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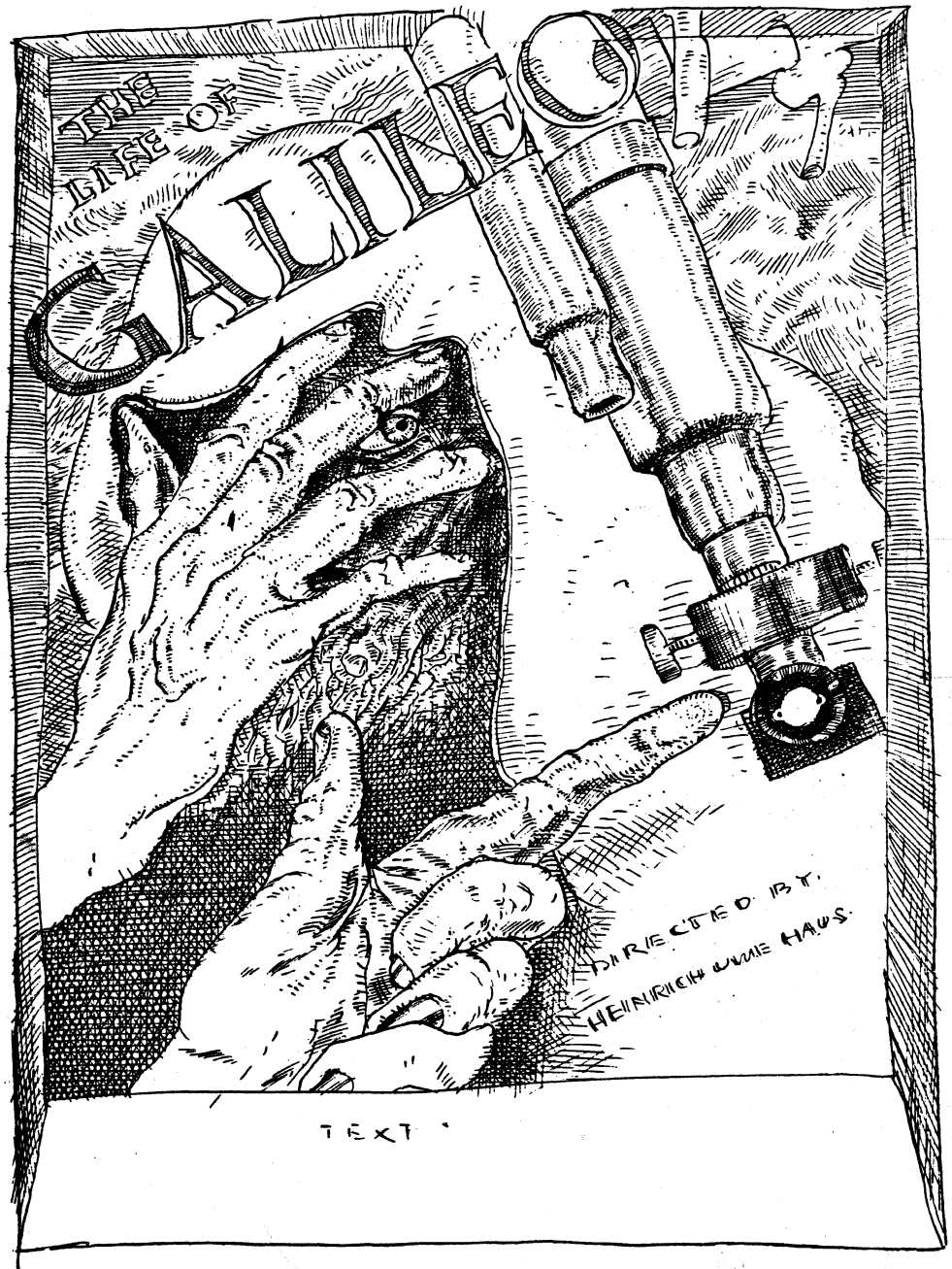
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COMMUNICATIONS

from the International Brecht Society



DIRECTED BY
HEINRICH WIMME HAUS.

TEXT

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Volume 17, No. 2

COMMUNICATIONS

from the INTERNATIONAL BRECHT SOCIETY

Volume 17

April 1988

Number 2

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Darko Suvin, McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada,
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Ward B. Lewis, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia,
USA, Secretary-Treasurer

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Cover: Poster design sketch (one of a series) by Henk Pander for the NEW ROSE THEATRE'S production of The Life of Galileo, Portland, Oregon, April 1988, directed by Heinz-Uwe Haus (Berlin/GDR).

2 Communications

EDITOR'S NOTE

As this issue of **Communications** goes to print--delayed somewhat by the logistics of our globally-based election process (another argument in favor of electronic mail--see note on p. 4), I am inclined to refer to the weather conditions I observe through my office window at the moment as a way of characterizing the current situation within the IBS: the sun is still shining, but those clouds gathering on the horizon look a bit ominous. To put that comment in perspective from my vantage point as Editor of **Communications**: Over the course of the past two years, **Communications** has managed to sustain itself rather well, not least of all because, as Antony Tatlow indicates in his report (p. 7), "it is a good, controversial, productive time for Brecht studies." Apart from that, at a time when printing/publishing costs have generally gone through the roof, the costs of producing **Communications** have increased very modestly--in addition to which close to half the cost of the last issue was covered by advertising revenue (a first). In this connection, it might not hurt to review for the membership how **Communications** is produced. We are currently operating on a budget of c. \$1400 per year (\$700. per issue), which is spent almost entirely on printing and postage. The journal is word-processed and presented to the printer in camera-ready format--down to the very last detail--and printed at a cost of less than \$.03 per page (for 300 copies). It is then sent out domestically at the rate of only \$.12 per copy, and internationally at a (surface mail) rate of c. \$1.00 per copy, with copies to Canada costing slightly more. To qualify for domestic bulk rates, a minimum of two-hundred copies must be mailed to individuals/institutions in the U.S.--meaning that a certain number of issues are sent out on a non-paid basis for the purpose of promoting membership or encouraging renewals (a practice begun by my predecessor, Marc Silberman, which still works to our financial advantage). All other expenses--for mailing letters and back issues, long-distance calls, xeroxing and computer services, student-aide assistance, and most supplies--are absorbed by the University. Some additional considerations: Printing costs are disproportionately a function of length (as opposed to the number of copies printed)--meaning that the only way to reduce our printing costs significantly would be to produce a significantly shorter issue (for example, fifty pages instead of eighty). The other option, of course, would be to circumvent the printing process altogether and return to a lower-quality, photo-reproduced (newsletter-type) format--or take a radical step into the age of electronic journalism as has recently been done by the Brecht Society of America, whose journal (*Gestus*) is now published on-line. However, speaking at an MLA forum sponsored by the Council of Editors of Learned Journals (CELJ) and organized by Dwight Steward (President of the BSA), I argued along with other editors that to move to electronic publication at this time would effectively deny access to **Communications** for a certain portion of our membership--namely, most of our Second and Third World subscribers--even if the concept of electronic publication otherwise has considerable merit and potential (whereby, if I may risk such a comment in an IBS publication, Steward & Co. are to be applauded for their pioneering efforts to create a true "journal for the age of science").

Until now, no serious consideration has been given to altering the format of **Communications**; as I indicated above, the sun is still shining, by

which I also mean that there has consistently been enough material of sufficient quality to justify publishing a semi-annual journal with eighty pages per issue. However, the storm clouds to which I alluded are quite evident in the financial data/membership statistics contained in the Secretary-Treasurer's report (p. 8). To put it bluntly, there are warning signals here which the IBS must take very seriously; our financial/membership base has contracted sharply during the past two years, primarily due to the situation with the Yearbook. To clarify my position on this: I agree with Antony Tatlow that all efforts should be made to sustain both Communications and the Yearbook; further, I maintain that it is short-sighted and utterly counter-productive to view them as competing enterprises--i.e., they both have an important, clearly defined role to play in sustaining the IBS and promoting the study and performance of Brecht's works worldwide (in addition to which I think it is somewhat premature to talk about consolidating the two publications to create a "mainstream" academic journal, which I'm not certain we could afford anyway). But neither publication can be sustained without a solid membership base, and this is where we are running into some serious difficulties. Specifically, we currently have slightly over one-hundred paid-up subscribers worldwide (!). Equally disconcerting is the fact that the number of issues sent out on a non-paid basis here in the U.S. in order to qualify for domestic bulk-rate postage now exceeds the number sent out to paying subscribers (!). I am willing to continue this practice because a) it actually reduces our postage costs; b) as noted above, it is a way of promoting membership, although it is no substitute for an active membership campaign overseen, for example, by the Vice-President or Secretary-Treasurer; and c) our institutional members (such as libraries) would drop us altogether if they didn't continue to receive Communications, even though they won't pay for it until the Yearbook appears (because of the current dues structure). In short: the IBS must take measures in the near future to find additional members/subscribers and/or resolve the dues payment problem. So far, we have been able to sustain Communications in spite of the problems with the Yearbook, and, in the process, help to sustain the Yearbook as well; but if the regular appearance of Communications is jeopardized, there is little hope of sustaining the IBS. To avoid such a scenario, we must generate significant revenue in the next six months through renewals and new subscriptions. (TO THAT END: A HARD-TO-MISS RENEWAL REMINDER FOLLOWS THIS EDITORIAL!!) Otherwise, some consideration should be given to an alternative format for this journal should it be necessary to produce it on a reduced budget; I am open to suggestions and encourage your response to these comments.

As far as the contents of this issue are concerned, there is ample evidence here to support Antony Tatlow's contention that (as quoted above) "it is a good, controversial, productive time for Brecht studies." Brecht's significant and complex reception in the Third World is once again the focus of several contributions; there are reports on a number of major Brecht conferences and symposia held in recent months (most notably, the Internationaler Brecht-Dialog "Brecht--Kunst und Lebenskunst" in Berlin/GDR and the Portland Galileo-Project); and, in terms of controversy, Reinhold Grimm's provocative comments on Brecht's Liebesleben vis-à-vis the topic "Lebenskunst" should elicit some response given the current debate concerning Brecht's attitude toward women. Also, as shown by Ellen Caldwell's piece on Galileo (presented at a stimulating session on poststructural readings of Brecht at the MLA Con

vention in San Francisco--see the MLA report, p. 14), this issue also exemplifies the extent to which the "poststructuralist project" has caught up with Brecht. I admit to an ambivalent attitude toward such readings; on the one hand, I endorse deconstruction as an interpretive strategy which problematizes textual authority, questions the "totalizing constraints of systems," and emphasizes the historicity of the text (none of which, however, are totally new as elements of textual criticism); on the other hand, there is the question of the historicity ("perspectivism") of poststructuralism itself, as well as certain problems posed by the broader, socio-political implications of deconstructive ideology (for example, is a poststructuralist critique of the "great metanarratives of history" and their impact on text, reader, author, producer, etc. an end in itself which obviates the need to deal with and interpret (i.e., search for meaning in) history as a tangible, material reality which continues to "happen"?) Such questions suggest the risk involved in promoting literary-theoretical debate in **Communications**: the terms of such discussions are alienating to many who are not initiated into the increasingly specialized "discipline" of literary/cultural theory and its exclusive vocabulary--"polyvalence," "phallogocentrism," "polyvocality," "metanarrative," "metonymy," etc. Nevertheless, I encourage readers--literary scholars and theater practitioners alike--to respond to this and other pieces which attempt to deal with Brecht in terms of recent developments in critical theory. It is not only a good time for Brecht studies but an equally "good, productive, controversial time" for Brecht producers/actors as well.

Finally, I would like to draw the attention of the readership to the change of address indicated on the inside front cover; to thank my student aide, Pamela Fickenscher, for her assistance and patience in the production of this issue; and to thank Valparaiso University for its technical support of **Communications** these past two years.

Michael Gilbert

ACHTUNG COMMUNICATIONS READERS!!!



If a RED DOT appears in the space below, your subscription to **Communications**/membership in the IBS has expired! Your continued support is crucial to the future of the IBS, so please consider renewing your membership/subscription at your earliest convenience. Dues information is contained on the inside back cover of this issue.

IBS ELECTION INFORMATION

If your membership is paid to date, you are eligible to vote in the IBS officers election. Some candidates' position statements appear on pp. 9-10 of this issue; see the enclosed ballot for further information. The ballot must be received by Secretary-Treasurer Ward B. Lewis no later than July 1, 1988 to be counted.

LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I'm not exactly pleased that I feel obliged to reply to my friend R. G. Davis' letter in the last issue of *Communications*, but it contained some statements that need clarification:

1) If Werner Hecht indeed told R.G. Davis what is quoted in the letter, he was distorting the facts. Wolf Biermann did not leave the GDR by "defection." In fact, that is precisely what he always refused to do, even though his work wasn't published in the GDR and he wasn't permitted to perform for more than ten years. While performing at a trade union rally in Cologne, W. Germany in 1976, Biermann was forced into exile by the GDR government which stripped him of his citizenship, thus preventing his return to East Berlin. This rather clumsy administrative expulsion of a poet who was, and remains, deeply committed to Socialism caused considerable protest from many artists, writers, and intellectuals of the GDR. Heiner Müller was, by the way, one of them.

2) It is a fallacy to label Heiner Müller a "dissident," if one considers the generally accepted meaning of that term in the West. At the present time (January 1988), Müller is directing a new production of his earliest play, *The Scab*, at East Berlin's Deutsches Theater, and he received the National Prize of the GDR in 1986. However, Müller has always maintained his independent political and critical position.

3) One may well disagree with Eric Bentley's ideological stance, but one cannot accuse him of "tending to ignore people like Müller and Hecht," as he is very much aware of their work and achievements. And Bentley, after all, was the first to bring Biermann's poetry to the attention of American readers when he translated and published Biermann's collection *Die Draht-harfe* as *The Wireharp* in 1967--long before Biermann had become a celebrity in the West through his expulsion from the GDR (the point at which other English language translators and their publishers became interested in him).

I would also like to comment briefly on Dr. Dalmia-Lüderitz' paper on "Brecht and the North Indian Hindi Stage" (*Communications* 17/1, pp. 53-61). She mentions my production of *Der kaukasische Kreidekreis* for the NSD (National School of Drama) Repertory in New Delhi, 1968, defining it as an "effort to present the play in the style of the Berliner Ensemble and the model . . . created by Brecht." This description is slightly misleading. Though I indeed used an approach and working methods developed by Brecht (as much as was feasible given the time restrictions of the production), the fact that the play was performed on a vast outdoor stage with a huge banyan tree at its center, and that its form is closer to Indian than Western theatre traditions, led me to make choices that moved the production away from the actual model as directed by Brecht in 1954. For example, the music, written for this production by Vanraj Bhatia, used indigenous Indian instruments and employed popular forms such as the 'dohas' or 'quawwalis.' Consequently, even this early effort to produce Brecht on the Hindi stage (the

translation was actually in Urdu) drew on Indian folk traditions, a trend--probably more prominent in later stagings--which, in my opinion, has been very effective in making Brecht's work viable on the sub-continent. When the production later had to be redesigned by E. Alkazi for indoor performances, he seems to have brought it closer to the Berlin model again, judging from photographs of one of these indoor performances.

Carl Weber
Drama Department
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Stanford, California 94305 USA

COMMUNICATIONS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

IBS MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Due to numerous requests from IBS members, a directory of all paid-up members of the Society (individuals and institutions) will be included in the November 1988 issue (Volume 18, No. 1). Also, to facilitate the exchange of information between members and assist with correspondence and organizational matters, please notify the Editor (by October 1st) if you have an **electronic mail address** accessible through the **BITNET** communications system. Information concerning this service will be provided upon request; domestic members will find a clear, concise overview of **BITNET** in the Winter 1987 issue (Vol. XII, No. 2) of the German Studies Association Newsletter (pp. 14-17). Via **BITNET** it is possible to send and receive messages from campus to campus, across the country, or overseas using a PC or other computer system; the service is still available without charge (!) on most campuses. The Editor's e-mail address is as follows: flg.mjtg@valpo (valid until 8/1/88).

* * * * *

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF COMMUNICATIONS (NOVEMBER 1988*):

Heinz-Uwe Haus: "Brecht's Influence in Cyprus"/"Das Zeigen des Zeigens: Brecht's 'Production Notes' on Schiller's Wallenstein"
Peter Beicken: "Some Unpublished Correspondence between Brecht and Marieluise Fleisser"
Horst Jesse: "Lebenskunst in Brechts Lyrik"
Leslie Damasceno: "Brecht in Brazil"
Maria P. Alter: "The Role of the Scientist: A Fall from Grace"
plus--
MLA Announcements
IBS Membership Directory
Annual Bibliography
and more

* The editorial deadline for Volume 18, No. 1 is October 1, 1988; please note the change of address indicated on the inside front cover.

*IBS OFFICERS' REPORTS*President's Report

It is a good, controversial, productive time for Brecht studies. The new edition has been launched by Suhrkamp and Aufbau; there is a large new biography--more of a "work-biography"--to discuss; and there has been a noticeable increase in the number of productions of Brecht's plays, some of which have been innovative and exciting.

There is no question but that this work is still producing a global response. Our society has been playing its part by encouraging and disseminating information about these events. There is an account elsewhere in this number of Communications of the "Brecht-Dialogue" held in Berlin this past February (see "Conference Reports"). It complimented instructively our 7th International Symposium in Hong Kong. Of course, it was a larger affair, but the same theoretical questions were addressed. The theatre productions were much less interesting than in Hong Kong; however, we were left in no doubt (for example) about the importance of Brecht for theatre people in the Soviet Union today.

Our own 1986 Symposium has been/is being extensively reviewed in, among other places, Theatre Journal, which has published some of the contributions, Comparative Criticism, published by Cambridge University Press, and The Asian Theatre Journal. There were also extensive and discriminating reviews in publications within China. I have produced a fat two-volume documentation of the Symposium with a large number of photographs of the productions. I have given one set to the Brecht Archives in Berlin, another to the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing; a third, currently in the hands of the Goethe Institute, is being returned to us and will be available for consultation.

The papers from the Hong Kong Symposium will be appearing in the next two volumes of our Yearbook, and should prove to be a valuable contribution to Brecht studies. The problems with the Yearbook do seem, finally, more or less solved. John Fuegi reports that Wayne State University Press offers us the best prospect of continuance, and that the irritant of rising costs which was causing us such concern does seem removable. This will mean that the financial constraints of producing both the Yearbook and Communications within a realistic membership fee structure will fall away. In other words, we can afford both.

I do not believe it a good idea to separate the Yearbook and Communications. They should, and do, complement each other. I think the current and coming numbers/volumes make this plain. The consensus at our Hong Kong business meeting was to explore methods for preserving both. This now seems possible.

The publishing contract for the Yearbook has been for periods of three years. The Society recently changed its procedures for appointment to the Managing Editorship, which is now made by the President on the advice of the Steering Committee. One volume of the current term has appeared, two more

are to follow. I believe that with Carl Weber and Renate Voris as additional Editors, we have a strong editorial team well able to secure the quality of our publication.

Fifteen months have elapsed since our last International Symposium. It is time to think of the next one. Both Germany and Latin America have been suggested as possible meeting places, but we have no specific proposals. Much depends here upon organizational and "political" skills. It is a difficult but rewarding task. We now need some serious proposals.

Finally, I have been asked to stand again for election as President. I have agreed to do so, but only for one final term.

Antony Tatlow

* * * * *

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

FINANCIAL DATA

September 20, 1987

April 14, 1988

<p><u>balance:</u> \$1789.56</p> <p>additional funds*--</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">DM 784,64</p> <p>(*Deutsche Bank Düsseldorf, Konto-Nummer 7674146)</p>	<p>receipts: \$2710.81</p> <p>disbursements: 1356.87</p> <p><u>balance:</u> 3143.50</p> <p style="text-align: right;">DM 822,60</p>
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MEMBERSHIP DATA

83 individuals (68 American and Canadian, 15 foreign) have paid dues. This compares with 101 a year ago and 170 the year before. Institutions are not billed until the Yearbook appears. Two years ago, 40 were billed; this year 18 have prepaid.

Ward B. Lewis

1988 IBS ELECTIONS

Nomination Statement--John Rouse

I feel the IBS must confront several key issues immediately; separate steps must be taken to deal with each problem, but all the problems interlock. First, we need more financial security, which ultimately means more money. Two steps are needed to solve this problem. The first is to attract more members. The second is finally to resolve the debate begun in Hong Kong over whether the Yearbook should be cut off from the dues structure. I myself think it should be. We could then make it available to members at a discount and sell it to non-members and to libraries through normal distribution channels. I assume that most of the 59 institutional members pre-paid as of the latest published membership report are libraries. I propose that we offer them Communications as the benefit of membership and the Yearbook as an extra. I also propose that we continue to develop Communications as a full-fledged journal as soon as we have enough money to do so. However, I don't see how we can undertake expansion until we get more money; the Editor is already being asked to undertake too much without increased computer and personnel support. Further, whether we split the Yearbook off or not, we must begin again to publish it every year.

The problems of attracting more members and dealing with the Yearbook pass over into a larger question. I don't think getting the Yearbook should be the main attraction of joining the IBS. That attraction should be the chance to belong to a career-enhancing scholarly organization. A journal seems to me the more appropriate membership forum for such an organization, because it appears more often. But beyond this, we have to decide why we're still alive, what we have to offer, and to whom. The new Brecht Edition should provide many research opportunities. But this should be complemented by attracting researchers in other areas, which means more work identifying and developing neglected areas. Brecht's practical theatre work, his poetry, and his use of music come to my mind immediately. So does continuing to open the organization to theatre workers and scholars in the Third World. And so does making connections back into Europe.

These questions connect up to the question of conferences. I would propose that the MLA panels be developed as one of two major forums for Brecht scholars in the United States, forums where several specific research areas can continue to be mined. Right now, however, we put one year's panels together immediately after the last year's, involving us in a mad rush to meet deadlines and putting us in the silly position of begging for conference chairs. I think at least one MLA panel should be in development a year in advance of each Convention; the Vice-President should assume responsibility for finding panel chairs. We should also move immediately to become an affiliate organization of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (the heir to the American Theatre Association). This would give us at least one regular panel at ATHE conventions, panels that would be entitled to financial support. These panels would also hopefully attract theatre people into the membership ranks. However, these panels must also be put together in a timely and responsible manner--another job for the Vice-President. Business meetings should continue to be held at the MLA.

