Boden hat fallen lassen, indem er sich bückt, ihn aufzuheben): Hinauf Monsignore, es ist mir hinaufgefallen."
2. The importance of Galileo's appetites as well as craving for knowledge emerges in the very first words of the play: "Stell die Milch auf den Tisch, aber klapp kein Buch zu." Stücke VIII, p.7.
3. That is of the production version, cf. scene 14, VIII, p.170 ff.

plate of goose-liver, and Andrea, who clutches the manuscript of the Discorsi; as Brecht commented in rehearsal:

> Er sitzt zwischen seinen beiden grossen Leidenschaften, der Wissenschaft und dem Fressen.[1]

The style of acting in the Berliner Ensemble is to a large extent conditioned by the requirements of Brecht's plays. The 'split' personalities of Shen Te / Shui Ta and Puntila would make complete identification between these parts and their actors quite impossible. It is, of course, hard to judge to what extent Brecht's actors do conform to his prohibition on empathy, but there are indications that many of them do preserve a sense of distance from what they are acting. This is certainly true of Ernst Busch in the part of Galileo, particularly in the first scene where the scientist enthuses about the coming of a new age:

> Aber jetzt fahren wir heraus, Andrea, in grosser Fahrt. Denn die alte Zeit ist herum, und es ist eine neue Zeit. Seit hundert Jahren ist es, als erwartete die Menschheit etwas.
> Die Städte sind eng, und so sind die Köpfe. Aberglauben und Pest. Aber jetzt heisst es: da es so ist, bleibt es nicht so. Denn alles bewegt sich mein Freund.[2]

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1. Sinn und Form, Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, op.cit., p.287.

2. Stücke VIII, p.9 f.

Busch is never carried away by Galileo's fervent belief at this stage. His delivery has the weariness of one who knows to what end Galileo will come. In other words, he preserves a measure of critical detachment from the part without treating it inconsistently. Helene Weigel in the part of Mutter Courage, although she is often gripping, makes it quite clear that she is not Anna Fierling by winking at the light operator whilst she sings her first song.[1]

To show rather than feel is the principle often at work in much of the acting at the Berliner Ensemble. The figure of Kattrin, for instance, because she is condemned to total silence can only be demonstrated in terms of gestures or facial expressions or actions. It is a completely extroverted part although, as a character, Kattrin is forced to introspection. It is, perhaps, one of Brecht's greatest theatrical feats that in Courage the only person to defy the compulsion of self-interest remains silent but heroic. Not that the actress of the Berliner Ensemble - Angelika Hurwicz - is intent on showing heroism for in the scene where she warns a town of imminent attack by beating on a drum[2] she does not demonstrate

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1. cf. Scene 1, Stücke VII, p.65 f. "Ihr Hauptleut, lasst die Trommel ruhen..."
2. Scene 11, Stücke VII, p.196 ff.

urgency or fear as she climbs on the roof. Her intentness of purpose is curtailed by her amusement at the soldiers' efforts to silence her.[1] With a pair of boots and a hat - stolen from Yvette - Brecht can make Kattrin express all her longing for love and glamour.[2] Courage's reaction to the death of her son Schweizerkas is another instance of emotions being shown rather than acted. When the volley of the firing-squad is heard Helene Weigel demonstrates the attitude of a screaming woman without uttering a sound.[3] This stylised expression of sorrow is, incidentally, extremely gripping and probably more so than if Helene Weigel were actually heard screaming. A similar gripping expression of sorrow is shown by Regina Lutz in the part of Virginia in Galileo. Her comment to Andrea at the end of the play: "Wir haben Besucher aus der Vergangenheit nicht gern. Sie regen ihn auf"[4] is followed by her gesture of lowering her head into her hands for a