If the MLA and ATHE conventions become the primary forums for American Brecht scholars, the IBS Symposia should serve to broaden our international membership. We need indeed to try for Symposia in Central and South America, again in Asia, and possibly in Africa as well. I also think we should try to hold a Symposium soon in the United Kingdom. Whether scholars in either of the two Germanies have much use for the IBS anymore is an open question. The terrifying work of arranging these Symposia falls, of course, to the President. But the membership needs to decide how often we need such Symposia. We also need to explore the development of national meetings of the IBS in other countries similar to those held at the MLA. I almost wrote that we need to develop other "branches" of the IBS, and that near-slip shows how much we've become oriented to one country and one continent. Our current President has been able to prevent us from sliding into this swamp altogether, but our feet are still sticky. And in the meantime, we have a competing organization on our own geographical turf. We can certainly coexist with The Brecht Society of America. But though it may not be as "hard-core" as we are, it may also be attracting some of the same people we want to attract. A little friendly competition won't hurt us, if we can show, through publications, convention panels, and International Symposia that we have a fresher Mac-Burger.

Nomination Statement--R.G. Davis

We must proceed to develop an organization that will meet dynamically the problems of U.S. Brecht reception, which has been hampered by a combination of depoliticizing anti-communist and anti-intellectual currents. The Brecht Estate has been of little or no help, and the IBS has been a conservative influence, maintaining and "academicizing" Brecht inside the universities and (even more) the MLA. At the same time, I by no means propose a rejection of the best intellectual efforts of the membership; rather, as in Congress of the Whitewashers, we can be critical about intellectualism without being foolishly activist.

Suggestions towards development of the IBS: I propose that the present Managing Editor of the Yearbook be replaced; that the by-laws eventually be changed to make the Vice-President the Managing Editor, and that the Vice-President be a resident of North America. In addition: that we deal with the issue of anti-communism in the Brecht Society in one way or another--papers, conferences, discussion; that we expand the membership by developing a membership campaign administered by the Secretary-Treasurer; that we develop associations with practicing Brecht-, epic-, and post-epic theatre developers, to examine what they are doing, learn from them and teach them what is to be done; that we investigate the visual aspects of the Brecht material, the work of Karl von Appen, Caspar Neher and other designers who have contributed to the work of epic theatre (this investigation should be expanded to include non-Brecht productions); that we develop a distribution organ for the best materials of epic theatre, e.g. the music of Eisler, the translations of Willett and Manheim, etc. to influence the American creative and political process; finally, that we walk on two legs and develop a policy that includes people inside and outside the (academic) institutions.

N.B.: The statement by Michael Morley, nominee for the office of President, got lost in the mail; nevertheless, he is definitely a candidate. If possible, a statement from him will be attached to the ballot insert to be sent out with this issue.

 MLA REPORT

1987 MLA CONVENTION--SAN FRANCISCO

Abstracts of Papers Read at IBS Sessions

I. BRECHTIAN DISCOURSES IN THE AMERICAS

Beatriz J. Rizk, CUNY Graduate Center, Chair

Beatriz J. Rizk:

"The Essence and Presence of Bertolt Brecht
in the Colombian New Theatre"

The Colombian New Theatre has reached in less than 30 years (1950-1980) a stability and degree of complexity which have put it in the lead amidst the independent theatre movements in Latin America. The ever growing political awareness and involvement of the artists and theatre workers in the changing realities of the country plus the influence of the most important theatrical currents of the century, with Bertolt Brecht at the forefront, have been essential for the development of the movement. In fact, the enthusiastic reception accorded to Brecht's practice and theory, which have permeated every single aspect of the theatre-making occupation in Colombia, has become a required object of study for anyone who approaches the New Theatre phenomenon. His presence, through stagings of his plays, and essence, through the interpretation and application of his teachings, acting-method, and stage techniques, were a powerful drive behind the New Theatre in its initial stages, reaching in some instances a saturation point. Enrique Buenaventura, one of the most prominent theatre director/playwrights in the country, has for one denounced what he calls the "both stimulating and obstructing" Brechtian influence while setting the record straight as to the contribution of the German author to contemporary Colombian theatre.

* * * * *

Leslie Damasceno, Princeton University:
"Brecht in Brazil"

As in most of Latin America, Brecht has been a major influence on the Brazilian theatrical scene from the 1960s until the present. This influence has been three-fold and intertwining: 1) since the late 1950s, Brecht has been one of the most presented foreign playwrights, a particularly significant fact given the use of Brechtian plays during the years of military repression (1964-1979); 2) reading and interpretations of Brechtian technique and theory have informed both theory and presentation of political theatre from the early 1960's; and 3) Brechtian theories have found an intentional complement and parallel in the revalorization of theatrical traditions of popular and cabaret forms that have marked more recent alternative political theatre. Concentrating on the manner in which the Brazilian productions and assimilation of Brechtian ideas have answered more to the spirit of Brecht than to the letter, this paper describes three productions

done or conceptualized by Teatro de Arena, Teatro Oficina and Grupo Opinião from 1964-1968, the period now referred to as the "golden age of Brazilian protest culture."

* * * * *

Bernardo Baycroft, Merrill College, University of California-Santa Cruz:
"Brecht and the New Invention"

Bertolt Brecht is a vital force in Latin American theatre today, but, surprisingly, in some of the more established groups in which his influence is especially felt, his plays are no longer performed. Rather, it is his theory which is most studied. Brecht's influence is strong in Colombia, and in turn, Colombia merits our attention as it has been a pioneer in the rise of the contemporary theatre movement that began in the 1960s. In Colombia, leading groups such as La Candelaria of Bogota do not perform Brecht's plays but rather use Brecht's ideas in the same way Brecht conceived them: eclectically, to create an original dramaturgy. The objective is not to "reproduce" Brecht, but rather to use Brecht's theory to invent a new theory and a new dramaturgy for Latin America. Santiago Garcia, director of La Candelaria, explains how the work of his group moved from the style of the placard play, with (intentionally) little development of characters, to a richer, more ambiguous approach in more recent plays. In one of these, Dialogue of a Rogue (Dialogo del rebusque, 1981), the theories of Brecht are transformed into new applications. Brecht's notion of narrative interruption, for example, suggests that the divisions between episodes be made apparent and spaced in such a way that the audience can interpose its judgment. In the Dialogue of a Rogue, this notion is transformed such that the interruptions themselves become the main fabula of the play. The original personal story of one character is contradicted and displaced by counternarrations, turning it into a vast epic narrative of social criticism, focusing upon the whole of Golden Age Spain and making indirect reference to contemporary Latin America.

(*Note: The complete text of this paper appears on pp. 55-67 of this issue.)

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R.G. Davis, California State University-San Francisco:
"Brecht Reception in the USA"

My research is prejudiced by the notion that the works of Brecht and his collaborators provide a school of socialist aesthetics for artists. My objective in examining Brecht reception is to see how much "pudding" has rubbed off or rubbed into the fabric of this society. By looking first at Brecht reception in Columbia and England we can set his reception in the USA in a comparative context.

Brecht has been studied and used by Enrique Buenaventura and Santiago Garcia, two important figures in the Columbian theatre movement. Rather than

do Brecht, they have used his theories to write, direct and develop a popular collective approach to drama, that appears to have become the heart of theatre in that country. A developing trade union movement in the mid-60's turned the imported Brecht into an element of social interface. England was ready for and open to the influence of the visit of the Berliner Ensemble in 1956. The Angry Young Men movement was at its height, and anti-imperialist sentiment was fervid. Major directors, writers, and critics looked to the Ensemble and Brecht for lessons.

In the U.S., current assessments indicates a decline in Brecht productions (C. Weber, 1985 Brecht Yearbook and K. Schmidt, Gestus, 1986), and a lack of Brecht development in the theatre. Erika Munk: "Brecht's influence is almost non-existent in terms of any serious attempts to form an ensemble which can create political theatre with both very critical aesthetics and clearly strong politics on any grand scale." Joel Schecter: ". . . there is an inhibiting factor . . . which is McCarthyism or even a Reaganism . . . since we can't talk about socialism or Marxism in our society at large, our theater will not show this discussion" (1984 Brecht Yearbook).

Regional theaters in the late 50's and early 60's were opposed to Broadway and therefore open to European plays. Carl Weber's production of Caucasian Chalk Circle (SF Actors Workshop) and Arturo Ui (Arena D.C.) could have moved on, but neither made it to Broadway. At the time, Broadway determined cultural decisions. All the commercial, class-A Brecht productions since The Mother in 1935 have both been box-office failures and questionable artistic achievements, save the off-Broadway production of The Threepenny Opera (1954) overseen by Lotte Lenya. No spectacular event has presented the totality of Epic Theatre on the US stage. The existence and resistance of the Brecht Estate in the US has not aided any social, artistic, or even scholarly development. The Brecht Archives are hidden in the basement of the Harvard Library, and Stephan Brecht creates obstacles to productions in New York City. Eric Bentley's translations, adaptations and mistranslations have not added to Brecht development. Rather, they have defused interest for with use they fall apart. Martin Esslin (1960) leaped onto the incoming foreign playwright and "explained" Brecht as a "lyrical poet who unfortunately was a communist." Anti-communism and anti-intellectualism unite in this country to depoliticize any suggestive or socially critical import. Bentley's bad translations far outsell Manheim & Willett's; and Esslin's widely distributed negation of Brecht competes with Willett's and others' books which give fuller elaborations of the work surrounding the play texts. Further, American anti-intellectualism is supported by religious fundamentalism, and intertwined with common sense rhetoric and Deweyite pragmatism, thus enhancing a capitalist ethic and making dialectical and materialist thought suspect.

Anti-intellectualism on the left is also resistant to critical influence from Brecht. The Moscow Art Theatre's US tour in 1923 resulted in the Group Theatre (1930-1940), whose subsequent influence on Broadway and Hollywood enthroned Stanislavsky as the icon of bourgeois realism, just as he was for socialist realism in the USSR. The radical theatres of the 60's pledged allegiance to Brecht but in subsequent years hardly deepened their knowledge of epic theatre. Resident theatres now do Brecht every two years as a classic, without any lethal moments and certainly without any socialist intentions.

The IBS was formed in 1968-69 by anti-communists and conservative Germanists. It has helped scholarship, but contains Brecht within a restrictive grip. Its radical element peaked in the mid-70's. Epic West, a center for the study of BB etc., ceased major functions after only four years. There is no memory of Eisler, little knowledge of Dessau. Kurt Weill lives in the Kurt Weill Foundation. Designers Neher and von Appen are unknown. The influence of Brecht and Eisler on political film documentaries is nil.

Signs of life: The Brecht Company survives with three professors on salary at the University of Michigan. Heinz Uwe-House pounds out Epic productions at US universities. A number of professors argue BB is alive in some of the universities. The Brecht Society of America and editorial group now publishes articles (Gestus) on BB electronically, and Brecht is developing in China. Perhaps a Chinese company doing spectacular Brecht (with acrobats?) will come to America?

Brecht is buried but not dead. One can expect an economic downturn in the next ten years and Brecht will be pulled out of the backroom. Yet epic theoretical formulations must be aligned with deeper cultural streams in American life if one is to see Brecht's suggestions influence artistic production. We will also have to deal with the anti-communist and the anti-intellectualist influence. Surely we in the International Brecht Society and the MLA should be able to do something about that.

II. (RE)PRESENTING BRECHT: POSTSTRUCTURAL READINGS

Janelle Reinelt, California State University-Sacramento, Chair

(Note: The complete text of Ellen C. Caldwell's paper "Poststructuring Brecht: Pluralism and Propaganda in Galileo" appears on pp. 38-47 of this issue.)

Sabine Gross, German Department,
University of California-Santa Barbara:

"Brecht's Discourse: Dialectics of the Text, Dialectics of Reading"

Brecht's study of dialectics made him a virtuoso of textual strategy. In keeping with his views on knowledge and learning, he uses gaps, twists and inversions to manipulate and refocus the reader's expectations and patterns of thinking, leading to deconstructions and revaluations. His texts are productive in challenging the reader to produce a sub- or antitext that deviates from the original text. Brecht's texts are of dialectics in a double sense: as a discourse on dialectics through a dialectics at work.

Readers of Brecht are called upon to practice "eingreifendes Denken." Applied to the text, this disruptive thinking is a defensive countermove, triggered by a text that disrupts automatic signification and smooth flow of thought. Brecht's "V-Effekt," defamiliarization, is anchored in the text and takes effect in the reader. The defamiliarized text in turn defamiliarizes the extra-textual systems of signification to which it refers. In a dialectical move, approaching the text means distancing oneself from it as part of a Hegelian three-step, both on the level of "Verständnis" (comprehension)

and "Einverständnis" (consent). In this movement with and against the text, negation doubles as rejection: Brecht's defamiliarization effect asserts itself as a dialectics of involvement and detachment on the affective as well as on the cognitive level. In this sense, "Verfremdung" does alienate the reader from the text, which serves as an initial entrapment. This movement of seduction and rejection is part of the pleasure of reading Brecht. But does the actual text-reader interaction, of which examples have been given, obey Brecht's theoretical and ideological imperatives? In taking shortcuts from intentions to presumed effects, critics have often followed Brecht's own struggle within a dialectics of openness and closure. Brecht's texts elude attempts to conclusively correlate the dynamics of reading as outlined above with their alleged uses and results; but perhaps it is this failure that keeps them alive.

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Robert Miklitsch, Department of English, Tufts University:
 "Reading Differently, Writing In-Between: Galileo in Quotations"

The presentation performatively juxtaposes citation and commentary in order to dialectically re-circulate and thereby problematize those paradigmatic or canonical readings of Brecht's Galileo (humanist, Marxist, deconstructive) which constitute its critical history. Putting into play both the Hegelian Dialectic and the Classic Dilemma as well as what Derrida calls the the "regime" and Barthes--reading Brecht--the "reign of quotation," it attempts to articulate a "materialist" or historio-graphic approach "beyond" the above critical perspectives--an approach, in other words, which takes into account not only the autonomy of the work of art, the "authority of the author" and the textuality of the text, but the heterogeneity of the reader, his inbetweenness, her difference, her "I-slots," his hats.

John Rouse, Theatre and Drama, Tulane University, Respondent:
 "(Re)Presenting Brecht: Poststructural Readings"

All three papers engaged various texts; two focused on Galileo. The readings proposed were provocative and I hope that the panelists will soon carry through these readings more comprehensively. None of the papers presented such a detailed reading, but to say this is not to criticize. Rather, the papers were highly successful in suggesting, within the inevitable constraints of a conference forum, the direction in which such readings might proceed. More importantly, the three papers, taken together, achieved considerable success in addressing a broader issue--in uncovering the ground on which a poststructural confrontation with Brecht is likely to take place. In this respect, Caldwell and Miklitsch complement each other in their considerations of Galileo, not least in that Caldwell explicitly includes theatrical interpretors among those concerned with the question of whether Brecht's plays can "continue to rebel and expose, in a world of Relativity and Uncertainty." Miklitsch locates the space where such a question can be explored in the passages between the various versions of Galileo; Caldwell

situates her discussion in the tensions between pluralism and propaganda, singular and plural authority shared by Brecht and Galileo, and notes the differences between the resolutions of these tensions which Brecht allowed Galileo and those he allowed himself. Gross locates a dialectics in the text-reader interaction that keeps open gaps which both Brecht, at least at the level of his theoretical and practical pronouncements, and his interpreters tend to force closed. Gross's argument focuses primarily on short examples from poems and prose pieces, and it would be interesting to see her perspective operate on the more complex text-reader-production-spectator interactions of the play-texts. Nonetheless, she is no less suggestive than the other two panelists of the possibilities that poststructural interpretation might open, and equally suggestive of the price involved. All of the three note that the price of Brecht's postmodern success may be the failure of his texts, at least in the movement towards didactic closure of their dialectic. None of the three seriously questions whether the confidence that we live in a new world of Relativity and Uncertainty might not need to be disturbed, and that Brecht might serve to enable such a disturbance. Whether those moments in Brecht's practice rendered most questionable by poststructuralism deserve to be privileged in carrying out this disturbance or whether the discussion needs to take precisely opposite directions remains itself a question, one posed by the panel in useful and provocative ways.

IBS BUSINESS MEETING, SAN FRANCISCO, DECEMBER 30, 1987

The meeting (following the last session of the Convention) was called to order by Vice-President Darko Suvin and attended by c. ten members of the Society. The agenda included a discussion of plans for the 1988 MLA Convention (see next page), the Yearbook/dues structure situation (no decision was reached), election procedures, the status of Communications, and relations with ATINT in the wake of a disagreement concerning the authorship of certain material published in the latest edition of the Yearbook.

The International Brecht Society

1988 MLA CONVENTION--NEW ORLEANS

The IBS will be sponsoring the following two academic sessions at the 1988 MLA Convention in New Orleans; a more detailed announcement will be included in the November issue of **Communications**. Note: in addition to these two programs, there will be an IBS cash bar/social hour and a (closed) business meeting, which will be announced well in advance of the Convention.

Session I: BRECHT AND HIS BIOGRAPHERS

Session Organizer/Chair: Siegfried Mews, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Speakers/Topics:

- Reinhold Grimm, University of Wisconsin-Madison: "Notizen zu Brechts Liebesleben"
John Fuegi, University of Maryland, College Park: "'Now You See Them, Now You Don't': The Marginalized Mitarbeiter in a 'Life of Brecht'"
James K. Lyon, University of California-San Diego: "Epic Theory and Aristotelian Biography--Werner Mittenzwei's Life of Brecht"

Respondent/Commentator: Siegfried Mews

Session II: BRECHT AND THE OTHER THEATRES OF THE SOUTH

Session Organizer/Chair: John Rouse, Tulane University

Speakers/Topics:

- John O'Neill, Free-Lance Actor/Director: "Brechtian Influences in the Work of Southern Black Theatres"
Joe Rosenberg, Texas A & I University (Director, Theatre Bilingual): "Todo ese Jazz Sobre Brecht/All that Jazz About Brecht"
Manuel Martin-Rodriguez, University of California-Santa Barbara: "Narrative Structures of the Actos"

Respondent/Commentator: Janelle Reinelt, California State University-Sacramento

N.B.!!! IT IS NOT TOO SOON TO BEGIN THINKING ABOUT TOPICS FOR THE 1989 MLA/IBS CONVENTION SESSIONS. CONTACT THE COMMUNICATIONS EDITOR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING PROCEDURES FOR PROPOSING A SESSION. TOPICS WILL BE FINALIZED AT THE IBS BUSINESS MEETING AT THE 1988 MLA CONVENTION IN NEW ORLEANS.

THINK AHEAD!!

CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA

Internationaler Brecht-Dialog 1988:

"Brecht--Kunst und Lebenskunst/
Art and the Art of Living"

February 9-14, 1988, Berlin/GDR

PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 9TH

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Opening of Exhibition "10th Anniversary of the Brecht Center of the GDR"

Berliner Ensemble, Foyer, Forum "Art and the Art of Living" (1); Short lectures by, among others, Ileana Berlogea (Rumania), Christof Subik (Austria), Jan Olsson, Willmar Sauter (Sweden), Christoph Funke, Johannes Goldhahn, Joachim Lucchesi (GDR)

Akademie der Künste der DDR/Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Film Retrospective:
Die Mutter, Berliner Ensemble, dir. Brecht (1958, dir. Wekwerth)
Helene Weigel (1973, dir. Mühl, Hecht)
Die zwei Söhne (1969, dir. Nitzschke)

Filmtheater Babylon, Die Dreigroschenoper (French and German versions; 1931, dir. Pabst)

Theater Performances--

Berliner Ensemble: Untergang des Egoisten Fatzer, dir. Manfred Wekwerth, Joachim Tenschert

Deutsches Theater: Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches, Guest Performance, Jugendtheater Riga, dir. Adolf Schapiro

bat: Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, Studioinszenierung des 3. Studienjahres der Hochschule für Schauspielkunst "Ernst Busch," preview performance, dir. Peter Schroth/Peter Kleinert

Das Ei, Friedrichsstadt Palast: Bills Ballhaus

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Video-Nachtstudio: Brecht in Finnland, dir. Erwin Burkert

FEBRUARY 10TH

Dorotheenstädtischer Friedhof, Flowers for Brecht

Bertolt-Brecht-Platz, Dedication, Bertolt Brecht Monument by Fritz Cremer

Berliner Ensemble, Ceremony in Commemoration of Brecht's 90th Birthday (Ministerrat der DDR)

Akademie der Künste der DDR, Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Premiere Presentation of the Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe der Werke von Bertolt Brecht (Aufbau- and Suhrkamp-Verlag)

Filmtheater Babylon, Film Retrospective:

Feigenblatt für Kuhle Wampe (dir. Mühl, Hecht, 1975)

Kuhle Wampe, oder Wen gehört die Welt? (dir. Dudow, 1932)

Theater Performances--

Berliner Ensemble: Die Mutter (premiere; dir. Wekwerth/Tenschert)

Deutsches Theater (see 2/9)

Theater im Palast: Grüner Schnaps und Roter Mond, Brecht-Revue mit Mahagonny-Gesängen

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Video-Nachtstudio: Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar, dir. Fritz Bennessee

FEBRUARY 11TH

Akademie der Künste der DDR, Robert-Koch-Platz, Opening of Exhibition "Brecht in the Graphic Arts"

Akademie der Künste, Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Forum "Art and the Art of Living" (2); lectures by, among others, Zbigniew Slupinski (Poland), Reinhold Grimm, Jost Hermand (USA), Horst Jesse (FRG), Arnold Schölzel, Jürgen Gross, Heinz-Uwe Haus (GDR)

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Dialogue "Brecht 88" (1); "Wirkungsmöglichkeiten der Kunst bei elektronischer Kommunikation" (Chairs: Dieter Schlenstedt, Lothar Bissky, Günter Mayer)

Berliner Ensemble, Foyer, AITA Symposium "Amateurtheater--Schöpfung für sinnerfülltes Leben" ("Creativity for a Meaningful Life") (1) (Chair: Rolf Rohmer)

Die Möwe, Kinosaal, Forum "Art and the Art of Living" (3); "Brecht International"

Akademie der Künste der DDR, Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Film Retrospective: Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder (based on Berliner Ensemble production, dir. Brecht and Engels) (1960, Wekwerth, Palitzsch) Paul Dessau (dir. Nickel, 1974)

Filmtheater Babylon: Hanqmen Also Die (dir. Lang, 1942, newly dubbed) Theater Performances--

Berliner Ensemble: Baal (dir. Alejandro Quintana)

bat: Der gute Mensch von Sezuan (see 2/9)

Berliner Ensemble, Foyer: Trommeln in der Nacht, Das Badener Lehrstück, Guest Performance, Theater der Stadt Schwedt, dir. Tatjana Rese

Brecht Zentrum der DDR, Video-Nachtstudio: Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder, Nationaltheater Lissabon, dir. Joao Lourenco

FEBRUARY 12TH

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, "Amateur Theaters Perform Brecht" (Video)

Akademie der Künste, Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Discussion: "Theater und Veränderung" ("Theater and Change"); Chair: Manfred Wekwerth

Brecht-Zentrum, Dialogue "Brecht 88" (2): "Kunstproduktion heute" (Chairs: Dieter Schlenstedt, Joachim Fiebach, Volker Braun)

Berliner Ensemble, Foyer, AITA Symposium, "Amateurtheater--Schöpfung für sinnerfülltes Leben" (2) (Chair: Christoph Brück)

Die Möwe/Kinosaal, Forum, "Art and the Art of Living" (4); Experiences in Producing the Threepenny Opera

Akademie der Künste, Film Retrospective:

Katzgraben (Berliner Ensemble Production, dir. Brecht and Wekwerth) (1957, Wekwerth)

Andere die welt: sie braucht es (about Hanns Eisler) (1973, dir. Lippmann)

Filmtheater Babylon: Tod und Auferstehung des Wilhelm Hausmann (based on Brecht's story "Der Arbeitsplatz") (1977, dir. Mühl)

Theater Performances--

Berliner Ensemble: Galileo Galilei (dir. Wekwerth, Tenschert)

Volksbühne: Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui, Guest Performance, Akadmietheater Wien, dir. Alfred Kirchner

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Video-Nachtstudio: Die Bestie (Fernsehen der DDR, 1988, dir. Alejandro Quintana) and Hiob, Tochter Brechts (Fernsehen der DDR, 1988)

FEBRUARY 13TH

Akademie der Künste der DDR, Konrad-Wolf-Saal, Forum, "Art and the Art of Living (5); "Brecht International"

Akademie der Künste, Film Retrospective: Baal (BRD, 1969, dir. Völker Schlöndorff)

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Dialogue "Brecht 88" (3): "Vormarsch zurück zur Vernunft;" Chairs: Dieter Schlenstedt, Friedrich Tomberg, Gerd Irrlitz

Berliner Ensemble, Foyer, Discussion: "Brecht auf dem Theater der 80er Jahre;" Chair: Ernst Schumacher (Verband der Theaterschaffenden der DDR)

Film Retrospective:

Akademie der Künste, Mysterien eines Frisiersalons (1923, silent, dir. Brecht, Engel, Valentin) and Happy End (1976; dir. Wekwerth)

Filmtheater Babylon: Die Rache des Kapitäns Mitchell (based on Brecht's story "Safety First") (1978, dir. Mühl)

Theater Productions--

Berliner Ensemble: Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder (dir. P. Kupke)

Volksbühne: Arturo Ui (see 2/12)

Deutsches Theater: Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe (dir. A. Lang)

Kino am Friedrichshain: Die Dreigroschenoper, Guest Performance, SCHICHT Theater Dresden, dir. Heinz Drewniak

Theater im Palast: Grüner Schnaps und roter Mund (see 2/10)

Brecht-Zentrum der DDR, Video-Nachtstudio: Mahaqonny (Theatertruppe "Osaka," dir. Hiroyuki Horie)

FEBRUARY 14TH

Berliner Ensemble, Closing Event: "Internationale Brecht-Rezeption heute"



COMMENTARY:

International Brecht Dialogue:
 "Brecht--Art and the Art of Living"
 Berlin/GDR, February 1988

Antony Tatlow

"Gorbi"--"Brechtreiz." These two slogans stood out among about thirty pieces of graffiti. Scrawled on three sides of a hall, they formed part of a stage set where students were performing The Good Person of Sezuan.

With several hundred others, I spent a week in Berlin celebrating Brecht's ninetieth birthday. Not expecting much from such a public celebration, I was intrigued by what took place. Brecht's Berlin is in ferment. The GDR has woken up. There is an intellectual, cultural crisis of confidence, one that accrues from this sense of a radical shift in global forces. The Chinese word for crisis is composed of the signs for "danger" and "opportunity." "Gorbi" and "Brechtreiz" encode that contradiction.

For anyone alert to the quality of Brecht's thought and the turbulent currents that flow through his work, what is now taking place is fascinating. If that work embodies personal and unfolds social contradictions, can it ever have appeared so apposite?

During one discussion, a Humboldt University philosophy professor put it like this: "The people on the bridge have discarded the charts. And now their problem is how to instruct the crew." The old simplicities are done for. Nothing can be the same again. The question is, has Brecht been too distorted by over-familiarity or simplification, to play any useful role? Some people think so. A young attendant was admitting me to Round Heads and Peaked Heads when he saw the conference badge on my jacket:

"Why do you bother? Brecht is so boring. He's passé."
 "We'd need to talk about that."
 "But Brecht isn't God."
 "Now we agree with each other."

This was clearly a case of "Brechtreiz." The efficacy of that particular production is another question. Striving for appositeness, it got stuck in mannerism: not an easy play.

But the "Brechtreiz" unfolded its own doubleness during the students' performance of The Good Person which was quite eccentric to the conventions for dealing with that troublesome man and which explain why his work functions as a surefire emetic to those sensitized by them. Nothing I saw came near the quality of their production. There was no mistaking the warmth of the applause from the young audience. In this respect as well it was a different story at the Berliner Ensemble whose official premiere, The Mother, attended by many prominent cultural affairs people, concluded with shouts of "bravo" from the gallery. They seemed disproportionate to the quality of the

production. "I wonder if they have employed claqueurs," said my neighbor who ought to know.

So some monuments are toppling while others are shored up. During the festivities a monumental bronze was unveiled in front of the theatre; somebody observed: "This Brecht sculpture is a Denk mal"--a realistic, full figure, larger than life. He is sitting on a bench, but it is not the Doubter, more the guardian of the Berliner Ensemble's "philosophical people's theatre." His face is smiling, his back is straight, his legs are spread open and his hands hold up a cap over the trouser buttons. He sits on one end of the bench and seems to invite company, but you can't quite sit beside him, the space is that much too short; you would look silly anyway. You could stand between his legs. The figure is placed on a circle of paving stones, suggesting the revolving stage. The sculptor, Fritz Cremer, asks us to interpret that as well.

"Brecht--Art and the Art of Living" ("Kunst und Lebenskunst") was the conference motto. What might it mean? For one dramatist who has encountered difficulties through his work, it meant the art of survival ("Überlebenskunst") as an alternative, as he put it, "to losing your reason" ("Verstand"). Such existential difficulties were hardly troubling the Berliner Ensemble or the Brecht heirs. But appearances can be deceptive. I will discuss the main contribution of the Ensemble to the festivities, productions of Fatzer and The Mother, later in this critique. The BE also announced that it would not produce any more Brecht plays for a year. If others are not exactly losing their reason, their mental stability (Verstand), there is no doubt about the prevailing loss of direction. You can't use old charts to navigate uncharted waters; the reason (Vernunft) they have lived by until now needs radical criticism.

This project is only getting underway and constituted the agenda for the discussions in the Brecht Center. For the first time in the GDR, people are having to examine all the borders of their thought at once. Nothing is sacrosanct. Even if these discussions did not reach conclusions that would have surprised anyone who attended our 1986 Hong Kong Symposium, the quality of argument was still different. Many of us have argued for some time the need to rethink the capacity of Brecht's work. Now we have an opportunity for a real exchange of experiences with our colleagues in the GDR as they extend the hitherto accepted categories of their thought.

How did this relate to the official opening of these events? The hosts were not the Brecht Center or the Berliner Ensemble but the Council of Ministers of the GDR, headed by Erich Honecker. There were two parts to the ceremony: an official address by the Minister of Culture (Dr. Hans-Joachim Hoffmann) and a program devised by Barbara Brecht-Schall and Ekkehard Schall, performed by members of the Ensemble and entitled "Amusement and Concern for One's 'Fellowman'" ("Amusement und Sorge um den 'Mitmensch'"), old favorites beginning with a recording of Brecht singing the "Song of the Insufficiency of Human Endeavor" from The Threepenny Opera and ending with everyone singing Eisler's Friedenslied, Brecht's version of Neruda's poem.

You suspect the second half was more interesting than the first half--wrong. It had its moments, for example Peter Bause's riveting performance of the Ballade von den Seeräubern, sustaining an exceptional intensity, not so

much by dramatizing the exotic narrative as by uncovering the force of its metaphors. But too much of the program seemed fixated by the awkwardness of its title. They must have envisaged entertainment after the longueurs of the official address and in part they succeeded, but their attempts to give the old favorites that extra twist did not really work. This may be unjust to some of the company because of the effect of Schall's narcissism, blatantly energized and intolerably lazy in about equal proportions.

There was nothing narcissistic about the Minister's address. Public events are always conducted in code. Arguments about performances turn on how we decode them and have less to do with surface semantics. The procedures for encoding are most complex in the theatre and constitute its special art. The public speech, especially at so formal a level as a state occasion, is circumscribed by expectations. We take part in a ritual; we don't expect surprises. If we get one, it may be because we are unfamiliar with the level of encoding. Ministerial speeches state government policy and express the interests of institutions affected by such policies. Though doubtless clothed in its own code, this one said that they needed the experience of Brecht's thought, his materialist dialectics, his art as a form of production not solely concerned with immediate intervention, hence better able to change the nature of social practice. It admitted uncertainties and called for a turn away from the reductive pragmatics with which Brecht has for so long been equated.

The texts promised in the new edition, presented by the Aufbau and Suhrkamp publishing houses, should enable a better understanding of their malleability, for they are still mostly known by their final versions and the accompanying interpretive practice. It was, unhappily, typical that no mention was made in this context of the pathbreaking Willett and Manheim edition.

The Minister's speech raised this problem: how to preserve a Brechtian critique of a world system that preserves inequalities, if we must now cooperate with, rather than confront, this system. There seem to be two answers and both were addressed in the theoretical discussions. Their starting-point was a volume of commissioned essays edited by Wolfgang Heise and published by the Brecht Center: Brecht 88, Anregungen zum Dialog über die Vernunft am Jahrtausende (Henschel Verlag, Berlin, 1987), a spectrum of opinion in the GDR. The discussions themselves are summarized in the Brecht Center's newsletter notate, in six special issues published February 9th-14th; I now want to concentrate less on the specifics of those arguments than on what is theoretically subtextual to them.

Peter Palitzsch, revisiting the Berliner Ensemble for the first time, remarked to notate that he had seen interesting productions but did not feel that questions were being asked of Brecht productions today, "and I thought that specialists, critics and scholars would perhaps be discussing such questions." Like Palitzsch, I had to choose between events, but I heard accounts of what I could not attend and have since studied the reports of all productions and discussions. Palitzsch was right about some productions. We did not have an opportunity to exchange impressions of the theoretical debates.

What seems to be at stake now, seen from the GDR perspective, is the need to discard theories of confrontation. They cannot be replaced by familiar united front policies of cooperation but necessitate a reconsideration of the social dynamic within so-called Second World societies. The slogan for this change is the stress on "individuality." The argument differs from the discussion of "subjectivity" in First World societies. Confronting what is encoded by these two slogans would be one way forward, instead of dismissing the first as tactics or equating the second with postmodern irrationalism. So the agenda is large and goes deep. What we need are sophisticated relational models that take account of the interdependence of our global problems. This probably does involve a rethinking of the whole Marxist project (and not an abandonment of it), perhaps in the spirit of what a much-maligned theorist-practitioner once termed the whole "experiment that will undergo many changes and will probably be made anew from its very foundations."

When "postmodernism" stands for solipsistic subjectivity and social indifferentism it is condemned, but the slogan tended to mask the productive or critical aspects of the Western debate. These confusions were not especially helped by one prominent West German scholar to whom it has now been revealed that "irrationalism is the only form of reason." What I found particularly revealing, in spite of the eloquently addressed need for new relational theoretical models, was the inability to actually locate in Brecht's work and thought anticipations and figurations of these very models.

There were jokes in the air, one sign that things are going deep. What is the definition of theory? You can understand it but it doesn't work. And practice? It works but you don't understand why. Somebody transposed the last lines from "In Praise of Communism" (from The Mother) as follows: "It is the difficult thing that simply can't be created" ("das Schwere, das einfach nicht zu machen ist.")

The main theoretical demarche echoed our Hong Kong discussions: a conviction that the particularizing, linear theoretical perspective must give way to a new multi-dimensionality. They need a theory to explain it. I do not believe this especially difficult, though the arguments need to be set out and this lies beyond my brief today. It involves a shift to a new theoretical or logical level. Any such shift can liberate or constrict; it constitutes that danger/opportunity which appears so stimulatingly unsettling.

In this context the so-called Third World serves a particular function, for it is compartmentalized as that place where Brecht's work is unremittingly relevant, no matter what difficulties exist elsewhere. Yet this assumption poses certain problems, both with respect to what this "Third World" actually is, and what Brecht's supposed function in it tells us about how that work is constructed by those who so place it, also within their own First and Second Worlds. Another factor needs to be included here: the understandable irritation among some Third World artists and scholars concerning the manner in which their theatre is interpreted in the West, which also reveals how they read Brecht and their own cultural traditions.

Western mythical/mystical readings of Asian theatre which so irritate people like Sengupta, and a common conviction that Brecht's theatre still functions unproblematically in Third World countries, constitute a mirror

image of each other. For Asian traditional theatres are imbued with historical cultural forces and formulate psychosocial experiences in terms of the myths and philosophical macro-models of their cultures. Popular, contemporary, idealizing, mystical readings--wherever they come from--simply separate out aspects of these performances form the cultural forces which produced them, and that is impermissible if we wish to understand them properly. Likewise, Brecht's plays cannot be reduced to a simple, mechanical economic anthropology. Where the Third World connotes vicious social and political repression and a struggle for survival, human needs will differ from those in other parts where it does not, as in countries like China with its long and rich cultural traditions. It is precisely in the confrontation between those sophisticated traditions and Brecht's theatre and dramaturgy that opportunities lie, both for those countries but also for revitalizing our understanding of Brecht in the Second and First Worlds. Such thoughts cut across conventional perspectives but I did notice, really for the first time, a readiness in the GDR to take such possibilities seriously.

Yet here there is a difference of interest between writers and scholars. Of course, there are epigones in both categories for whom nothing much changes. But where change does matter, writers and theorists are united by their need to escape from overfamiliar readings, yet divided by the writer's need to surmount the anxiety of influence, either by fleeing the too powerful prefiguration or constructing a version of it that makes separation inevitable and writing possible, whereas the theorist can return to the dominant figure and change him by rereading.

The inescapable doubleness in response was demonstrated when both Heinrich Müller and Volker Braun mentioned connections between Brecht and Picasso. This gesture both distances and reinforces the influence. Müller alluded explicitly in the discussion with Heise in Brecht 88 to Brecht's admiration for Picasso while stressing how difficult it is to probe beneath the surface of his plays. Braun did it implicitly by speaking of the need for a theatre that would make sense to Picasso, the need for what he called an "aesthetics of exploded reality" ("eine Ästhetik der zersprengten Realität"). But just such an aesthetics is contained as a potential within and on occasion is expressly formulated in Brecht's work.

In the preface to Arturo Ui, he speaks of the explosion of the new dramaturgical core in his work, aligning this metaphorically with our new understanding of the forces in the universe revealed by physics. Where Brecht is closest to Shakespeare he is most interesting, says Müller, who needs to find this approximation difficult in order to write his own plays. Where some critics point to the linearity of Brecht's plots when compared with Müller's (and by implication to that of his thought), what strikes me is the rigor with which Brecht addresses the problem of representing the unconscious, how it is constructed in the character and by the audience, and how these constructs collide. This question has been repressed by uniperspectival, critical linearity. Brecht's interest in East Asian drama was part of his search for methods to show these psychological complexities, as distinct from a simply constructed ego-psychology which did not interest him. In other words, Brecht's plays can be reproblemized, provided directors and dramaturgs have a will to do so.

On the evidence of the productions in Berlin, this is not impossible although it still seems difficult. I want to discuss two instructively contrasting Berliner Ensemble productions, The Mother and Fatzer, as well as the Vienna Burgtheater's Arturo Ui and The Good Person of Sezuan as performed by the students of the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst "Ernst Busch," Berlin. First, however, a word concerning a concert performance in the newly restored Grosses Schauspielhaus of The Seven Deadly Sins, with Gisela May. She is still incomparably talented. Successful concert performance depends upon the male quartet voices of the family who were excellent. This is one of Weill's best works, but the separation of the elements Brecht envisaged for the projected great form, the collaborative work of art, can only be properly realized when this work is performed with dance for which it was written. Why is this so seldom done? Dance would deepen the resonance of the double voice, when the conflict incorporated in the unrealizable desire to escape an existence as human commodity is poignantly shaped before our eyes, since the other Anna is largely silenced. Hers is the dance part. Without it she has virtually disappeared. The whole point about separating the elements was that they would reinforce one another by regaining their integrity. The effect is cumulative, a gain of quality not just quantity. Omitting one dimension means simplifying the work and reducing the perceptual opportunities. Now is not the time to do this with Brecht.

The danger/opportunity of this moment in the GDR was well documented by the two main Berliner Ensemble productions, both directed by Manfred Wekwerth and Joachim Tenschert. Fatzer spoke directly to the GDR audience, or at least to the critics, as The Mother did not. Constructed some ten years ago by Heiner Müller out of the text fragments from the late Twenties, and then performed in West Germany, it has now reached the Ensemble in modified form and has been performed since July 1987. If The Mother is an attempt to reread a socialist classic, Fatzer seeks to reproblematicize the whole of Brecht. Müller can point to Brecht's claim that the verse form in Fatzer represents the highest technical standard. For Müller, the fragmentation in Brecht's text represents processes of thought instead of conveying simple conclusions. I find Fatzer unsatisfactory because its confusions obfuscate rather than liberate, but the play clearly speaks to a need in the GDR and must therefore indicate the extent of present confusion. The tiresomely simplified Brecht is of course a critical construction, the social authorization of a particular reading. Tiring of this, critics reach for the other extreme. Yet the more important distinction lies between clarifying and obfuscating. To clarify is not to simplify but to deepen the range of experience, to render more complex. In this context, to simplify is, in fact, to obfuscate. Provided we "read" them adequately, Brecht's "great" plays clarify. Though Fatzer does not simplify, in resisting any standard simplified reading it does not clarify either because it is confused. Though it unquestionably problematizes, it also obfuscates.

To an outsider, the analogies employed for this play seem extraordinary. Müller writes of the fragmentary masterpieces Woyzeck and Urfaust. Mittenzwei and Weimann refer to Waiting for Godot. Yet nowhere in Brecht's text can I discern a quality of writing or any aesthetic power to sustain such comparisons. The analogies only operate as inner-GDR code, or on the formal level for the fragmentation and disjointing of conventions, or in an abstract parabolic sense, as when Weimann reads it as a parable of uncertainty and interrupted liberation. The argument by analogy operates on the

level of intention; it is not guaranteed by text or production. Brecht himself discarded the burgeoning material--"smash it up for experiments, without reality, for my own orientation"--for which he could find no form and which anticipates later topoi. To reconsider the problems he faced then, and dealt with through the course of his work, implies that they were perhaps not so much solved as obviated. I will bracket the irony that this Untergang des Egoisten Fatzer had in its main role a once brilliant actor whose egotism seems indestructible.

For Müller the obviated problem is the elision of individuality and personality by a mechanical economic anthropology which Brecht's work objectively served and in terms of which he is disposed to read it. Hence his understandable disaffection for "marxist terminology," i.e. for unsustainable simplifications. So Fatzer struggles to formulate the laws of movement instead of bringing it to a stop.

But the play strives to formulate the problems of a pre- or proto-socialist morality, the dilemma that arises when a collective cannot survive without the energies of a strong individual whose behavior is incompatible with any such collective. If we read it in this manner, the contemporary analogy seems clear. The revolution is stuck. It must cooperate with capitalism. Internally, the problem is how to liberate creativity without unleashing egotism. If there is plot in this fragmented text, it registers repressions in the individual and social psyche. Given Brecht's personal position in the social struggles of the Twenties, we see why Fatzer, whom the others need to advance their interests but who pursues his own, is bound with ropes, constrained and finally killed. This is the dramatic homology for the creation, not solution, of a problem. To constrain and assassinate does away with the problem by repressing it. To repress is to preserve and intensify, not to solve. To kill is to keep alive. If we read the play in some such way, it can perhaps be recuperated for current discussions. The problem for a (post-)socialist society is not whether to kill, and hence preserve, Fatzer, but how to change them all. Maybe the problem lies less in the fear of the consequences of destroying, or unleashing, the (bourgeois) subject than in the apprehension that there might be no sustaining models inherent in the culture to enable the development of the relational subject. But to think in such categories is perhaps to step outside the main framework of current thought--though I noticed that Gerd Irrnitz, of the Humboldt University, spoke of the need to establish connections between the pre- and post-bourgeois subject. And that is, of course, the whole purpose of the Chinese analogies in Brecht's work.