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1. cf. stage directions p.199: "Kattrin hat während des Trommelns wieder zugehört. Jetzt lacht sie."
2. cf. Scene 3, Stücke VII, p.104.
3. cf. Theaterarbeit, op.cit., p.264: "Der Ausdruck des äussersten Schmerzes nach dem Anhören der Salve, die Schweizerkas niederstreckte, der schreilos geöffnete Mund bei zurückgebogenem Kopf, stammt vermutlich von der Pressephotographie einer indischen Frau, die während der Beschiessung von Singapore bei der Leiche ihres getöteten Sohnes hockt. Die Weigel muss sie vor Jahren gesehen haben, wiewohl sie sich auf Befragen nicht daran erinnerte. So gehen Beobachtungen in den Fundus der Schauspieler ein."
4. Stücke VIII, p.189.

brief moment. It comes as a kind of commentary on the embittered spinster she has become and indicates briefly but powerfully her grief about the loss of Ludovico.

Conclusion

An analysis of Brecht's plays and theoretical writings can hardly expect to produce a brief definition of what he meant by 'epic Theatre'. For one thing, 'epic Theatre' is not just a particular category of Brecht's work; it is almost co-extensive with that work. For another, it represents an attitude which is a part of the poet's personality. All that can be done by way of summary is to point to certain salient features of the work as a whole and to indicate a certain pattern of development. The question of which came first - the theory or the practice can hardly, in the nature of things, be answered definitively, although Brecht himself gives a hint of the answer when he speaks of his theoretical writings as an explanation of what he is trying to do in practice.[1] What can be stated with some confidence is the paramount importance in Brecht's thinking of the theatre. It was his constant endeavour to disrupt the conventional association of drama and theatre; this is evident in his youthful attempts to assimilate the theatre to other forms of public display - the sports arena, the boxing-ring, the law-court. Ultimately, however, Brecht came to see in the theatre none of these things-- although

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1. See above, p.268 ff.

the forensic element never leaves his drama - but rather a place of experiment, a laboratory. This was a consequence of his habit of regarding the theatre as an organ of society, forming that society and being formed by it. Given that society had changed radically, Brecht argued that the theatre too must change. What had been a vehicle of religious and metaphysical thought in a religious age must become a vehicle of scientific thought in a scientific age. What went on in a theatre must cease to be an act of communion and become an experiment; the theatre must cease to be a kind of church and become a sociological laboratory. Events on the stage - particularly those represented in tragic fashion - must cease to be regarded as universally valid and timeless, mystically recurring in a sort of transubstantiation. They must be looked upon as rationally designed, deliberately circumscribed repetitions of actual or possible processes. Illusion was no more admissible than it would be in any of the other sciences.

It will be seen that Brecht's notion of theatre is ruled by a marked sense of purpose, and although the great plays of his maturity have not the scientific austerity of those of his middle period, they are nevertheless essentially didactic. This conception of the theatre casts light upon Brecht's interpretation of 'epic'. 'Epic' is simply that style of representation which shows events clearly as past events,

as a repetition, and thus allows a detached and critical attitude on the part of the hearer or observer. There is nothing novel in this interpretation of 'epic': it is implied in Aristotle's definition of poetry which 'imitates by narration', and there is distinguished authority for it in German literature. Schiller, in conformity with Goethe, defines the difference between tragedy and epic as follows:

> Dass der Epiker seine Begebenheit als vollkommen vergangen, der Tragiker die seinige als vollkommen gegenwärtig zu behandeln habe, leuchtet mir ein.[1]

Schiller was prepared to admit that the epic and the tragic genre interpenetrated - in fact, that the highest form of tragedy tended towards the epic.[2] And the characteristic quality of the epic to which tragedy in its highest form aspires is the freedom it confers on the listener:

> Die dramatische Handlung bewegt sich vor mir, um die epische bewege ich mich selbst, und sie scheint gleichsam stille zu stehen. Nach meinem Bedünken liegt viel in diesem Unterschied. Bewegt sich die Begebenheit vor mir, so bin ich streng an die sinnliche Gegenwart gefesselt, meine Fantasie verliert alle Freiheit, es entsteht und erhält sich eine fortwährende Unruhe in mir, ich muss immer beim Objekte bleiben, alles Zurücksehen, alles Nachdenken ist mir versagt, weil ich einer fremden Gewalt folge. [3]

It is in the very nature of poetry itself, Schiller continues, to set us free from phenomena:

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1. An Goethe, 26 Dezember 1797.
2. "Die Tragödie in ihrem höchsten Begriff wird also immer zu dem epischen Charakter hinaufstreben und wird nur dadurch zur Dichtung." Ibid.
3. Ibid.