If Fatzer was convoluted, The Mother seemed anodyne to many, remote from today's problems. Wekwerth, taxed with this, argued a need to recall the spirit in which the communist movement evolved, that such recollection had a positive function for his society, but that he had also wanted to stress factors apposite today as they were not for earlier productions, for example: how can the revolution be maintained after its initial phases? So the play offered not just historical instruction but a model for constant reappraisal. It showed, for example, how teachers must be parted from their dogma, how we still needed the mother's stubbornness. He also justified a quasi-return to Stanislavskian naturalism for revealing the figures' individuality--Pavel's inexperience, Vlassova's fear--thus de-heroicizing them. He also wanted to bring out the motherliness of the figure and the humor in

the text. All in all, an attempt to escape the paragons for more human, troubled, but no less encouraging figures. Perhaps in keeping with this tendency, Eisler's music was dampened, distanced, "quoted," not trumpeted. "In Praise of Communism" was sung very quietly, definitely low-key. He wanted to show what feelings people need in order to make revolution, to show what Brecht called the "friendliness (Liebenswürdigkeit) of socialism."

Wekwerth's arguments provoked skepticism and scorn among the audience, whose criticism was sometimes abusive and teutonically dogmatic. I found his defense persuasive in the context of the interests he embodies. He is caught in a contradiction: between justifying the production as a call for new thinking about the revolution, and stressing its achievements through the category of the socially comic which derives its humor from the knowledge of the superiority of its perspective. This problem was encapsulated for me in the reaction of the theatre audience to one line in the play. The teacher looks at the revolutionaries' newspaper and says to them: "Can't you make your papers more interesting?" The audience burst out laughing, just as they did ten years ago.

The program reprinted something Benjamin wrote in 1932, differentiating between an undialectical and a dialectical opposition in the form and content of consciousness. In the first, the dramatic figure can only reflect on the nature of his/her actions; in the second, these actions point the way towards theory. Benjamin describes the difference between a naturalist and epic/dialectical psychology in the theatre. Brecht's work has been almost entirely aligned along some such distinction. We could equate the naturalist psychology with ego-psychology and the epic/dialectical with a social psychology operating as the socio-economic anthropology that was so innovative in terms of what it opposed. But neither category is adequate to our understanding and we need to step beyond them, in some sense through a dialectical synthesis, one that accounts for the force of the social unconscious, that reads the individual psyche as a function of its structurations. Brecht's writing requires us to do this.

This problem was certainly raised by the Vienna Burgtheater's Arturo Ui, directed by Alfred Kirchner. It was a fine performance, talented actors working with a gifted director. Of course it was crafted for its normal Austrian audience and must have seemed almost exotic in Berlin. Through the grotesqueness of its figures, Arturo Ui, more clearly than many plays, engages with the historical unconscious of its period and with the unconscious of any audience that must construct a meaning for this work. Hitler's final speech was given a bravura performance by Franz Morak, screamed through loudspeakers that really hurt the ears. As it began, a curtain fell behind him, standing at the front of the stage, and a battery of neon lights were directed right into the audience, lighting up the whole theatre. You could not see his face. When he was well into this speech, I turned around to observe unobtrusively the reaction of the audience. What I saw is embarrassing but needs to be told. Many people, especially the women, were smiling. I do not believe those smiles marked an ironical distance. They were smiles of satisfaction, contentment, responding to the psycho-social dimensions of the performance. This forces us to think about the warning at the end of the play, because it also warns us of the force of unconscious responses. I do not believe that audience constituted a proto-fascist group.

We were not listening to Hitler, or to anyone else advocating comparable policies, but to a simulation of what took place, multiply encoded. Decoding or responding to it, the unconscious also operates within us and upon us, unless we can bring it to the level of awareness. I was not sure that his production was so crafted as to draw attention to these processes.

In the Academy, I spoke of the need to watch the processes in Brecht's work that run counter to accepted interpretations, and to the connections with East Asian culture. I referred to productions of The Good Person in China which had revealed at least five dimensions in the character, more than I had ever seen in Europe. Afterwards, Werner Heinitz, the dramaturg, suggested I should come to their student productions, directed by Peter Schroth and Peter Kleinert: "Maybe you will see two or three dimensions." Far from the center of attention, this production was easily the best performance I saw in Berlin, and one of the liveliest I have seen anywhere.

They quoted Mittenzwei in their program, writing about the cessation of conflict between the political systems; so what happens then to Marxist aesthetics, and Brecht, in a period of cooperation? Sorting this out is the GDR's problem because of traditional simplifications. The students showed us one answer.

Their performance was so full of invention and striking externalizations that I gave up trying to record them. This all happened because of their approach to the text, not at all unlike what must have happened in China, but here through psychological rather than geographical-cultural distance. They recorded their initial reaction: the text seemed rather dumb, people like Shen Te simply didn't exist. But as they worked with it, they began to understand how it was constructed, how it has to be read, and then presented it on several levels of perception. They therefore seem to have reached their understanding of its representation of the repressed, not by theorizing this, but by acting it out in terms of their own contemporary experience. This led them to those theoretically separable levels, reached through their bodies rather than through theoretical presuppositions. In its turn, this led to, and in part no doubt resulted from, an exceptional visual and sensual awareness. When these physical correlations have been discovered, when they have been given shape, the text is dynamite: mind-blowing and deeply moving. Such was the quality of this performance.

They did not show poverty as immiseration. The water-seller did not sell water. Instead, they showed it as a kind of moral collapse, an absence of social coherence, as moral immiseration, a whiff of anomie, thus touching what must be a repressed and disturbing perception in the GDR. For them, poverty was a metaphor and this play demonstrated the fear of disintegration, of degeneration, of possible social collapse, where a society chooses to live egotistically, without social cooperation. Given global technological developments, such a possibility faces many societies.

Their play showed a society living entirely for the gratification of its immediate needs. Shen Te's generosity lies in her ability to see beyond this, though she does that in terms of her personal happiness as the voice of the social unconscious speaks through her. These voices only make sense when not sentimentalized. They must be shown in their interrelationally abrasive complexity, and that can only be done if they are separated out yet

shown simultaneously through the figure. East Asian dramaturgy has developed techniques for enabling this. I had never seen a Western production that achieved comparable results so well. They showed, for example, the schizoid personality of the policeman, as a function of the clash between his office and his nature, but not by a simple reductive psychology--nice man, nasty job. Instead they split him into half-disciplined agent of the social powers, the familiar figure, and half-demented petit-bourgeois NCO, barely able to contain his rage. They showed the figure as activated victim of his own structuration, and the price we pay for it. The equivalent complexity in Shen Te establishes a much closer connection with Shui Ta, a literal superposition of faces, how both are riven with the characteristics of the other, how Shui Ta is more frightened and Shen Te much harder than they usually appear in the reductive binary dramaturgy to which this play has been so frequently sacrificed. At the very end, abandoned by the Gods, Shen Te is left standing at the front of the stage holding onto an open, empty dustbin. She speaks only one word: "Help!" Blackout. End of play.

Right at the end of the final session on the stage of the Berliner Ensemble, the delegate representing the Soviet Union remarked: "There is nothing so boring in the theatre as a bad Brecht production." He then made it very clear how important Brecht has now become for his country. During one of the theory sessions, a longwinded speaker was tackled over one of his formulations. "Of course I can say that reality is a danger," he replied. Quick as a flash, Gerd Irrlitz interposed: "Reality is not just a danger, it's the main danger." Perhaps that can stand as a summary of what took place in Berlin.

4. BRECHT-WOCHE

Augsburg, West Germany

On the Occasion of Bertolt Brecht's 90th Birthday

February 4-11, 1988

Report from the German Information Service, New York:

BRECHT-WOCHE ZUM 90. GEBURTSTAG: Aus Anlass des neunzigsten Geburtstages von Bertolt Brecht am 10. Februar wird in seiner Geburtsstadt Augsburg die 4. Brecht-Woche veranstaltet. Vorgesehen sind unter anderem Gastspiele, eigene Theateraufführungen, zwei Ausstellungen und zahlreiche Vorträge. An der Brecht-Woche beteiligen sich auch Mitglieder des Berliner Ensembles und Dieter Heinze, Leiter der Akademie der Künste der DDR. Zur Ankündigung des Programmes im Geburtshaus des Dichters erschien auch Paula Bannholzer, Brechts Jugendliebe "Bl." Die heute Sechsendachtzigjährige vermachte der Stadt für ihre Gedenkstätte ein Silberarmband, das ihr Brecht zu ihrem achtzehnten Geburtstag geschenkt hatte.

The following newspaper summary of the 4. Brecht-Woche from the Augsburger Neueste Nachrichten was sent in by IBS-member Horst Jesse, 1. Vorsitzender, Bert-Brecht Förderkreis Augsburg e.V.:

Veranstaltungsreigen mit Theater, Vorträgen und Ausstellungen

Am 10. Februar würde Bertolt Brecht 90 Jahre alt — abermals Anlaß für seine Geburtsstadt Augsburg, des Erzählers, Dichters und Dramatikers zu gedenken, ihn auf der Bühne vielfach ins Spiel zu bringen. Mit einem besonderen Geburtstagsgeschenk gratuliert schon vorab am gestrigen Montag Brechts Jugendliebe Paula „Bi“ Banhoizer-Gross. Sie übergab im B.-B.-Geburts Haus, Auf dem Rain 7, an Bürgermeister Dr. Ludwig Kotter ein türkisbesetztes Silberarmband, das ihr der Dichter zum 18. Geburtstag im Jahr 1919 verehrt hatte. Das Schmuckstück wird seinen Platz in einer Vitrine der Brecht-Gedenkstätte finden.

„Mit dem Rock von Kattun und dem gelben Tuch/Und den Augen der schwarzen Seen/Ohne Geld und Talent und doch mit genug/Vom Schwarzhaar, das sie offen trug /Bis zu den schwärzeren Zeh'n...“ — das war die Hanna Cash, bedichtet von Bert Brecht. Eine „Rosa Luxemburg von Augsburg“ nannte sie Christel Peschke vom Augsburger Stadttheater, die u.a. mit dieser Ballade am Montag im Brecht-Haus den Reigen der Gedenkveranstaltungen eröffnete. Im Mittelpunkt wird die 4. Brecht-Woche (4. bis 11. Februar) der Städtischen Bühnen Augsburg stehen. Die Auswahl bei Gastspielen sei, so Chef-dramaturg Helmar von Hanstein auf der Pressekonferenz, nicht allzu groß gewesen. Ein Burgtheater-Abend mit „Arturo Ui“ zerstückte sich aus terminlichen wie finanziellen Gründen; die „Mutter Courage“ aus Köln sei aus bühnentechnischen Gründen geplatzt. Nachfolgend Theateraufführungen, Vorträge und Ausstellungen in der Übersicht:



Theateraufführungen

- GRÜNER MOND VON ALABAMA, Münchner Theater der Jugend. Brecht für Kinder ab acht Jahren. 4. Februar, 11 Uhr, Foyer Stadttheater. — Ebenda um 18 Uhr Brecht für Jugendliche und Erwachsene.
- DIE DREIGROSCHENOPER, Städtische Bühnen Augsburg. 4. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Komödie.
- RUTH, mit Brigitte Bruun, Kopenhagen. Eine Erzählung über Ruth Berlau und Brecht. Deutschsprachige Erstaufführung. 5. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Komödie.
- ZEITZEUGEN, mit Roswitha Trexler und Fritz Hennenberg (Leipzig). Reflexionen über Texte von Brecht und Heiner Müller; Musik von Dessau, Landy, Lombardi und Stelzer. 6. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Komödie.
- LEBEN DES GALILEI, Schloßtheater Moers. 7. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Komödie.
- WEILL, EISLER, BRECHT UND JAZZ, mit der Hannes-Zerbe-Blechband und drei Mitgliedern des Berliner Ensembles der DDR. 8. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Stadttheater.
- DIE MUTTER, Städtische Bühnen Augsburg. Kantate nach dem Brecht-Stück

von Hanns Eisler. 9. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Stadttheater.

● UNTERGANG DES EGOISTEN JOHANN FATZER, Städtische Bühnen Augsburg. Fragment von Brecht in der Fassung von Heiner Müller. 10. Februar, 20 Uhr, Komödie.

● HERR PUNTILA UND SEIN KNECHT MATTI, Theater Dortmund. 11. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Stadttheater.

● UNTERGANG DES EGOISTEN FATZER. 11. Februar, 19.30 Uhr, Komödie.

Vorträge

● GEBURTSTAGSGRÜSS AN BERT BRECHT, mit Christel Peschke, Sibrand Basa, Dr. Manfred Lohnstein, Erich Maiberger und dem Männergesangsverein „Bismarck — Frohsinn“. Veranstalter Brecht-Förderkreis Augsburg. 28. Januar, 20.30 Uhr, Clochard.

● DER GYMNASIAST BRECHT UND SEINE ERSTE LIEBE, Referent Dr. Helmut Gier. Veranstalter Historischer Verein Schwaben. 3. Februar, 20 Uhr, Peutinger-Gymnasium.

● BRECHTS STÄDTE, Vortrag von Prof. Helmut Koopmann bei der Festveranstaltung zum 90. Geburtstag von Brecht. Als Gast dabei Prof. Dieter Heinze, Leiter der Akademie der Künste der DDR. 10. Februar, 18 Uhr, Komödie (geschlossene Veranstaltung).

● BRECHT UND DIE ARBEITERBEWEGUNG HEUTE, Referent Lothar Zimmermann (DGB-Vorstand). 10. Februar, 20 Uhr, Gewerkschaftshaus.

● DIE ERZÄHLENDE PROSA BRECHTS, zwei Vorträge von Pfarrer Horst Jesse, dem Vorsitzenden des Bert-Brecht-Förderkreises Augsburg, 8. und 15. März, jeweils 19.30 Uhr, Zeughaus.

Ausstellungen

● BRECHT BEIM PHOTOGRAPHERN, Porträtstudien von Konrad Reßler. Eröffnung am 4. Februar, 17.30 Uhr, im Stadttheater-Foyer mit Einführungsreferat von Michael Koetzle. Dauer der Schau bis 13. März.

● DDR-KÜNSTLER ZUM THEMA BRECHT, 23. April bis 29. Mai, Toskanische Säulenhalle des Zeughauses.

● BRECHT — PLAKATE AUS DER DDR, 23. April bis 29. Mai, Brecht-Haus.

Unter dem Motto „Brechts Jugendjahre in Augsburg“ lädt schließlich der Verkehrsverein zu drei Führungen ein, am 6. Februar (14 Uhr), 7. Februar (11 Uhr) und 10. Februar (14 Uhr). Treffpunkt am Brecht-Haus; Anmeldungen beim Verkehrsverein. go

NNE-AATG Spring Chapter Meeting/Symposium
"Brecht heute"
University of New Hampshire
April 23, 1988

The Department of German and Russian of the University of New Hampshire (Durham, New Hampshire/USA), with support from the Goethe Institute Boston and UNH Center for the Humanities, sponsored a one-day Symposium on the topic "Brecht heute" on April 23rd in conjunction with a performance of Mother Courage at the University's Johnson Theater (Paul Arts Center). The program included the following presentations/events:

David Bathrick, Cornell University: "Re-Estranging Brecht--the Problem of Relevance"

Jane Shattuck, Department of English, University of Vermont: "Fassbinder as Brechtian Cinema: Hollywood Melodrama as Lehrstück?"

Tony Kushner, Director, New York City: "Staging Mother Courage and Her Children--The Problem of Cultural Transfer"

The presentations were followed by a plenary discussion and responses from the speakers.

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Sixteenth Amherst Colloquium on German Literature
"From Word to Image:
The New Theatre in Germany and the United States"
Murray D. Lincoln Campus Center, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
April 28-30, 1988

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, in conjunction with the Goethe Institute Boston and The East Street Dance Studio (and with financial support from the UMass Arts Council), sponsored its sixteenth annual Colloquium on German Literature this past April. Among the participants were several prominent IBS members, notably CARL WEBER, Stanford University, who spoke on the topic "German Plays on the American Stage;" and ANDRZEJ WIRTH, Universität Giessen, FRG, who moderated a session featuring playwrights Heiner Müller (Berlin) and Robert Wilson (New York) and presented a paper on "Intercultural Syncretism in Theatre: Robert Wilson's Work in Europe and the United States."

ARTICLES

Kunst, Lebenskunst, Liebeskunst:
Eine zweifache Huldigung*

Reinhold Grimm,
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Zunächst möchte ich Werner Hecht sehr herzlich danken, daß er mir erlaubt hat, die beiden folgenden Miniaturtexte, die schon vor Jahren entstanden sind und auch--obzwar zum Teil in gekürzter Fassung--bereits veröffentlicht wurden, hier noch einmal, und nun vollständig, vorzutragen. Sie stellen, anhand zweier Gedichte, eine doppelte Huldigung dar, die der Kunst wie der Lebens- und Liebeskunst Bertolt Brechts gilt. Also: Ovation für Brecht!

I

Die Überschrift des ersten Gedichts, "O Lust des Beginnens," ist zugleich sein Einleitungssatz:

O Lust des Beginnens! O früher Morgen!
Erstes Gras, wenn vergessen scheint
Was grün ist! O erste Seite des Buchs
Des erwarteten, sehr überraschende! Lies
Langsam, allzusehnell
Wird der ungelesene Teil dir dünn! Und der erste Wasserguß
In das verschweißte Gesicht! Das frische
Kühle Hemd! O Beginn der Liebe! Blick, der wegirrt!
O Beginn der Arbeit! Öl zu füllen
In die kalte Maschine! Erster Handgriff und erstes Summen
Des anspringenden Motors! Und erster Zug
Rauchs, der die Lunge füllt! Und du
Neuer Gedanke!

Nackt, unumwunden, hemmungslos gestehe ich: ich liebe diese Ode an den Alltag. Wenn mich die dumpfe Unlust des Endes packt (und wie oft geschieht dies nicht heute? Wer bliebe davon verschont?), wenn Ekel und Verzweiflung an Welt und Leben oder einfach die üble Laune des an seinen Schreibtisch, in seine Bücherzelle Gebannten, die alte Mönchskrankheit der *acedia* mich zu übermannen drohen: immer dann lese ich "O Lust des Beginnens." Diese drei-

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zehn scheinbar so kargen Zeilen sind von einer unbändigen Fülle und Frische, sind selber wie ein Wasserguß, sind Kühlung, Labsal, Erquickung. Nichts ist mir heilsamer und stimmt mich heiterer in der apokalyptischen Ode unseres Alltags als diese Brechtsche Ode auf ihn. Ich lese sie: leise und nur die Lippen bewegend, laut und langsam skandierend, stets genußvoll und allmählich, trotz allem, fröhlich. Letzten Endes koste ich diese "Lust des Begin- nens" auf der Zunge nicht weniger als im Hirn. Frühere Jahrhunderte hätten gesagt, ich 'erbaue' mich an Brechts Versen. Doch weil ihnen jedwedes Feierliche und Weihevollere, jeglicher Prunk und Pomp so gänzlich fremd sind, füge ich eilig und englisch mit angelsächsischem understatement hinzu: They give me an uplift.

Freilich, womit soll man seinerseits, um die Eigenart und Schönheit von Brechts Versen zu schildern, beginnen? Muß man sie überhaupt bereden? Ist dieses Gedicht nicht dermaßen klar und einfach, daß es keiner Erläuterung bedarf? Aber eben deswegen möchte ich einiges dazu sagen. Ich beschränke mich auf dreierlei: eine mehr gattungspoetische Erwägung; ferner eine technische, für Brecht überaus typische Feinheit, die, obzwar auf den ersten Blick rein metrisch-formal wirkend, gleichwohl in den Kern des Brechtschen Dichtens und Denkens führt; zuletzt ein paar allgemeine, dem Inhalt gewidmete Betrachtungen.

Zur Frage der Gattung. Ich nannte das Gedicht eine Ode. Nicht von ungefähr. Denn dieses lyrische Gebilde, das dem Alltag nicht bloß gilt, sondern im Alltagsgewand auch daherkommt, das in schlichtester, ja kärglicher Sprache gekleidet ist und auf allen Schmuck, ob Reim oder sonstige poetisch-rhetorische Kunstmittel, verzichtet: dieses Gedicht erfüllt tatsächlich die Gattungsgesetze der klassischen Ode, wenn auch auf seine Weise. Die Ode ist ja, so heißt es in den Nachschlagewerken, gekennzeichnet durch ein "Gegenüber;" sie atmet "kühle Distanz und dennoch tiefe Ergriffenheit vom Erlebnis;" gebändigt durch strenge Formgebung, im Stil des "gezügelter Pathos," ist sie bei aller Ergriffenheit von "gedanklicher Helle," ist "beziehungs- klar und konturenfest." Diese sämtlichen Kriterien treffen auf "O Lust des Begin- nens" zu. Und Brecht hat nicht nur erfolgreich die odische Du-Anrede verwendet, sondern sogar (welche Kühnheit in einem modernen Gedicht) fünfmal den odischen O-Anruf! Ja, damit nicht genug: in dreizehn Zeilen gelangen ihm nicht weniger als dreizehn Ausrufe und Ausrufungszeichen!

Brechts technische Feinheit. Der Schein trügt allerdings, was die Kunstmittel betrifft. Zwar prunkt dieses Gedicht nicht mit poetischem Bilders- schmuck und rhetorischem Ornat; es ist aber trotzdem mit höchstem Kunst- verstand "gemacht." Man nehme die Zeile "Langsam, allzuschnell". Denn so, rät Brecht, soll man ja lesen. Was nämlich? Das lange ersehnte und gleich- wohl so nicht erwartete Buch. Die Doppellust, es möglichst rasch kennenzu- lernen (es zu "verschlängen") und zugleich nach Möglichkeit in aller Ruhe zu genießen, ist hier mit unnachahmlicher Präzision in zwei asyndetischen, durch kein "und" verbundenen Kontrastbegriffen vereinigt. Wenn anders Dia- lektik in der widersprüchlichen Einheit von Gegensätzen liegt, die einander bewegen, wechselseitig erhellen und weitertreiben, so ist derlei vollkommene lyrische Dialektik. Diese Zeile, als Wortpaar wie als Vers, entspricht aufs genaueste Brechts Denkweise und bildet zudem einen Musterfall seines dichterischen Verfahrens, das er "reimlose Lyrik mit unregelmäßigen Rhythmen" nannte. Brechts nüchterne, sachliche, unpathetische Ode kann sich gerade

auch als Kunstgebilde mit den besten Leistungen eines Klopstock, Goethe, Hölderlin messen.

Den Inhalt betreffend. Muß nicht selbst den Kenner erstaunen, was dieses Gedicht auf engstem Raum mitteilt? Wahrhaft allumfassend--er sei, sagte Brecht zweideutig, ein "katholischer" Dichter--wird die Lust des Beginnens in seinen dreizehn Zeilen wiedergegeben. Die Natur im Tageslauf (der frühe Morgen) wie im Jahreslauf (das erste Grün) kommt darin zur Sprache, desgleichen das Naturhafte am Menschen, dessen Zeugung--und mit welcher keuschen Konkretheit sind der Liebesakt und seine Erfüllung ("O Beginn der Liebe! Blick, der wegirrt!") bis in Rhythmus und rhythmische Wiederholung hinein hier dargestellt! Ebenso ist aber in "O Lust des Beginnens" auch das spezifisch Menschliche, das Nicht-Natürliche am Menschen--und zwar ganz folgerichtig für Brecht, den marxistischen Dichter, im spezifisch Marx'schen Sinne--enthalten: nämlich die Arbeit. Das verschweißte Gesicht, der kühlende Wasserguß, das frische Hemd künden von körperlicher Anstrengung, das begierig geöffnete Buch und der neue Gedanke von geistiger Tätigkeit. Lustvoll indes, daran läßt Brecht keinen Zweifel, ist beides: insbesondere eben die Erkenntnis, der er mit unstillbarem Wissensdurst verhaftet blieb, die wieder und wieder aufs neue für ihn begann. Ja, sogar die technische Welt der Maschine (will sagen des Autos, mitsamt dem Drehen des Zündschlüssels, das nun alles Routinemäßige abgestreift hat, und dem Anspringen und ersten Summen des Motors) ist fugenlos in diese Brechtschen Verse eingegangen, ist gegenwärtig in seiner Alltäglichkeit und doch in lyrischer Schönheit. Nicht einmal die sogenannten Laster, die ja die wahren Freuden des Lebens auf dieser Welt sind, fehlen; denn auch Zigarre oder Zigarette und das wohlige Gefühl des tief in die Lunge eingesogenen ersten Rauches gehören, wie sehr uns die Ärzte warnen mögen, zur Lust des Beginnens.

Goethe meinte bekanntlich von einem der großen, reichen, makellosen Dramen Calderons, man würde daraus die gesamte Poesie, sollte sie wirklich einmal verlorengegangen sein, rekonstruieren können. War er vielleicht allzu überschwenglich, so bin ich jedenfalls gerne dreist genug, in ähnlichem Sinne zu behaupten, man könne aus solch einem kleinen, kargen, doch nicht minder makellosen Versgebilde Bertolt Brechts die volle Ganzheit dieses Dichters, sein Wesen als Mensch wie als Denker und Künstler, erahnen . . . und notfalls rekonstruieren, selbst wenn der Rest seines Schaffens, alle zwanzig (oder nun dreißig) Bände der Gesamtausgabe, unwiederbringlich verloren wären. "Neu beginnen," wußte Brecht, "kannst du mit dem letzten Atemzug."

II

Das zweite Gedicht trägt den Titel "Über induktive Liebe" sowie den seinerseits huldigenden Zusatz: "F. Bacon gewidmet, der die induktive Methode in die Naturwissenschaften einführte." Es lautet:

Der große Bacon baute auf Versuche.
's wär Zeit, sie in die Liebe einzuführen.
Vielleicht, wir finden, wenn wir uns berühren:
Wir liegen gerne unter einem Tuche.

Und meine Hand, die deine Brüste fand
Sag, ist sie angenehm? Wenn wir's nur wüßten!
Vielleicht dem Schoß nicht, aber doch den Brüsten?
Vielleicht dem Schoß, und diesem nur die Hand?

Nur dürfte weder Wollen noch Verwehren
Bei dem Versuch das letzte Wort bedeuten.
Erfreuen sollten wir, wenn wir uns freuten.
Aus dem Genießen wachse das Begehren.
Gestattete sie, daß er sie begattet
Ist ihm, sich nicht zu gatten, auch gestattet.

Der diesen Discours de la méthode schrieb, gilt als Pascha, wenn auch kaum als Pappagallo. Denn dazu wie zum echten Macho fehlte ihm wohl das Imponiergehabe. "Aber", tönt es schrill, "ein male chauvinist war Bertolt Brecht bestimmt!" Und Kritiker, die sich emanzipiert dünken, bieten eilig die Belege hierfür an. Beispiele werden hervorgeholt, Aussprüche nachgewiesen, erotische Untaten aufgezählt. Flugs hat man (will sagen 'man/frau,' da der Dogmatismus selbst die Sprache nicht schont) den Stab über dem armen B.B. gebrochen und lauthals sein Verdammungsurteil verkündet. Wagte er nicht, dieser angeblich so fortschrittlich gesinnte Dichter, von Frauen wie von Frauen zu reden und als Frauen mit ihnen umzugehn? Weh ihm!

Nun war ja das Liebesleben des Mannes Brecht in der Tat ein bißchen . . . wie soll man es nennen? "unbürgerlich"? Doch erstens ist das Bürgertum keineswegs so prüde und puritanisch, wie uns gewisse radikale Kreise weismachen wollen; und zweitens treibt 'man' es ausgerechnet in solchen Kreisen zumeist noch so autoritär, patriarchalisch und auch muffig wie nur je unter Kleinbürgern. Also? Müßten wir uns mit dem abgedroschenen Wort 'bohemehaft' behelfen? Sollen wir gar den gefährlichen Ausdruck 'natürlich' wählen? Oder wäre ganz schlicht und einfach zu konstatieren, Brechts Liebesleben sie eben kein sehr gewöhnliches gewesen? Daß er im Sinne gewöhnlicher, gängiger, hergebrachter Moralbegriffe (wie erst recht, versteht sich, im Sinn rigoros feministischer Verkehrsformen und -forderungen) einiges auf dem biographischen und poetischen Kerbholz hat, läßt sich schwerlich leugnen. Zu fragen bleibt indes, ob es durch ein Gedicht wie "über induktive Liebe" nicht längst schon aufgewogen ist, wenn es denn aufgewogen werden soll und muß.

Ich werde mich freilich hüten, das in Prosa breitzutreten, was Brecht in Versen vorschlägt. Gerade weil es sich hier um kein schwüles Bettgeflüster, sondern um den Austausch zweier gleichberechtigter Partner handelt, hat dies Gedicht keine Paraphrasen oder sonstigen Phrasen nötig. In ihm ist, obzwar bloß die männliche Stimme spricht, stets auch die weibliche gegenwärtig. Die Gemeinsamkeit der beiden sich liebend Erprobenden und Erfreuenden ist sogar, zur Abwechslung, rein philologisch-numerisch demonstrierbar.

Nicht weniger als achtmal steht das Pronomen "wir" oder "uns," hingegen kein einziges Mal das Pronomen "ich"! Statt mieser Tradition, die sich fort-schleppt, oder neuer dogmatischer Starre, erscheint wiederum lebendige Dialektik--die sich hier, ganz konkret, als widerspruchsvolle Einheit von Wollen, Verwehren und Gestatten, ja von "Genießen" und "Begehren" (man beachte die Umkehrung) darstellt. Auch ihren Humor besitzt diese kecke Verwissent-schaftlichung des Erotischen: von der augenzwinkernden Widmung an den "gro-ßen Bacon" bis zur Lautkomik des stotternden Staccatoschlusses, die dessen Ernst aber darum keineswegs mindert. Und wie sich's seit Petrarca und Shake-speare für ein auf Gefühl wie Gedanke bauendes Liebesgedicht, zumal ein didaktisches, ziemt, ist Brechts Discours de la méthode selbstverständlich ein Sonett.

Übrigens behaupte ich durchaus nicht, das Gedicht sei vollkommen. Aber es ist so ganz ohne Faxen und Verrenkungen, von solch humaner Gelassenheit, lässigem Freimut, freier Bindung und Rücksicht wie nur selten Verse über die Liebe. Sinnlich zugleich und sachlich, zeigt es die schöne Nacktheit der wirklichen Emanzipation, die keinerlei ideologischer Reizwäsche bedarf.

"Alle Künste," schrieb Brecht, "tragen bei zur größten aller Künste, der Lebenskunst." Und was wäre die Lebenskunst ohne die Liebeskunst? --Noch einmal: Ovation für Brecht!

Der Friede ist das A und O aller
menschfreundlichen Tätigkeiten,
aller Produktionen, aller Künste,
einschließlich der Kunst zu leben.

Poststructuring Brecht:
Pluralism and Propaganda in Galileo

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According to Efim Etkind, the Brecht/Staniavsky controversy in 1956 Soviet theatre (re)introduced to Soviet aesthetics the question of plurality: "What is important is that Brecht represented a second theater. And if there is a second theater, there can be a third, a tenth one. This is the problem of having more than one authority (my emphasis). Brecht was a second party in theater. . . . The Führer principle and the possibility of creating a second theater, indeed of creating a fiftieth theater, were at stake." (1) What Brecht represented here illustrates quite powerfully one of the effects of pluralistic strategies--to dislodge authoritarian claims to truth. Although many Brechtian texts (plays) are both formally and thematically pluralistic, their political commitment sometimes threatens to become statically ideological or narrowly propagandistic. Brecht claimed that in urgent historical situations propaganda may be a useful tool for the engaged writer, and he may be right. But its continued use, after its planned obsolescence, can become oppressively authoritarian, for, as Adorno remarks, "Even if politically motivated, commitment in itself remains politically polyvalent so long as it is not reduced to propaganda, whose pliancy mocks any commitment by the subject." (2)

Pluralism and propaganda, as they pertain to The Life of Galileo, open in the Brechtian text or play a problem much-discussed by post-structuralist theorists and of great concern to feminist theorists: the question of authority. If one purpose of "political," "committed," or "engaged" theatre or art is to "bare" ideology, one theorem of various post-structuralisms is that art is always political, that on some level ideology is always present in art; there is no Archidemean vantage point outside ideology from which to stand and not be affected by it, no non-ideological master theory. In the apparently circular acts of writing and reading one makes choices, consciously or unconsciously, under various cultural and political constraints. The artistic practices structured by and structuring this continually mediated, post-modern world are those which fragment the self and reality, and those which suggest the impossibility and undesirability of recreating or reinventing any whole, unified subject or any monolithic reality--either an author or an authority. For Lyotard, "the post-modern would be that which, in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself; . . . that which searches for new presentations, not in order to enjoy them but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable." (3) That which allows for an interchange or play among the various fragments, and which also recognizes and explores their ideologies, I would call the non-synthesized, the problematic, the changeable, the plural. The Brechtian text bared

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ideology and opened the question of plurality and authority in 1956. It has in recent years fueled the "theatre of the oppressed." Can it continue to allow the reader and spectator to be what Lyotard calls "witnesses to the unrepresentable"? (4) Put another way, can those elements of the Brechtian text which admit of pluralities be co-opted without in turn propagating more reductive or repressive ideologies? Or, can pluralistic strategies (many of them already Brechtian) illuminate those places in the Brechtian text where its propaganda is most stagnant or examine its own claims to authority? In some cases the Brechtian text deconstructs itself readily or is readily dialogic; in other cases one must continually read against the text, and against Brecht's own recorded readings against his own texts.

The broad outline of Brechtian theory is, as many critics note, dialectical, its innovations coinciding with or perhaps flowing from Russian formalism. (5) According to Frederic Jameson, Brecht contributed to "the coming to consciousness of art as defamiliarization in the first place," (6) a realization that sustains most post-structuralist literary theories. He argues that Brecht saw the primary opposition "between the static and the dynamic, between that which is perceived as changeless, eternal, having no history, and that which is perceived as altering in time and as being essentially historical in character." (7) In terms of artistic strategies, this opposition can be translated into the question of propaganda and pluralism.

Several Brechtian theatrical strategies, and perhaps the most revolutionary Brechtian dramatic theory, point to, pave the way for, and/or have as one of their destinations a pluralistic aesthetic. Because of their urgent historical situation, however, several Brechtian texts propagate, through static binary oppositions, (the) one great "truth of our time"--the barbarism of controlling the means of production by violence. Such an idea simplifies "truth" and prepares a course of action, but tends to deny the historicity of its own claims. Thus, some Brechtian texts are caught in the paradox of pluralistically examining a question in such a way that they promote one answer only. Critics have often noted that, at the end of The Good Person of Szechwan, the audience is asked to analyze alternatives, and is then pushed in one direction. It is seldom if ever noted that The Caucasian Chalk Circle does not examine the ways in which the control of the definition of motherhood has historically been inseparable from the physical and legal control of women. In chasing the one great truth of our time, the plays often remain blind to the "barbaric" ideologies on which they construct their criticism. To examine the political nature of all art (Brecht himself says that "for art to be 'unpolitical' means only to ally itself with the 'ruling' group" (8)), is to examine its forms of authority, or, the basis of propaganda. Yet, it is also to explore art's lack of authority, its pluralistic extensions, and its own tendency to dismantle propaganda.

The Life of Galileo exhibits a marked tension between pluralism and propaganda. Its forms are plural, its changes chronic, and its various characters often ambiguous, but it values certain unexamined forms of authority and at the end of at least one version "pronounces" truth. Aside from the plurality of genres it employs, the play has a variety of versions (which cannot be evaluated merely as "more" or "less" "mature"), and of productions (including filmed ones), thus making it difficult to decide what constitutes the "authoritative" Galileo, or even for deciding upon interpretive strategies. Most versions, however, radically revise existing versions of history,

and pit the dominant ideology of the Church, which controls the means of production of the peasants of the Campagna--and therefore controls theological scientific truth--against the potentially revolutionary scientific truth discovered, but not controlled by Galileo. In the later versions of the play, one authority (theo-socio-political) is questioned and found lacking, but another authority (scientific)--which Galileo abandons for the former--is scarcely questioned. One truth is shown to be "relative" to its political and economic concerns, whereas Galileo's newly "proven" scientific truth is revealed as being independently, objectively true. The figure Galileo gives to the term "reason" a value that does not admit of dialectical tampering, of contradiction. And yet, there is a hint of contention when Sagredo is allowed to say "human beings are not accessible to reason;" it is "delusion when (one) believes in the rationality of the human race." (9) Reason, Logic, Truth, the play suggests, may be supreme values, but, alas, they are perhaps not human values. The play(s) thus may also deny the validity of the ultra-rational, explicitly by rejecting transcendental faith, and implicitly by not acknowledging or by devaluing the unconscious, the illogical. It should become apparent here that one of my own problems with Galileo, as often represented by those in authority, is a reliance on the values--White, Masculine, and European--of presence (finally trusting what some people see) and of logic. Throughout the play(s) and in the Organum the synonym for such values is "science."

The "truth" of the play(s) is also mediated by audience recognition and acceptance--i.e., by the authority--of familiar literary types: the shrew, the romanticized servant, the son-figure in conflict with the father-figure, and, in the first version, Galileo as the tricky "slave." These literary figures bring with them all sorts of ideological, especially patriarchal baggage. (10) Yet, again, in some versions the play questions these types, and suggests Galileo's complicity in creating them. I would claim that the post-Hiroshima versions of the text become more authoritative and propagandistic because they tend to deny, with greater rigor, competing versions of the Galileo story. They deny any socio-psychological motives in the Church/Galileo conflict. They reject a Galileo who does not or cannot radically criticize (for whatever reasons) the institutions of the Church, who had little choice whether to "martyr" himself. They reject the official version of the Church, as well as the cultural-hero version.

Although these later versions shift between admiration for and condemnation of Galileo (11), the frontier-crossing scene is dropped and his last, self-condemnatory speech is only slightly undercut by Andrea's remarks. This choice would seem to be authoritative, yet not every spectator has yielded to the authority. Another Brechtian text says: "In the California version . . . Galileo interrupts his pupil's hymns of praise to prove to him that his recantation had been a crime, and was not to be compensated by this work, important as it might be. In case anybody is interested, this is also the opinion of the playwright." (12) The question of authority is crucial in presenting or re-presenting Galileo, for while there seems to be a variety of ways to re-present the so-called reality of the historical figure, there also seems to be only one. I would like to approach this dilemma theoretically, first in terms of historical authority, and then in terms of textual (author)ity.

I. History as Narrative

Although Hayden White often seems buried in structural analyses, he does question, in the introduction to *Metahistory*, the very nature of historiography. He claims that every historical account is in some ways a narrative; "There does, in fact, appear to be an irreducible ideological component in every historical account of reality." (13) That is, "the facts do not speak for themselves, . . . the historian speaks for them, speaks on their behalf, and fashions the fragments of the past into a whole whose integrity is--in its representation--a purely discursive one." (14) Thus the observer has a role in creating history. Lyotard claims that human events are structured by language games--they are "the minimum relation required for society to exist: even before he is born, if only by virtue of the name he is given, the human child is already positioned as the referent in the story recounted by those around him." (15) Lyotard rejects the great meta-narratives of history, with their heroes the proletariat and the psychologically whole subject. Written history may thus be seen as an essentially revisionistic and pluralistic process, a narrativizing, whereby one orders and records, or represents his or her perceptions of reality. (16)

Historical drama parallels this type of historiography, as in Marlowe's (and Brecht's) Edward II and all of Shakespeare's Roman and chronicle plays. Brecht's own willingness to revise historical accounts acknowledges their unstable, shifting nature, and denies the absolute authority of the author's historical and artistic vision. His narrative staging of the life and work of Galileo takes a metonymic, episodic form, which lacks final closure, despite its apparently "regressive," mixed, or circular shape. The play(s) show a world in conflict, and "look back" (revise) to interpret and shape an event: Galileo's recantation. The play(s) do not always, however, invite questioning, although they cannot help eventually baring their own ideology of reason, science, logic, the father--their phallogocentrism. Like many Brechtian texts, Galileo explores the nature of Authority, demonstrates its dependency or relativity, provides it challengers, and manipulates those challengers either to "succeed" or "fail" according to a predetermined, authoritative metanarrative of history. Both written history and historical drama are constructions of reality; nevertheless, those with the power to do so construct them.

Thus, Brechtian vision is basically revisionary: history is subject to analysis, to re-writing, to re-presenting. Several critics have recorded the changes Brecht made in those versions of history he read, in light of the historical circumstances of Galileo's writing (1938/9) and its own re-writing. Although these rewritings are well-known and well-documented, their historiographical significance is often overlooked. Brecht subjected to revision not only previous versions of history, but his own as well, something critics must be willing to re-present. Some directors have been urging this move. Wolfgang Schwiedrzik suggests we might be best served by taking a hatchet to the plays (17); Sturm is less optimistic and points to the problem of pluralism and propaganda in Brecht's plays: "We no longer live in the simple relationship of contradictions, oppositions, which can be used for certain syntheses, where there is a main and a subordinate contradiction and so on. But we move much more in ambiguities, in ambivalences, in polyvalences." (18)

At the same time that it labors within an overarching metanarrative, a "scientific" method of history by which it judges, the dramatic structure of Galileo admits that history is pluralistic in at least one sense: its writing is changeable, rewritable--a task in which Galileo himself is involved. Episodic structure seems especially well designed to comment on itself, and Brechtian theory seems to suggest that as both history and its ideologues change, strategies for dealing with them--for re-presenting them--must also change. There remain some slight problems. Peter Stein argues that the texts would have to be reworked to "become a production which is for us today relevant and important and bears in mind all aspects of today's thought processes. That will, however, not be allowed by the copyright holders." (19) London's National Theatre production experienced a similar problem in staging and reworking the frontier scene. (20) If, in theory, no one owns history, there is no Authority for interpreting it: its recording is, as Barthes says, like any modern text, "l'image d'un pluriel triomphant, que ne vient appauvrir aucune contrainte de representation (d'imitation)" ("the image of a triumphant plural, which is not impoverished by any constraint of representation (imitation)" (21). Yet, one knows very well that some entities control the means of its production, especially academic and governmental institutions, not to mention copyright holders. The question of narrative authority raises the question of artistic authority: who controls it; who controls the means of a dramatic production? Author, Director, Theatre, Actor, Set Designer, Set Builders, Collaborators, Spectators? Each of these categories may be viewed as a social construct, as a "community," which will ignite various productions and representations of a play. Reader-response criticism would suggest that it is up to the reader/spectator to supply what the author/director does not, or perhaps even to collapse the two functions. Propaganda, however, usually subjugates the role of the reader/spectator to that of the propagandist, hierarchizing instead of dialogizing the two. Brechtian texts again offer contrasting views; in a list of Common tendencies for actors to guard against (which might also apply to the reader/spectator), "Failing to explore the playwright's intentions" is penultimate to "Subordinating one's own experience and observation to what one imagines those intentions to be." (22)

II. The Author-Function

Although Douglas Kellner claims that Brecht rejected "the notion of the creator as the solitary genius" in the learning plays, and wanted to "alter aesthetic production radically" (23)--with play as process--critics daily attempt to fix, penetrate, determine the meaning of the Author-function, in Foucauldian terms, of "Bertolt Brecht." These attempts will eventually fail, for any unicity in an author's voice may one day be untangled or will untangle itself. This rejection of the author function also tends to limit the function of the critic and to "activate" the usually passive role of the reader/spectator. If God and Man are dead, surely the Author and any tendencies to theologize him or her have died with them. The Brechtian texts disagree on these matters, as might be expected, contradicting each other in different contexts. Brecht is recorded as scorning the bourgeois notion of "intellectual propriety" when it pertained to someone else, and to have insisted on the very phrase when it pertained to him. (24) While Brechtian political aesthetics tended to move the emphasis from the seemingly fixed

and immutable text and its master-writer to the uneasy, uncertain, unpredictable, and multiple arena of response, the workshop and stage, Brecht the director reportedly controlled such productions and processes with a dictatorial if collectively influenced hand. Some records and photographs of rehearsals suggest a hierarchization and subjection of all parts to the director, who worked under the illusion of chaos and proliferating ideas, but who somehow controlled it all and "gave it life." In the later plays, Brecht often appeared to exhibit the same kind of theologizing of the Author/Director as did Shaw, to have the production and its politics depend less on the will and worth of any performer or worker (with notable exceptions, especially his wife) than those structural elements controlled by the Authors. (25)

Aside from these problems of "property" (propriety?), the notion of the author governs Western metaphors of the production of texts and obscures them as processes, which, Brechtian theory itself claims, could reveal their historicity. The notion of the author is itself historical, as traced by Foucault, and "is directly derived from the manner in which Christian tradition authenticated (or rejected) the texts at its disposal." (26) To continue to re-present the Brechtian text, we may wish, in theory, at least, to dance the (Barthesian) "death of the Author" and all its clinging metaphors, and acknowledge the possibility of a polyvocal Brechtian text. Falling back on the author-function allows society, the theatre, the critic, the propagandist to restrict the proliferation of meanings, an act of fixing which imitates the ancient and patriarchal attempt to restrict female sexuality and to rear only authentic children, with the sure knowledge of paternity or author. Such certainty is, of course, impossible; if even Telemachus acknowledges that it's a wise child that knows its own father, surely it's a wise text that can claim a singular, univocal, determinate author. The Brechtian text also seems complicit in denying its father and refusing its name, perhaps nowhere more so than when coupled with the name of Galileo, whose authorship demanded punishment (another stage in the history of the author-function) and on whose name the Brechtian text hangs a moral of individual and/or social failure--it remains ambiguous. The relationship of Brecht to his various texts and stagings, what he called his Experiments, is akin to that of Galileo with his texts and experiments, not personally, but generically, as artist to scientist. Brecht continued to posit this similarity between the two figures, from Galileo through the Messingkauf Dialogues to the Organum.