> Die Dichtkunst, als solche, macht alles Gegenwärtige vergangen und entfernt alles Nahe (durch Idealität), und so nötigt sie den Dramatiker, die individuell auf uns eindringende Wirklichkeit von uns entfernt zu halten und dem Gemüt eine poetische Freiheit gegen den Stoff zu verschaffen.[1]

Schiller, as an idealist, and Brecht, as a materialist, are poles apart; when Schiller speaks of freedom he clearly means something different from the freedom of judgment, the intellectual detachment and clarity which Brecht hoped to achieve. But there is all the same a striking affinity in the views which the two poets take of the epic mode of representation. Again, it is tempting, particularly in view of the very wide scope of the term, to identify Brecht's 'Verfremdung' simply with Schiller's 'Dichtkunst': both terms imply a new vision of things. But where Schiller's 'Dichtkunst' transcends reality and opens up a vista of a new world, Brecht's 'Verfremdung' is designed to unmask a world which the poet considers to have been obscured by ideals, and to show its true material nature. In both cases, the function of poetry is to show the world as it truly is, but in each case the philosophical premises are different. It is for this reason that Brecht - paradoxically on Schiller's premises - chooses the mode of representation which most obviously appeals to the senses - the stage. For Schiller, sense impressions fettered the imagination;

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1. Ibid.

for Brecht, they stimulated it. Schiller encouraged speculative thought; Brecht was concerned with visual demonstration. This visual, concrete quality is an essential element of Brecht's epic theatre. Brecht was not drawn to the theatre simply as a convenient vehicle of propaganda. It was not simply that he was aiming at an audience not given to serious reading. His attachment to the theatre is a temperamental attachment. He is a master of words, but words themselves are not enough for him - only the theatre offered him a realization of poetry. His unit of poetic expression is not the word or the sentence, but the emblematic situation - what he called 'Gestus'. His plays acquire their full resonance only in production, their text is only one element in a complex whole in which the parts set each other off. In half-ironically terming himself a 'Stückeschreiber' Brecht surely meant to destroy the nimbus which attaches to the word 'Dichter', to diminish the importance normally attributed to the dramatic text. He believed himself as much a producer as a playwright.

Brecht continually stressed the rational nature of his epic theatre and defined as narrowly as possible the part which emotion might play in it. As a consequence one is inclined to ask the question which Joe Fleischhacker puts to himself:

Aber kann einer,
Der so vernünftig denkt, Gefühl haben? [1]

The evidence of Brecht's earliest plays goes to show that he was in fact a man of feeling - not, it is true, of sentiment or of delicate or sublime feeling, but of powerful elemental feeling. He was sharply aware of the savage urge of the senses, moved by man's brutality to man and oppressed by a singular sense of man's loneliness. The development of a rationalistic attitude actually precedes the establishment of the notion of epic Theatre. Kragler adopts a rationalistic attitude, but he is ashamed of it. It is not until Dickicht that Brecht's rationalism takes on a scientific guise. It is in this play that he adopts a behaviouristic psychology which ostensibly enables him to analyse action and dissect motives in an utterly objective fashion. One can readily imagine how this scientific attitude offers a defence against the horrors of life - of which Brecht had seen his full share as a hospital orderly. But Brecht could not be content with this arid creed for long: it offered neither a salve for his social conscience, nor an escape from the sense of man's isolation. There may be observed in his work a progressive widening of vision: he turns from the individual to society, from psychology to sociology. Given his innate or acquired