III. The Artist/Scientist

The theatre, through its chameleon nature and its always problematic relationship to texts and "reality," has forever been susceptible to revolution and radical criticism from within, to self-reflection, self-revelation, reform, shock, and advance. (27) As an institution, it has moved from being participatory to separatist and, in some few instances, back again. Critics in both the East and West have smugly exclaimed and/or loudly complained that Brecht's later plays, written in exile and using a compromised aesthetic, work in spite of such earlier theories as the collapse of spectator and players, the collectivization of the author function, and the establishment of a defamiliarizing "theatre of reason"--sometimes, in the West, salvaging

Brecht by making him a "humanist." While there may be worse labels, I believe the Brechtian text, especially Galileo, can still be re-presented in such a way that it questions Authority without permanently retreating into an Authority of its own. Perhaps Galileo now works (and therefore does not work) because Western theatre is for the most part still specularized, because audiences are asked to empathize with familiar literary "types," because the author/director/producer still controls productions, and because history, reason, and science are considered beyond ideology. The Life of Galileo may be re-presented as a contradictory account, an inwardly turning narrative for the role of the artist and of the scientist in the post-modern world: not merely to survive but to expose the repression of what is now called "desire," by using strategies which displace ideology and make raids on the totalizing constraints of systems. Galileo's relationship to his own texts, recopied furtively at night, can be read as the repression of desire; his release of those texts to Andrea can be read as the desire which threatens to destroy systems--both of the State and of capital. At the same time, the symbol of Western positivism, presence, and rationality--that extended phallos, the telescope--remains conspicuously present on stage, succeeding or failing to penetrate the ambiguities of the universe, depending on who controls it. Galileo's "theft" of the telescope can also be presented as a denial of the author that, when turned on the world, exposes, literally, the abuses of authority. To question the values represented by Galileo is not to remove them, but to place them such that their functions are defamiliarized and revealed, their relationships and their alternatives acknowledged.

Deleuze and Guattari claim that "art and science have a revolutionary potential, not because they have any special access to truth but because they induce "increasingly decoded and deterritorialized flows to circulate in the socius, flows that are perceptible to everyone." (28) Galileo has certainly been revolutionized in the twentieth century; we can no longer claim with him in the Dialogue that "the conclusions of natural science are true and necessary, and the judgement of man has nothing to do with them." (29) If texts such as the Life of Galileo are to continue to rebel and expose in a world of Relativity and Uncertainty, they must, as scientists (such as Evelyn Fox Keller) publicly have begun to do (30) be re-presented with an awareness of their own perspectivism. In different contexts, Galileo has already produced ironic results (31) --perhaps unwittingly. Much remains to be done to open the texts. Pluralism, ambiguity, questioning, examining, acknowledging the indeterminacy of meaning may be used as strategies for re-reading and re-presenting the Brechtian play, not to release the fantasy world of liberal authority, but to counteract presentations founded in oppressive ideologies, and as a means to becoming self-conscious about Authority. Peter Stein believes that Brechtian drama does not serve the crucial requisite that "Only through a total involvement and confusion and constant changing of viewpoints can life exist in the theatre." (32) I think it is possible for Galileo to examine the problem of (con)science in all its ambiguities, for it questions existing versions of history, including its own, and it seeks all shades of revolution--terrestrial, political, epistemological, re-presentational. One already revisionistic Brechtian text revises and judges another, acknowledging the instability and illusory nature of its own authority, inviting the reader/spectator to question, again and again and again, his or her own authorities for the acceptance and propagation of historical, artistic, and scientific truth.

Notes

1. Efim Etkind, "Brecht and the Soviet Theater," in Bertolt Brecht: Political Theory and Literary Practice, ed. Betty Nance Weber and Hubert Heinen (Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1980), p. 83.
2. See Theodor Adorno, "Commitment," trans. Francis McDonagh in Aesthetics and Politics (London: New Left Books, 1977), p. 178.
3. Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 81.
4. Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition, p. 82.
5. See Etkind, "Brecht and Soviet Theater," p. 84, on Brecht's formalist/futurist friend Sergei Tretiakov.
6. Frederic Jameson, The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972), p. 91.
7. Jameson, Prison-House, p. 58.
8. John Willett, ed. and trans., Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964, p. 196, no. 55.)
9. Bertolt Brecht, Life of Galileo, in Collected Plays, Vol. 5 (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), pp. 24, 27.
10. See Darko Suvin, "The Mirror and the Dynamo: On Brecht's Aesthetic Point of View," The Drama Review 12/1 (Fall 1967), 56-57. The article ends astutely, tracing one strain of Brecht's "wit" from "Lucretius and Aristophanes, Rabelais and Cervantes, Fielding and Swift" (67); the plays do not always escape inheriting the reactionary strains of these ancestors--certainly not their sexism.
11. Gerhard Szczesney, The Case against Bertolt Brecht: with Arguments Drawn from his Life of Galileo, trans. by Alexander Gode, New York: Ungar, 1969), pp. 8-63.
12. Bertolt Brecht, Collected Plays, Vol. 5, p. 230.
13. Hayden White, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), p. 21.

14. Hayden White, "Fictions of Factual Representation," in his Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 125.
15. Lyotard, Postmodern Condition, p. 15.
16. For an extended discussion and critique of this theory of historiography, see Michael Hobart, "The Paradox of Historical Constructionism," forthcoming in History and Theory.
17. See Wolfgang M. Schwiedrzick, "Brecht--Only with the Hatchet? How Contemporary Directors in West Germany View Brecht and his Stageability Today: Interviews." Communications from the International Brecht Society 13/1 (November 1983), 20-26.
18. Schwiedrink, "Brecht," pp. 23-24.
19. Schwiedrink, "Brecht," p. 24.
20. Jim Hiley, Theatre at Work: The Story of the National Theatre's Production of Brecht's 'Galileo' (London, Boston, and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 20-26, p. 22.
21. Roland Barthes, S/Z (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1970), pp. 11-12.
22. Brecht on Theatre, p. 245.
23. Douglas Kellner, "Brecht's Marxist Aesthetic: The Korsch Connection," in Weber and Heinen, eds., Bertolt Brecht: Political Theory, p. 33.
24. John Fuegi, Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, According to Plan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 49, 52, 60.
25. Thus Brecht on Peter Lorre in 1931: "To begin with, he is helping the playwright to make a point, though there is more to it than that of course," Brecht on Theatre, p. 55. For the perspective on Shaw, I am indebted to Amy Koritz, "Girl Watching: The Dance Writings of George Bernard Shaw," paper delivered at the Carolinas Symposium on British Studies, October, 1987. Ionesco's complaints about Brechtian acting also stress this point--the actors are pawns, not human agents (see Martin Esslin, The Theatre of the Absurd (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 113-114).
26. Michel Foucault, "What is an Author," in The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 110.
27. See Jonas Barish, The Antitheatrical Prejudice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).
28. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, trans. by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1983), p. 379.

29. Galileo Galilei, Dialogue on the Great World Systems, trans. by T. Salusbury, ed. by G. de Santillana (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 63.
30. See Evelyn Fox Keller, "Feminism and Science," in Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology, ed. Nannerl O. Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo, and Barbara C. Gelpi (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 113-126.
31. Several audiences have been transformed by the play, but not always to such a condemnation. The play "works" for Fritz Erpenbeck, a theatre critic who said of Galileo that despite all the epic theory, he cannot hate this man, "while, all the time, he is being spied upon by his stupid and shrewish daughter" (Aus dem Theaterleben, Berlin: Aufbau, 1959, cited in Fuegi, Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, p. 333). It also "worked" for Soviet audiences in 1966: "The reference to the smuggling out of the manuscript caused a real commotion in 1966 when I first saw the Taganka production (around the time of the Sinyavsky/Daniel arrests). It was deleted in later performances." (See Henry Glade, "Major Brecht Productions in the Soviet Union since 1957," in Weber and Heinen, Bertolt Brecht: Political Theory, p. 94). If one allows Galileo to condemn himself, might this statement not be ironic?
32. Schwiedrzik, "Brecht--Only with the Hatchet?," p. 22.

**Dramatic Text to Performance Text:
Brecht's The Exception & the Rule as an Indian Folk Form**

by Shehla Burney

On Everyday Theatre

The everyday, thousandfold, fameless

But vivid, earthy theatre fed by the daily human contact

Which takes place in the street. (Bertolt Brecht)

Banjara Hills: a suburb of Hyderabad, India.¹ Beneath the white-washed mansions of Banjara Hills with tall garden walls overlooking the lights of the Hussein Sagar Lake, huddle the *basthis*, the "huts unions", as they are called -- portions of land appropriated by squatters who have built make-shift shelters, crowded with families and the noise of children. Slowly, over the years, these huts have acquired status -- stability, concrete and wooden structures with TV antennae and numerous portable radios, a mosque with one minaret, and a temple (the most tenuous signs of territorial rights) and government- subsidized water taps and electricity.

All night long, on long summer evenings, the music and sounds of ritual, the songs of work and play, come pouring in through the scented jasmine creepers and the overhanging pink bougainvillae of my parents' garden walls. The drama of everyday life is played out here in its many contradictions. The Indian newspapers live out their gory reportage in these very *basthis*. The montage of everyday theatre -- traditional/modern, past/present, rich/poor, high/low -- jostles and jolts the mind with its dialectical oppositions. Here, where the aesthetics of norms/forms is constantly in flux, the dialectical montage of the Brechtian stage becomes a metaphor of the street.

These *basthi* folk -- gardeners, day-labourers, cooks, maids and domestic servants, street vendors and some *banjaras*, (gypsies) -- were my invited audience which sat on the back lawn of "Panjgul" and watched a free performance of Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule*, one October evening last year. The reason for this extravaganza was to look at how aesthetic form is mediated, translated, and socially constructed to create meaning by a working class audience in India; in other words, to see how dramatic text is translated into performance text for a particular audience through the intertextuality created by the juxtaposition of image/word, actor/audience, time/space etc. in performance.

In this brief paper, I can merely report on the content and conceptualization of the performance. The actual results of my study in the semiotics of theatre reception are still incomplete. However, the general perceptions that I received, seemed to suggest that Brechtian modernism -- montage and tableau -- often perceived as "intellectual" and "formalistic" by middle class audiences in the West, is familiarized/defamiliarized by the illiterate working class audiences in India because it deconstructs the contradictory, conflicting, patterns and forms of their life. Montage -- a modernistic fragmentation of reality and its replay -- multiplies the means of representation to punctuate, alienate, disjoint the dramatic text by creating intertextuality. Demythologizing, the peeling of

¹Hyderabad was an independent Muslim princely state in the heart of Hindu India, until the 1960s when it was annexed as part of the Republic of India. It was ruled by the Nizam of Hyderabad, believed to be the richest man in the world in the 'Fifties. Hyderabad was never under the British Raj. Like the rest of Indian society, Hyderabad is both feudal and modern, riddled with social, cultural and economic contradictions.

masks occurs when the hidden structures encoded in the social construction of forms are revealed in their essential contradictoriness.

Producing Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule* in Hindustani translation, (from my own script fashioned after the IPTA, Bombay, and the *Rangadhara* scripts) in the form of an Indian folk *nataka*, with a mixture of *Kathakali*, *Katha* and *Nautanki* styles, was indeed a rewarding experience. The spirit of festivity at the performance, the ritual of spectacle reception, the rapped attention, the eagerness to respond to my questions on the tape-recorder, all seemed to suggest that it was a "good night out".

John McGrath, in *A Good Night Out*, makes a strong case for a working class popular theatre which speaks a "language of theatre" that is understood by a particular audience. McGrath suggests that the political and social values of a play cannot be the same for one audience as they are for another. The conventions of entertainment and theatre-making, the elements of form, are signifiers of class content. The aesthetic form, the time and place of performance, the price of tickets, the general ambience of the theatre event, influence either the inclusion or the exclusion of certain classes of audience, such as the working class. As he puts it: "The play itself can completely change its meaning, given the wrong theatre or the wrong publicity, or even the wrong ticket prices".²

In India, where the divisions of class/caste, rich/poor are predominant and pervasive, the working class is locked out of the theatre halls of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois theatre tradition in India is vastly influenced by Western, especially, British forms that are imported, translated, and imbibed. This theatre is meant for the educated audiences, in other words, for the minority. Thus, Brechtian productions which are produced by the few *avant garde* little theatres, or government subsidized National schools, or major Left oriented theatres in India, such as the Indian Peoples' Theatre Association (IPTA), do not reach the working class audience.

Working class culture in India is institutionalized -- it has its own history, its own values and its own ritual of entertainment. Despite the built-in inequalities of gender and class which have divided the lives of men and women into separate compartments in India, the men and women of the labour class have historically worked together, in the fields or on the construction sites or the factories, and have joined in communal celebrations in the evenings. Distinct from the conservatism of the aristocratic upper class culture, the cautious business-mindedness of the industrialist class, and the nondescript timidity of the middle classes, the working class culture is marked by cultural practices that are ostentatious, festive and full of colour -- masks, ritual, song and dance, and joint participation by both men and women.

The culture of the *basthis* is firmly entrenched as a set of aesthetic forms, which are part of the daily art of living. There is the drumming on festival nights, the sing-song of marriage ceremonies that go on for days, the vigils on auspicious full-moon nights, the Hindu chants, the Koranic recitations over the loud-speaker from the mosque during *Ramadan*, the live wake-up alarms of the minstrels on fast days, the thumping sounds of the *Gorkha* in erstwhile British uniform, the self-appointed watchman of the community who makes his rounds on the silent, winding roads and calls for donations from the bungalows at the end of the month. The noisy quarrels on "water days", the gossip sessions under the tree, the screams of ragged children, the perilous games of

²See John McGrath, *A Good Night Out/ Popular Theatre: Audience, Culture and Form*, Eyre Methuen, London, 1981, pp.6-7.

street urchins, the poetic *gazals* sung by the half-drunk chauffeur as he returns home late at night on his bike, the fresh vegetable vendor's cry, and the dance of *banjara* (gypsies) at *Holi*, the festival of harvest -- are all the usual sounds and signs of the *basthi* everyday theatre. The *basthi* never sleeps.

The Ganesh Chatur festival is celebrated for ten days with the mask of the Elephant god set up on a chariot or platform in every community. Dramatic performances and *puja* are performed for this deity on all the days of the festival, reminiscent of the medieval miracle plays. The Muslims have their own story-telling sessions during *Moharram*, the month of mourning for the Prophet's martyred sons. This is celebrated on a large scale -- effigies are constructed on ornate platforms, and the story of the *Karbala* is recited through verse, music and chanting. On the final day, the effigies are floated on the Lake in a colourful ceremony. Every *basthi* takes pride in its dramatic processions and iconic art. There is a whole tradition of an actor/audience dialectic and participatory drama in Indian Sanskrit aesthetics that is alive and well in folk forms today.

Spectacle reception in India, especially by the lower classes, is almost a communal ritual: people are used to watching jatra (festival) plays, popular Hindi films, street circus acts, and story-telling in groups. To reach these *basthis* where the masses actually live, it is imperative that the language of theatre incorporate the signs and symbols encoded in the everyday forms and cultural practices of the people. To reach this audience, the proscenium stage in posh auditoria has to be replaced (at least some of the time) by the village square, the market or the street or an open space that is also the venue for *janata nataka* (folk theatre) and other local forms of entertainment. If theatre is to be a place of recognition, of evaluation, of enjoyment, it cannot but exploit the language of theatre of the spectators.

Culture and form are an integral part of how audiences make meaning. Every audience brings with it its own ways of seeing, its indigenous symbology and cultural codes, its own interpretative processes such as perception, association, memory, and experience.³ As these associations, memories and experiences pass through the minds and eyes of a particular audience, they give theatre a social, historical and personal context and meaning. Since social structures are encoded and deeply entrenched in the way people see, different audiences from different cultures make meaning differently. As John Berger says, "Every image embodies a way of seeing".⁴

Cultural forms, then, can be interpreted only in the social context of the subjectivity of the audience. What Raymond Williams calls "complex seeing"⁵ is facilitated when indigenous folk forms are used which are then defamiliarized through the Brechtian aesthetics. The I/You, actor/spectator dialectics of the theatre launches private thoughts and ideas into a public world. For theatre is a social event.

Each performance is different, evanescent and difficult to record. There was magic in the happening at Banjara Hills which only my *basthi* audience could understand -- a sense of communal kinship in the sharing of an event that spoke to them

³See recent research in ethnosemiotics.

⁴John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, BBC and Penguin Books, London, 1972.

⁵*Drama from Ibsen to Brecht*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1968, p. 283.

through their particular form and tongue. There was also an eagerness on the part, especially of the women, children and the old men to have their experience recorded, retold, reaffirmed. There was a strong need to narrate the story, to relive it by retelling, re-playing, re-presenting it through other stories that they knew. The women and children talked animatedly about the play at length. The older men, who perceived themselves as elder statesmen of the community, felt a sense of moral obligation to stay behind and respond to the questionnaire, to have the final word, as it were. Each opinion was considered valid and important by the others.

While the cultural form was generally familiar to the audience as a spectacle, a *nataka*, a happening, the montage of mixed genres -- North Indian/South Indian, Hindu/Moslem, modern/traditional (Eastern/Western), semi-classical/folk -- totally defamiliarized the content as well as the form, adding an element of rupture, interruption, estrangement. The presence of some German guests, one of them being Mr. W. Meissner, Director of the Max Mueller Bhavan (Goethe Institute) of Hyderabad, strangely enough, also worked as an alienation effect.

The Exception and the Rule was directed by a leading local professional director, Bhaskar Shewalkar, and acted by a young amateur theatre group called *Rangadhara*. The *lehrstuck* was selected because of its marriage of form/content, its conciseness, ritual stylization, and pedagogical framework, reminiscent of the didactic plays of the Hindu festivals. The audience sat on the grass on cotton "dhurries" around the acting space. The vocalist and the musicians, playing Indian folk instruments -- the harmonium, the flute, and the tabla (drums) -- sat on one side facing the audience, as is common in both Indian classical and folk performances, where the reciters recite the words to the music, which is enacted through a language of gestures (*mudras*) by the *Kathakali* or *Kathak* dancer or player.

In opposition to the ornate "costumed players" of the Indian stage, the musicians and most of the actors wore ordinary Indian dress -- guru shirts and white trousers. The one exception was the Judge, who wore a colourful and rich *Kathakali* costume with a black head-gear proclaiming the signs "*Nyaya/Anyaya*" (Justice/Injustice) in Hindi script. He also wore a judge's wig and black cloak. The eagle-nosed half-mask, reminiscent of the tradition of bird-masks in Indian Marathi theatre, was painted with an exaggerated red eye on the side of the tilted *Anyaya*. The only other character to wear a half-mask in the production was the Merchant who also wore a gold-embroidered vest and a turban, signifying his rank and position. When the *basthi* folk were asked why the Judge and the merchant wore masks, the responses ranged from "Because they are double-faced" (literal translation) to "because evil is always masked", to "because they are guilty and should be ashamed of themselves". One old woman, the mother of one of the maids in our house, was very angry, very indignant: "There is no justice for the widow", she said, "there was no one to speak for the widow. She was all alone. Isn't this what always happens?"

The children all thought that the Coolie was "a good guy": "He had no guile in his heart. He was killed because he was exploited and poor". Asked if they knew any other characters in Indian mythology who were masked, many of the spectators remembered Hanuman and Ravana, the evil characters from the Sanskrit epic, *Ramayana*, which they had seen at the Ganesh festivals and also watched as a popular serial on television. However, the most enjoyable/educational feature for the audience were the songs, which were composed by Vijay and Javed Akhtar. One vendor, who sells *idli* (hot snacks) to the *basthi*, responded: "The songs helped to make us think, to stop us from crying and feeling sorry". Another felt that "the songs were full of spirit and told you what to do".

The play opened with a group song in the form of the *Katha* (story-telling) ritual in which the words are both articulated as well as sung by the other players as variations on a theme:

Ek Katha sunate hain, hum apko katha sunate hain
(A story we tell you, we tell you a story)

The Indian dance-drama tradition was employed as a means of depicting "the story of a journey". The journey itself was represented through stylized dance movement, in the form of the basic *Kathak* dance-steps, *Dha dha dhin dha*. In contrast to the North Indian form of the *Katha*, the Judge used a distinctively South Indian style of whirling dance movement from the *Katakali* to make an entrance. This juxtaposition of forms and style created a disjuncture, a knot in the text. The Judge also used a high-flown Sanskritized language which clashed with his comic, eagle-like gestures, mask and high-pitched tone. The court scene received tense attention.

To create rupture, all the songs were performed in a *mixture* of folk styles -- the "kawali", the semi-classical solo, the popular folk song, et al. The song of the courts was presented in the style of the "kawali", a popular Moslem style of musical "debate", a dialogue between two opposing parties or several singers. The lines and stanzas are improvised by the chorus after the lead singer has rendered them, so as to reinforce the meaning of the words by using alternative styles and pitch. The "kawali" is considered a semi-classical style in which the audience traditionally participates either by repeating the lines or by exclamations of praise and enjoyment. The *kawali*, is a form that creates intertextuality because of improvisation, echoing, cacophony, articulation, and participation by both players and spectators.

On the other hand, the Merchant's song was performed in the form of a fun "tamasha", in the Marathi comic style with a mock folk dance in which the Merchant used his staff as gesture.

Harkat me hai barkat (In agility there is profit/glory)
Keh gai Lala Ghan Sham (Says Lala Ghan Sham)
Ram kaho bhai Hari Ram (Say "Ram Ram, Hari Ram")

The song was used as *gestus*, as ostention of wealth and capitalist greed typifying the Indian business magnates who always call on "Ram" and religion to justify their actions. This was mediated by the audience because of political innuendo and newspaper scandals of corruption that always filter down to the ordinary people because of their inordinate interest in politics. The outsider is always surprised by the sophisticated knowledge of the political process by illiterate people in the largest democracy in the world. The song was rendered as a victory song of the merchant but with its ironic and comic underside. The dance style used was also suggestive of the Rajasthan horse folk dance.

The Coolie's song was performed in the playback style of the stylized Indian cinema, minus the melodrama. While the singer sang it as a solo in accompaniment with the flute, the Coolie used a language of gestures to interpret the words. (The Indian dance styles of *Kathak* and *Bharatanatyam* possess a stylized aesthetic code of gestures, hand movements and glances used as signifiers.) The song about "Durgapur" (Urga), about the Coolie's wife and child, became instantly popular. I heard it being sung over and over again by the "whitewash men" (the painters) who were painting our neighbour's house all week and by the children of the *basthi*.

The song of the crossing of the River was rendered in a traditional *raga* by the handsome solo singer, Sri Krishna, who walked around the stage with his mike, indexing the difference and conflict between the two men, while the Coolie and the Merchant formed a tableau. The disjuncture was created by the classical rendering of the song and its modernistic representation: the River Mir was represented by three young actors in blue guru shirts who kneeled and swayed signs painted with stormy waves.

The form, to my *basthi* audience, was not Brechtian, but indigenous, accessible and local. Yet it was defamiliarized. One of the characteristics of working class culture, perhaps, is that it defines itself locally rather than nationally and continues to do so despite the standardization of all culture attempted by the media. The language used was neither Hindi nor Urdu -- but Hindustani, a general unison of both languages which is the actual spoken language of the common people. However, the stylization of the diction created pungency, punctuation, "punctum", in Roland Barthes' phrase.

It seems that an East/West aesthetics has still not been worked out. The plays of Brecht provide ample space to do just that.

(Editor's note: The author of this paper, Shehla Burney, is a graduate student in the Curriculum Department of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.)

BRECHT AND THE NEW INVENTION

Bernardo Baycroft

While there is much talk of the death of Brecht in many places, he is alive and well in Latin America and so is the theatre. The Latin American New Theatre, which had much in common with movements in the US. in the 1960s, continues on stronger than ever, while in the U.S. the movements of the 60s have faded. In Colombia, the vanguard of the New Theatre movement, the New Theatre has gained such ground that it has moved from the upstart, renegade position it began with in the 60s to become *the* national theatre today. This does not mean that theatre workers have become stars and can live comfortably from salaries - not in the least. It means, rather, that the theatre has established a powerful critical voice that has gained the respect of the country, although simultaneously it has received the threats of right-wing death squads. The work of the theatre continues on in the daily grind of small, underfunded groups, while the names of many of the most accomplished actors and directors have appeared on published death lists and are fearing for their lives at this moment.

Brecht is a vital force in the Colombian theatre today, but in the more established groups you will never see any of Brecht's plays being performed. This is because the objective is not to imitate or reproduce Brecht, but rather to use Brecht's theory to invent a new theory and with this a new dramaturgy in Latin America. In this sense the New Theatre movement is part of a larger Latin American postmodernist project that is inventing and reinventing a culture for the New World using elements from

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universal art as a point of departure. As watchers of this new activity, what interests us is not the way Brecht, or Aristotle, or Charlie Chaplin or Fassbinder influences the Latin American movement, but rather the new invention that emerges and that even today is creating a reverse influence on the outside world.

Brecht is useful because he is so critically conscious of the theatrical activity and because he established a theory of theatre. The New Theatre shares with Brecht this dedication to theory. The movement is well-known for the intense critical dialogue among observers, directors and actors that accompanies it at all times. If we interpret theory broadly to include this characteristic activity, we can see how it has been a source of stability for the movement over its three decades of existence. Just as importantly, theory develops from and also nourishes an original dramaturgy.

As an example, Santiago García, Director of La Candelaria, sees in studying Brecht the possibility of an original dramaturgy: "If we read carefully this question of the distancing effect in Brecht, we see the possibility of creating our own dramaturgy, one that is original, not a copy and not a reproduction of other models." And García concludes: "What is fundamental is the invention of the new work: being very Brechtian means never staging the works of Brecht."¹ The operative words here are "new invention" or elaboration, since the New Theatre has elaborated upon Brecht and gone significantly beyond his theories in innumerable instances to create its "new inventions".

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In my research I've been looking at the question of how the contemporary Latin American theatre has elaborated dramaturgical strategies to create the new invention of theatre and a new voice for Latin America, one that is richer in ambiguity and connotation. It's especially compelling to look at the kinds of strategies that have been employed in the recent period to overcome some of the problems of the 1960s, when the theatre was frequently dominated by a discourse of direct reference to an historical event or situation, to the detriment of other elements such as character and action. This situation-privileged theatre, or what we may call the historical-referential theatre, constructed a kind of Latin American epic around important historical moments such as the resistance to conquest, the wars of independence, and in Colombia, the banana workers strike of 1928 and the period of violence and civil war of the 1950s.

Speaking of one of these situation-privileged plays that he had done in the 60s, Director Santiago García was candid about what he called the "unacceptable immediatism" of the play, but he nonetheless defended the freshness and spontaneity of this kind of work. The work is called *We the Comuneros* (*Nosotros los Comunes*, 1972²) which deals with a rebellion of middle-class farmers in Colombia in 1781 that anticipated the war of independence. Quoting García: "*Los Comunes* is a "placard" (*pancarta*) play. The good guys win and the bad guys lose and the good kick the bad off the stage and the revolution wins. This is a kind of political Jesuit theatre, very obvious, but in any case this obviousness has a certain fascination. At the time we did the play it suffered from an unacceptable immediatism, but seen at a distance those scenes take on a large aesthetic dimension because of their freshness."³

With the generative nucleus of the play being dominated by situation, it became necessary to elaborate new strategies to devise a more indirect and ambiguous referential system, one which would add dimension to both character and action. I will mention one such strategy designed to accomplish this end: the concept of narrative interruption.

For this discussion I will refer to the 1982 play *The Dialogue of a Rogue* (*Diálogo del rebusque*)⁴ by the group La Candelaria of Colombia.

The Dialogue of a Rogue is an original text by Santiago García, based on *El buscón* and other works of Francisco de Quevedo. The story is the life of the rogue Pablos seen as a double narration done by himself and by a series of characters that constantly interrupt him. At the opening of the play, Pablos is condemned to hell but takes advantage of a rebellion among the devils and escapes, arriving in the theatre. Appealing directly to the public to give him a chance and be his witness, he attempts to narrate his life story, but his narrative is confronted and interrupted by one character after another. Quevedo, who is in hell for writing immoral literature, has repented of his creation of Pablos, and appears as a character in the play to protest Pablos' autobiography. Pablos' plea to return to life to tell his story is granted by the devils on the condition that one of them, Cirilo, accompany him to ensure that he not exaggerate. Pablos does exaggerate, making his life sound more respectable than it was, but again and again his narration is interrupted with counter-narrations that contradict his story and lead him through beatings, robberings and other misadventures. Pablos, the son of a witch and a thief, attempts to reenact his life in this

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second chance and move up the social ladder. He experiences a momentary rise and then a crashing defeat when his pretensions to marry above his station are found out and repaid by a crippling beating. He undergoes further transformations, passing from beggar to ruffian, refusing always to return to hell on the ambiguous grounds that he must live "to understand." In the final scene a politically progressive revolution has triumphed in hell, granting the devils a social system with "human," rights, including sexual reproduction. The new liberated government of devils re-sentences Quevedo, this time for having repented of his writings, which are now in favor and are ordered published in popular editions. Pablos is allowed to live out his life so that he may learn by it.

Narrative Interruption: Celebrating the Knots

In the opening passage of the play we see that Pablos is interrupted as soon as he begins to speak. The cut in Pablos' narration before he has been able to say anything doesn't seem significant, but it is, since it is the first of a barrage of significant interruptions from a series of strange encounters.

Indeed, elaboration of dramaturgical strategy around the technique of the *interruptus* or narrative interruption, an element of the principle of aesthetic distance, is the fundamental structural axis of the play and a major contribution by García to the elaboration of the fabula, or action, in the contemporary theatre.

The notion of separation and interruption of narrative elements is also a

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cornerstone of Brecht's theory. In his notes to *Mahagonny*, Brecht speaks of the "radical separation of elements" in epic opera (an idea opposed to Wagner's practice):

When the epic theatre's methods begin to penetrate the opera the first result is a radical separation of the elements. The great struggle for supremacy between words, music and production... can simply be by-passed by radically separating the elements.⁵

The basic notion of separation of elements above applies equally to the episodic structure of the epic theatre:

As we cannot invite the audience to fling itself into the story as if it were a river and let itself be carried vaguely hither and thither, the individual episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed. The episodes must not succeed one another undistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgement..⁶

Brecht's *interruptus* is well-known and had been used in Latin America previously. For example, the surprising, intentionally unnatural appearance of the chorus, with the bodies of the actors artistically posed, had been a favorite technique of García's for some time.

In the present play, García presents a new elaboration of the *interruptus*, developing the idea of interruption to the point where it becomes not

merely integrated into the action, as Brecht expoused, but the paramount structural element of the action, springing from the action and the characters themselves. García gives this account of the new role of the *interruptus* :

...we began with the script that I had proposed, to see the necessity that don Pablos would not narrate his story chronologically, but rather that it be a story that could have what Brecht proposes for the meditation of the audience, some *interruptus*; that is, the story begins, but it is interrupted; those interruptions provide not only the structural requirement that the theatre needs, but also the space the public needs to meditate about what it is about to see. Generally in Brecht these *interruptus* were done with songs, with freezing the action, with placards, with signs, with a lot of different things. Here what we did to achieve these *interruptus* was to make them be produced by the work itself, by the characters of the work themselves. . .⁷

García explains how as they worked with the *interruptus* in improvisations, they gradually made the interruptions more important than the original plot.

It is this *interruptus* that provides the basic structural tension of *Dialogue of a Rogue* and allows the action to flow from characters who have real complications, contradictions and excentricities. As Pablos attempts to tell his life story and to live it again, his narration is interrupted as above, first by Quevedo, who claims that as his own

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invention which he has repented of, he doesn't want Pablos to narrate anything. Next Pablos is interrupted by the Chief Devil, then Cirilo, his companion devil, for beginning too loudly. As Pablos begins to describe his parents in a favorable way, a henchman immediately appears to interrupt again, destroying Pablos' depiction by explaining how he recently executed Pablos' father for thievery. In this way we begin to see how the narration by the main character enters into contradiction with the narration by characters around him, and in this intentionally jerky, disjointed fashion which celebrates the "knots" in the narrative rather than the narrative itself--the story emerges.

The story is a metaphor of the attitudes and consciousness of deceit, madness, and false appearances adopted by a people trapped in the moral deterioration of the crumbling Spanish empire. On the road to the court, for example, Pablos is again interrupted by a kind of madman pushing a cart full of odds and ends and some huge maps, who for fourteen years has been trying to get an audience with the king to explain how to reorganize the empire. This figure, the Arbitrator, is dressed in rags and yet speaks in a style that seems to be educated and informed:

Arbitrator

Well then! Don't you know of the great disasters that pummel the kingdom? Do you not know by chance of the frightening events that that are bringing down our empire from all sides?

Pablos' description of the state of affairs of the Spanish empire is a reflection of the resigned, status quo position, which is bleak enough:

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Pablos

Well, we know about the wars and the hunger and about the many dead, and about those that have been banished, jailed, and have disappeared... but these are problems that have been around for so long that there is nothing new except the appearance of another tax to further oppress the poor.

The Arbitrator quickly replies that his attitude is quite different, that he is worried about the great problems of the century.

Arbitrator

I see from what you say that you are the lowest kind of spirits and are not like me, concerned about the great problems of the century. May God live!

The Arbitrator then prepares to offer his own "high-minded" plans for the problems of the empire:

Arbitrator

I have the solution for everything here in these maps and writings. From what I see, Sir, you are educated and so I will be able to explain to you how the Empire can be saved. You know how our troupes in Flanders and in Italy, the war with the Turks has cost more than the very Papal blessings, Algeria, etc. and etc. Just look. . .

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At this point the man rolls out a huge tattered map on the ground. It shows an empire in shambles with problem areas everywhere:

This is just my work to save Ostende. As you can see the whole difficulty is around this sea; so I would order that it be sucked up with sponges and taken out of there.

Pablos and Cirilo, who had been paying close attention, burst into laughter upon hearing that the man wants to suck up the sea with sponges. But Pablos, whose quest is to understand life in his second chance at it, goes alone with the Arbitrator with a reasonable reply:

Pablos

But you should realize that once you have sucked up the water the ocean will fill it in again.

Arbitrator

The ocean will do no such thing, because I have already thought about that very well and I have an invention here that will sink twelve states over in this region.

Pablos

Who could have imagined such an invention!⁸

At this point the contradiction of the two discourses cannot be resolved and the encounter ends. Nonetheless, in this world of deceitful appearances only this kind of marginalized madman reveals the truth. If

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we look at his plan to soak up the sea on one side and sink twelve states on another so that the sea won't rush in again, we see that his solution is mad--but in reality only a miracle of this kind could save the empire at this point. But the Arbitrator's discourse is sane and reasonable on another level. Unlike Pablos' relativistic assessment, his is a *gestus* of the historical moment, realistically showing an empire in disarray and in imminent danger of collapse, with leaks and holes everywhere, and only sinking more as attempts are made to repair it.

As we see, the interruptions to Pablos' narrative *are* his narrative. They define and create him, negating his optimistic story with the reality of the decay and deceit of the empire. The constant interruptions change Pablos' personal story into a vast, epic narration. Ironically, we learn nothing of him, but we are presented instead with the social history of an age, with striking parallels to present-day Latin America. Latin America receives no direct reference in this play, but the system of indirect reference makes it unnecessary. Each criticism of class, duplicity and social decay implies that it is really the Latin American situation that is to be accounted for, just as Nazi Germany was often the real theme of Brecht's apparently exotic landscapes. The never-explicit references to the Latin American situation add dimension to each line and gesture of the play, eclipsing the gulf in space and time to the Spain of Quevedo.

The above, then, is an example of the principle of narrative interruption, showing how Brecht is used as a starting point for the creation of new inventions and new applications of aesthetic distance for a Latin American theatre.

NOTES

1. Santiago García, "Seminario sobre el distanciamiento," Taller Permanente, Corporación Colombiana de Teatro 22 June 1983. (All translations are mine).
2. Published in *Cinco obras de creación colectiva*. Teatro La Candelaria. Editorial Colombia Nueva, Bogotá, 1986.
3. Personal interview. 4 July 1983.
4. Santiago García, *Diálogo del rebusque*. MS (Teatro La Candelaria, 1982).
5. Bertolt Brecht, "The Modern Theatre Is the Epic Theatre," in *Brecht on Theatre*, 37.
6. _____, "A Short Organon for the Theatre," in *Brecht on Theatre*, 201.
7. Personal interview. 4 July 1983.
8. Santiago García, *Diálogo del rebusque*. MS.

PRODUCTION REPORTS

The Life of Galileo

at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts,
Portland, Oregon USA, April 1-17, 1988
THE NEW ROSE THEATRE, directed by Heinz-Uwe Haus

Laureen Nussbaum,
Portland State University

At this point, nearly half way through its running time, the remaining ten shows of The Life of Galileo are sold out. Whence this enthusiasm for the problems the 17th century Italian scientist had with the authorities of his time? What is happening, particularly since the local theater critic in the one and only Portland daily, The Oregonian, warned after opening night that "the style is dry, a frequent problem with Brecht," who leads the theatergoer "into the Theater of Virtue: that dangerous metaphorical space in which audiences strain to stay alert because they know the play is good for them?" Are Oregonians particularly susceptible to morality plays?

There are some obvious reasons for the resounding success of the present production. It is the New Rose Theatre's first in the Dolores Winningstad Theatre of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, a new facility which they will share in the future with several other local companies. To mark the occasion, they invited as guest director GDR Brecht expert Heinz-Uwe Haus, whose dynamic approach to theater work had deeply impressed his Portland audiences when he was a visitor at Portland State University almost two years ago. For Haus, who has been a guest director in several North American universities, the production with the budding New Rose ensemble is his first experience with a professional theater on this continent. The connection between town and gown was from the outset a given, and grants from the Metropolitan Arts Commission and the Oregon Committee for the Humanities made a city-wide Galileo project possible (see the program listing following this review).

In mid-January, Haus began workshops aimed at exploring Brechtian concepts with the actors, a mixed group of professionals and semi-professionals. An exhibition of posters at Portland State University in honor of the 90th anniversary of the playwright's birth followed. Then a series of symposia took place, involving theater practitioners and scholars from several disciplines and from over a half dozen different institutions. They focused on the historical Galileo and his science, on the social and political implications of his writings, on the social responsibility of the scientist, on Brecht's Galileo play and the issues it raises, and, finally, on the performance in critical perspective. Concurrently, for a period of three months, the Planetarium of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry has been showing the sky the way Galileo observed it through his telescope over 370 years ago. All of these activities served to deepen the insights of the actors and to broaden their scope. Slowly but surely, mostly thanks to Heinz-Uwe Haus' impressive know-how, indomitable energy and charm, they attracted public and media attention. So, when opening night came around, anticipation was high.

From audience reactions it is clear that expectations were in most cases even surpassed.

The Dolores Winningstad Theater is an Elizabethan theater space which seats around 360 people. Haus had the thrust stage extended into the parquet and a raised platform added, extending from the first gallery. Both extensions increased the moving and grouping space. Moreover, the former brings the stage action right into the auditorium while the latter, with sets of steps on either side from the higher to the lower level add a great deal of flexibility. The stage and steps are made of unfinished wood, and the director stresses the fact that he is not presenting a self-contained historical case in a historical setting but rather a very open case of the intricate relationship between power and knowledge, which belongs as much to our time as to Galileo's. In contrast to the stark stage and the few but well-chosen stage props, Susan Bonde's costumes--particularly for the clergy, the Venetian city fathers, the Florentine court and the astronomers --are lush as if to invite the actors to play their parts with gusto. These costumes make for superb groupings which, however, are not only aesthetically pleasing. Since Haus avoids all unmotivated movements, social relationships are expressed by the way he places the groups, e.g., the Doge and the Venetian senators on the higher level and Galileo and his friend Sagredo on the lower, a visual image that is repeated when the Florentine court visits Galileo's house.

The present production is based on a translation of the final version of Galileo by Howard Brenton, which was first produced at the National Theatre in London in 1980. Haus cut Brenton's text basically in accordance with the structure of the original Danish script. He omits the "Plague" scene, the scene at the "Medici Palace" and the "Border Crossing" as well as several minor passages in the remaining twelve scenes. Even so, the performance lasts exactly three hours, for the director wants his actors to take the time to establish the gestus of each sub-scene. The joy of awakening to a new age in the first scene, then the painful realization that even in the new era the milk bill will have to be paid, the triumphant demonstration of how the changed position of the sun vis-à-vis the earth can be described by having the earth move, the annoying disturbance caused by unwanted visitors and the new vistas which a convex and a concave lens, placed at a proper distance, can open concerning both the milk bill and the Milky Way. Haus gives his actors the time to play out each gestus but he insists on clean breaks between them and thus avoids a naturalistic approach, which would blur the meaning of each sub-scene. The justification of the Church's position as voiced first by a humble peasant's son in the "Little Monk" scene and later by the Cardinal Inquisitor in the "Pope" scene is given proper weight. In both cases, Haus succeeds in bringing out the actors' full potential. In "Cardinal Bellarmine's House in Rome," the depravity of certain Church officials is stressed; the cardinals are played as clever company men.

When Manfred Wekwerth produced The Life of Galileo with the Berliner Ensemble in 1978, he used the masks of the "Carnival" scene at the beginning and end of the play, and had the ballad singer of that scene act as the narrator in order to provide a plebeian perspective on the whole play. Haus extends this approach by using part of the "Carnival" scene as a Prologue and by closing with the carnival folks, who, having watched Galileo's final exchange with Andrea from the back of the stage, come forward and, taking off their masks, sing the chorale of the (abbreviated) final scene as an

Epilogue. This framing of the play and the fact that the lively "Carnival" scene itself, with the actors dashing in from the upper gallery, comes just before the intermission, draws the audience into a community in motion and underscores the fact that the conflicts dealt with on the stage concern each and all of us.