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detestation of the metaphysical, the only brand of sociology which could appeal to Brecht was dialectical materialism. The transition from his earlier work, which contained a considerable romantic element, to the marxist attitude coincides approximately with the development of the epic theatre and may be traced in the many versions of Mann ist Mann and Joe Fleischhacker. The exotic fascination of the city jungle and of the Wall Street Titans gives way to an analysis, partly doctrinaire, partly satirical, of capitalist society. It may well be that his conversion to dialectical materialism narrowed Brecht's outlook and restricted the range of his expression, but, on the other hand, it gave to his work direction and energy, it enabled him to see a pattern in life. The earlier plays are in many senses chaotic, full of brooding and senseless, indiscriminate violence. Marxism provided the kind of ideological substance without which the epic Theatre could hardly have developed. This does not mean that Marxism as such is inseparable from the epic Theatre. Epic Theatre is not a content but a form, a mode of presentation, a particular way of showing things. It is admittedly best adapted to showing social relationships; Brecht invariably shows these from a Marxist point of view, but, in theory at least, his methods could be used to show them from other points of view.

It is after his adoption of the Marxist philosophy that

we find Brecht's most austere dramas - the Lehrstücke - in which he seems more concerned to assimilate the doctrine himself than to convey it to others. However, dialectical materialism did not extinguish his latent romanticism or his poetic genius as such. If Brecht had completely assimilated Marxism and become simply a Marxist propagandist his work would probably be of little interest outside East Berlin. But for all his rationality, Brecht retains his human warmth, his evident sympathy with the poor and oppressed - and he never loses his poetic vision. This is not a vision of a perfect Communist society, but a vision of human suffering and aspiration. It is a vision which broadens, even, as the poet matures and which increasingly eclipses the doctrinaire ideas of his middle period. Courage, Puntila, Galileo are humane works about human suffering and human foibles. They and the other major plays are suffused with a humour that is largely lacking in his earliest work and in the doctrinaire dramas. This humour, in so far as it is satirical and seeks to point out the incongruities and paradoxes of society, is an integral part of the epic theatre. Its basis is wit, a quality sufficiently rare among German dramatists. Brecht's wit shows itself in the ability to construct exemplary situations, to illuminate unexpected aspects or relations of social life - it is in fact the basis of 'Verfremdung'.

All the things which have been mentioned are ingredients of the epic Theatre. Certain features of the epic Theatre - its superficial techniques - have been applied to works by other authors: to Johannes Becher's Winterschlacht, for instance, but with conspicuous lack of success. This may be because there are certain inimitable elements in Brecht's epic Theatre, certain elements which are elements in his personality. One such element is almost certainly Brecht's language. A good deal has been said above of the many voices he can adopt with parodistic or satirical intent. What is most captivating about his work, however, is his own idiom, the language he uses when he speaks with his own voice. Brecht was deeply aware of the ambiguities and overtones of everyday words and he exploits them with uncanny skill. Once he had outgrown the flamboyance of his early expressionistic work, he used in his plays language which might be understood by anyone - full of concrete nouns and simple verbs, almost devoid of adjectives and adverbs. Brecht acknowledged his debt to the German Bible and few writers since Luther have used German with such force, with such nearness to common speech and with such memorable rhythms.

Brecht himself ironically claimed immortality on the grounds of his famous tag: "Erst kommt das Fressen, dann

kommt die Moral"[1], but if he is remembered it will probably not be for this or any other ideological pronouncement: it will be for the poetic power and beauty of his language. It is this language - which cannot 'date' - which makes of Brecht's epic Theatre something inimitable, something entirely of his own. In this sense, too, one might say:

Episches Theater, das sind Sie, lieber Herr Brecht!

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1. Brecht made this claim in one of his last interviews with Ernst Schumacher. cf. Er wird bleiben, Neue Deutsche Literatur, No.10, 1956, p.28. "Seit Kaiser tot ist, sitze ich ganz einfach oben, ob es gefällt oder nicht. Aber wird meine Wirkung grösser sein als die ihrige, wird meines Bleibens als lebendige Wirksamkeit länger sein? Sicher ... schon weil ich den Satz geschrieben habe: 'Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral!'. So etwas ist dauerhaft."

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