Throughout this production, Haus uses Hanns Eisler's original score as transcribed, modified and enriched by Barbara Bernstein for her small band of musician-actors, who can be heard from behind their music stands on the first gallery only seconds after they were seen on stage. The stanzas which announce the next scene are mostly sung from the corners of the first gallery, and here as well as in the scene changes, which happen before the audience's eyes, the actors (of whom several play more than one role) move with split second speed and precision, which adds greatly to the flair of the show. Haus built on the versatility of his actors and on the American vaudeville tradition to balance the serious subject matter of the play. A good example of the director's careful counterbalancing is the end of the "Pope" scene. While the acolytes robe the Pope, they function as perfect and impervious automatons, who fulfill their tasks mechanically upon each signal of a handbell. Once they have been instrumental in changing the fairly enlightened man Barberini into the top functionary of the Church militant, a last bell signal releases the acolytes, who subsequently stomp up the steps, relieved to be themselves again.

Michael Griggs, the artistic director of The New Rose Theatre, had asked Shabaka from the San Francisco Mime Troupe to play Galileo, a most felicitous choice. Shabaka's mimetic talent, sonorous voice and tremendous acting skill is the hub of the production. On top of his demanding role, he serves as the announcer for most of the scenes, an additional epic element in this production, which prevents the audience from over-identifying with the Galileo figure. But also within the scenes, the callous way in which the great man treats his housekeeper and (even more so) his daughter, is played with Brecht's "not . . . but" clearly in mind. After the recantation and in the last scene with Andrea, Haus and Shabaka take pains to make Galileo neither a villain nor a hero. When Shabaka's Galileo emerges from the dungeon of the Inquisition, he notices how disappointed and disgusted his students are with him, whereupon his weary face lights up with a faint smile of approval. In the last scene, Shabaka reacts to Andrea's radical "all or nothing" attitude and to the young man's need to make once again a hero out of his old teacher, by portraying a Galileo who is pondering rather than ponderous. This open-ended final scene stimulates the audience to think about the attitudes of scientists and about the dangers of scientific discoveries in the hands of the mighty. It brings home the need to be informed and involved. For as Dürrenmatt says in the "21 Theses" at the end of his Physicists, "the subject matter of physics is a matter for physicists; its implications concern us all. What concerns us all, only all of us can solve."

How have the audiences reacted so far? In some performances they appeared more involved than in others, depending on age and temperament. I spoke to dozens of people after a number of different shows. They all agreed that it is a superb and crisp production, although for several Eisler's demanding music drowned out the words of some stanzas sung between the scenes. Many commented enthusiastically on the flair and the timing and on

the colorful spectacle. Others remarked that they never knew that the New Rose actors were so versatile and that their range of performance skills must have grown under Heinz-Uwe Haus' directorship.

In an audience discussion with the actors, the directors, and the dramaturg after a matinée performance, it was clear that the play had prompted all kinds of serious reflections about science and the scientists of our time. There was also a question about the paragraph from the Discorsi which Brecht included at the end of the "Recantation" scene, which in the present production is written on a large piece of cloth and lowered from the flies, while loudspeakers proclaim Galileo's recantation in three different languages. Why this text about the absence of simple proportionality in nature, which stresses the fact that "smaller animals are comparatively stronger than larger ones . . . (and) small plants, too, stand up better"? The paragraph ends with the assertion: "The common assumption that large and small machines are equally durable is apparently erroneous." On the premise that Brecht picked this text for his first version of Galileo in Denmark in 1938, I venture that he interpreted it as a variation on the main theme of his "Legend of the Origin of the Book 'Tao-Te-Ching' on Lao-Tsu's Road to Exile" written that same year. In the poem he comforts himself and his fellow refugees with Lao-Tsu's proposition that ". . . quite soft water, by attrition/ Over the years will grind strong rock away./In other words, . . . hardness will lose the day."

For the New Rose actors, it seems, the "absence of simple proportionality" had a quite different meaning. Coming from their diminutive, intimate theater, the Winningstad appears huge, requiring a more than proportional effort to project their voices and their acting. Under Heinz-Uwe Haus' apt direction they are doing splendidly, and it is to be hoped that the present production will usher in a new ensemble concept on the Portland main stage theater scene.*

*N.B. The forthcoming issue of GESTUS, journal of The Brecht Society of America, will be devoted fully to the Portland Galileo project. It is scheduled to contain (among other things) texts of the symposium lectures, reflections on the production by Heinz-Uwe Haus, program notes, excerpts from panel and public discussions, and a summary of the theater workshops.

Calendar of Events for the PORTLAND GALILEO-PROJECT:
 Exhibition, Symposia, Planetarium Shows, Theatre Workshops
 and Productions of Brecht's Galileo

Heinz-Uwe Haus notes: "The focus of the Galileo-Project will be to show that the contradictions in Brecht's Galileo-figure reflect the antagonistic characteristics of our time, which cannot be kept in check by a heroic individual ready to assume responsibility . . . without a democratic political movement which stands up against the power apparatus of the state."

(CALENDAR OF EVENTS)

I. THEATRE WORKSHOPS directed by Heinz-Uwe Haus, Berlin/GDR, directed toward Portland's professional acting community:

January 16 How to read a play and discover the events
February 20 The narration of the story by grouping
March 19 Gestus and the "art of observation"
April 16 "Dialectics" in acting

II. EXHIBITION--"The Life and Work of Bertolt Brecht"

White Gallery, Portland State University; organized by Profs. Laureen Nussbaum and William Tate, Portland State University

A collection of 26 plates spanning Brecht's career as playwright, poet, and stage director both in Europe and the United States given to the PSU Library by Heinz-Uwe Haus, who opened the exhibition on February 12th.

III. SYMPOSIA--"Brecht and Galileo: An Exploration"

February 22 Galileo and his Science: H. Snodgrass, Lewis & Clark College; D. McCarty, Mt. Hood Community College; J. Dabrowski, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry
February 29 The Social and Political Implications of Galileo's Science: L. Roberts, Portland State University; W. Eamon, New Mexico State University
March 7 Galileo and the Social Responsibility of the Scientist: R. Nussbaum, Portland State University; H. Snodgrass, Lewis & Clark College
March 14 Galileo: Brecht's Play and the Issues it Raises: L. Nussbaum and W. Tate, Portland State University

These symposia were organized by Prof. William Tate (PSU) and were made possible by a grant from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities.

IV. PLANETARIUM SHOW, Oregon Museum of Industry & Science:

"Through the Looking Glass of Galileo--The Sky the Way Galileo Observed It" (March 12 - June 12)

V. THEATRE PRODUCTION, Winningstad Theater, Portland Center for the Performing Arts/The New Rose Theatre: Bertolt Brecht's Life of Galileo

Performances April 1-17, with audience discussions April 3rd and 17th
Guest Director: Heinz-Uwe Haus, Berlin/GDR; Galileo played by Shabaka, San Francisco Mime Troupe
Artistic Director of the New Rose Theatre Company: Michael Griggs
The production was supported by an Excellence in Arts Grant from the Portland Metropolitan Arts Commission.

Young Brecht in Paris:
Baal and In the Jungle of the Cities
 at the Theatre de la Ville, Paris,
 October 2 - November 14, 1987

Petermichael von Bawey,
 American College in Paris

Under the direction of Georges Lavaudant, the Theatre National Populaire offered two dramas of the young Brecht, Baal (1918) and In the Jungle of the Cities (1922). Lavaudant sought to portray Brecht as the poet of vitality, the lyricist whose instinctual drives echoed those of his mentors, the French poets Francois Villon and Arthur Rimbaud. Such forces as poetic energy and will, human struggle and survival are the semantic markers of this portrayal. In the theatre brochure Lavaudant wrote: "I wish to show the irrational energy that appears to me to run through the two works."

Mr. Lavaudant's choice of actors--Andre Marcon as Baal and Francois Marthouret as Garga--did not really confer on these productions the particular scope the director wanted. Marcon's Baal was a nervously shouting and gesturing character whose exaggerated movements drove him across the stage. Baal swaggered wildly with half-empty bottles, assaulted women and shouted here and there "champagne tout le monde." The fervent action on stage registered the usual Parisian Hektik, but it did not capture the deliberate vehemence with which Brecht's Baal rejects bourgeois culture. In Jungle of the Cities, staged in alternation with Baal, Garga was played with such torpor that his character metamorphosis was not easily evident. Annie Perret as Mae Garga offered an unsuccessful counterweight. She resorted to exaggerated, obscene gestures to mark her downfall into prostitution. Yet even Perret's overstated style did not give her gestures dramatic force. The audience could easily find similar gestures better executed on the main boulevards of the city. Charles Schmitt performed well as Shlink, giving his character various Chinese attributes which distinguished the role.

Jean-Pierre Vergier, close associate of Lavaudant, designed the set and the costumes, which were impressive for Baal but less so for In the Jungle. For Baal, an elevated, dark field with a fluffy, cloudy sky as backdrop was an appropriate setting for the appearance of peasants dressed in South German or Swabian costumes of the turn of the century. The appearance of a mid-get among males dressed as female prostitutes added a grotesque touch to Baal's tavern visits. That Baal the balladist did not sing his lyrics was a disappointment. Thus, it was not the chorale of Baal which opened the play, but rather the scene in the bourgeois salon. Other ballad sequences were transformed into dramatic dialogue. A guitar-playing or banjo-strumming Baal singing Brecht's lyrics might have given the play that "irrational energy" Lavaudant sought to convey to the audience.

In his review of the productions (Acteurs, October 1987, pp. 27-28), Michel Bataillon stated that Lavaudant wanted ". . . to paint Brecht in the

colors of our time." Yet there is no color of our time evident in the productions, only its "fashion." What is fashionable is that Baal and In the Jungle once provoked scandals and today we can attend performances of these plays, enjoy their historicity and applaud our sophistication: we are no longer scandalized by the protest of drop-outs, views of prostitutes, lives of gay persons or combats of everyday life in the big city.

A close study of Brecht's early theater innovations might have given Lavaudant insight into Brecht's method of extracting the "material value" of cultural works to produce dramas that would use familiar texts in criticism of their content. Baal was written against Johst's Der Einsame, a piece on the life of Christian Dietrich Grabbe which Brecht found outdated. Applying this method to Brecht's own dramas might have transformed merely fashionable plays into critical ones.

* * * * *

"NO PLAYS NO POETRY BUT PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS
PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS PROVOCATIVE PRESCRIPTIONS OPINIONS AND POINTERS FROM
A NOTED CRITIC AND PLAYWRIGHT"

The Via Theatre/Otrabanda Company/Talking Band
directed by Anne Bogart
New York, March 1988

From Erika Munk's column "Cross Left" in The Village Voice, March 29, 1988:

All of which brings me to Brecht, author of this column's epigraph (though he stole it from my, and everyone's, grandmother), who was writing about art as commodity 50 years ago. Under Anne Bogart's direction, the Via Theatre, Otrabanda Company, and the Talking Band are presenting **NO PLAYS NO POETRY BUT PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS PROVOCATIVE PRESCRIPTIONS OPINIONS AND POINTERS FROM A NOTED CRITIC AND PLAYWRIGHT**, the text of which comes almost entirely—say, 95 per

cent—from Brecht's theoretical writing. Well, no review either—reviews, Rich and Papp have convinced me, are meretricious—but a few pleased notes.

An amusingly disparate group of experimental sensibilities decided to explore the ideas of epic theater and alienated (distanced, estranged, whatever) acting: Bogart and her colleagues are cool, chic, and presentational. Talking Band is warm, political, and presentational, I haven't seen enough of Otrabanda to generalize. Bogart thinks Brecht "had funny theories in which he contradicted himself all the

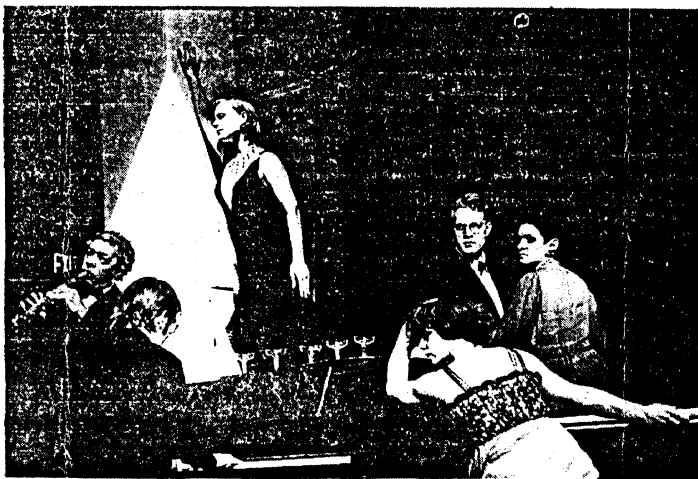
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time"; the Band's Paul Zimet is inspired by Brecht because he "believed against all odds that theater has an effect on people's behavior." Oh, to have been a fly on the wall during those rehearsals.

An officious person (exchange: "Where's the bathroom?" "Lavatory facilities will be available at 8:15." "I thought the play started at eight?" "It does. Please move along.") herds the audience here and there, setting up a healthy resistance. An actor in a Brechtian leather coat over an emphatically un-Brechtian purple shirt and green patent leather belt, opens with a speech outlining Brecht's critique of theater from the '20s to the '50s: Brecht was a wit, his targets perverse. Then the show opens into a multiplicity of exhibits in the Ohio Theater's vastness: in its center, a black man with a boombox raps on "The Street Scene: A basic model for epic theater." An actress illustrates a text about the V-Effekt by sticking on a mustache, wearing a garterbelt over her dress, and other not terrifically Brechtian maneuvers. A woman in a white coat illustrates maxims like "What is natural must have the force of what is startling," and "He who is showing should himself be shown," with silly sex drawings and scuzzy gestures. A musician demonstrates—such a Brechtian word—the "opera of innovation," playing a wood flute and some minimal sound-producing objects—funny if you know that the original text was written for the premiere of that complex, maximal work, *Mahagonny*, funnier if you consider that Bogart's last production was Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Several other scenes are going on: standing in the middle of the space the spectator is hit with a wonderfully nonsensical but energizing mix of sounds.

Then some focus is created. The



NO PLAYS NO POEMS . . . but definitely a nice bunch of theater.

audience is seated for a panel on the nature of theater—from the Messingkauf Dialogues—in which the pompous, the censorial, the radical-didactic, and the philistine are all mercilessly sent up. After a comment about the "rich inner life, which for many intellectuals is merely a substitute for a rich outer life," the panel breaks down into farcical displays of id. (Maybe the Wooster Group should do to Brecht what it has done to Wilder and Eliot and O'Neill? Maybe Bogart is imagining them already doing it?) There's a parody of an Eislerian Stalinist cantata, with Weillish saxophones nearby. Finally, the audience is again rearranged (being ordered around so much seemed like a satirical jab at early Schechner productions, but I think that all theater people will find their own satires in this show) and told they're "going to see a play, a battle between theater and play. Observe whether theater is victor or van-

quished." The phrase comes from a brief note Brecht wrote in 1927, when the theater—standard production techniques of the time—was the enemy, the play—above all his own—the thing.

Out of the mouths of drawing room decadents—on the chaise, swilling champagne, swooning and seducing—come a flood of Brecht's epigrams, manifestoes, ironies. During moments of the highest, and phoniest, melodrama—all glossed with '80s affectlessness—the fellow with a cigar is reminding us that "disbelief can move mountains." As the style is already ironic (though Brecht's targets weren't, and our own mainstream theater isn't), the effect is pleasantly dizzying.

And though the piece ends in a crassly sentimental, exhortatory mode—with most of the text surely not by Brecht, or at least out of Brecht's dimmest, most opportunistic

moments—this falling off doesn't ruin it. That it occurs at the moment the piece tries to give us a Message does, however, present a major problem under the evening's fun: Brecht thought art *had* to be fun, or be lousy. So far so good. But he was—imagine having to say it!—above all a political writer. **NOT PLAY NOT POEMS . . .** is non-political at heart, only half the equation. One of Brecht's meanest remarks cuts a little close to the bone: "The theater can stage anything: it theaters it all down."

Still: "Art is never without consequences," and the consequences of a genuinely exploratory art, even when it's exploring only part of the territory, are always to the good.

Noted with dismay: the press kit is thick with biographical and promotional material, and not one word, there or in the program, about the sources of the Brecht texts. Very discouraging for the inquisitive mind.

The press-kit phenomenon dominates an entire production in *The Jazz Section*, Dan Hurlin and Dan Froot's piece ostensibly about the repression of jazz in Czechoslovakia in the '40s under the Nazis and in the '80s under neo-Stalinism. It unself-consciously—exactly when self-consciousness is called for—weaves performance-art staging with a TV-melodramatic plot and an almost total lack of historical depth, or even data. The combination made for a muddled 75 minutes, despite some nice music and potentially interesting performers. The subject enticed me, as it must have enticed Hurlin and Froot. Enticement is never enough.

"The most hopeful element in the present-day theater is the people who pour out of both ends of the building after the performance. They are dissatisfied." (1926). ■

IN BRIEF

ERIC BENTLEY, New York City, writes to inform IBS members/Communications readers that Grove Press (which was recently sold) will continue to publish all of its Brecht volumes except for the Hauspostille. Notes Bentley: "If you want to persuade Grove to re-issue this item, you would have to organize a campaign of letters demanding Hauspostille. It was a hard one to sell; but it was the only bilingual BB around." The Grove Brecht series includes: Baal, A Man's A Man, and The Elephant Calf, transl. Bentley and M. Esslin; The Caucasian Chalk Circle, transl. Bentley; Edward II: A Chronicle Play, transl. Bentley; Galileo, transl. Charles Laughton; The Good Woman of Setzuan, transl. Bentley; The Jewish Wife and Other Short Plays (In Search of Justice, The Informer, The Measures Taken, The Exception and the Rule, and Salzburg Dance of Death), transl. Bentley; Jungle of Cities and Other Plays (Drums in the Night, Roundheads and Peakheads), transl. A. Hollo, F. Jones, and N. Goold-Verschoye, resp.; The Mother, transl. Lee Baxandall; Mother Courage and Her Children, transl. Bentley; The Threepenny Opera, transl. D. Vesey/E. Bentley (lyrics); and Bentley's Brecht Commentaries.

Of additional interest: Eric Bentley indicates that The Brecht-Eisler Song Book is now back in print and available from Music Sales Corporation; and that Folkway Records, which put out the series of Bentley-Brecht recordings--Bentley on Brecht, Brecht Before the Un-American Activities Committee, Songs of Hanns Eisler, The Exception and the Rule, The Elephant Calf, and A Man's A Man--has been taken over by the Smithsonian Institution. The recordings may be ordered by telephone at 609-683-0090.

THEATRE JOURNAL, published by The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, featured Brecht in a special issue entitled "Distancing Brecht" (Volume 39, No. 4, December 1987): "This issue . . . presents a representative spectrum of the reception of Brechtian theory and practice in the decade of the 1980s. The articles illustrate the break with the traditional Brecht reception established in the late 1960s and 1970s in which Brecht's ideas of political theatre were embraced by the experimental and political theatres of that time as directly relevant to both their theatrical and political practices." Theatre Journal is co-edited by SUE ELLEN CASE, University of Washington-Seattle, and ENOCH BRATER, University of Michigan; Book Review Editor is IBS-Member JANELLE REINELT, California State University at Sacramento. Contributors to "Distancing Brecht" include: KLAUS VOLKER, DAVID BATHRICK, MARC SILBERMAN, JOSETTE FÉRAL, ROSWITHA MUELLER, and JAMES K. LYON. The special Brecht issue is available for \$6.00 from The Johns Hopkins University Press, Journals Publishing Division, 701 West 40th Street, Suite 275, Baltimore, MD 21211-2190 USA Tel. (301) 338-6964.

THE PUERTO RICAN TRAVELING THEATRE COMPANY of New York City is presenting Brecht's play Señora Carrar's Rifles/Los Fusiles de la Señora Carrar from March 16th through May 1st as part of its 1988 Season. The production, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the play's premiere, is being directed by ALEJANDRO QUINTANA of the Berliner Ensemble and features MIRIAM COLON in the title role. This is the Company's first Brecht production, and there will be performances in both Spanish and English. Those interested in the work of

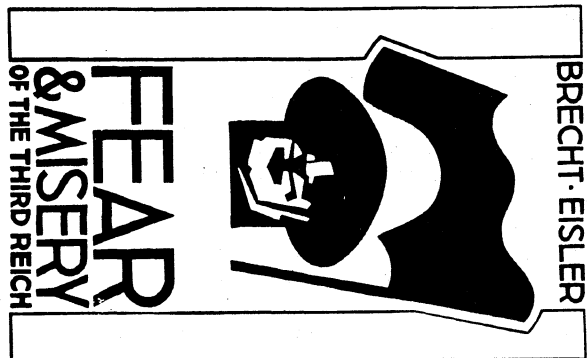
this unique theatre ensemble can contact the Company at 304 West 47th Street New York, New York 10036. (Many thanks to BEATRIZ RIZK of ATINT, the Asociacion de Trabajadores e Investigadores del Nuevo Teatro, P.O. Box 1792, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150, for providing information on this production to Communications.)

CARL WEBER of the Stanford University Drama Department (and former assistant to Brecht and the Berliner Ensemble) will be conducting a Directing and Dramaturgy Seminar, June 20-July 14, 1988 at the Tisch School of the Arts/NYU Department of Performance Studies, 721 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, NY. Further information on the Seminar which, according to Weber "is based on BB's methodology" can call the School at 212-998-1620.

"THE WEIMAR EXPERIENCE REASSESSED": The Departments of History and German of the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), in conjunction with the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), New York, are sponsoring an Interdisciplinary Summer Seminar in German Studies on "Culture, Society and Politics in Germany, 1919-1933" under the direction of THOMAS CHILDERS, Professor of History, and FRANK TROMMLER, Professor of German, May 31st-July 3rd. From the Seminar brochure:

This interdisciplinary seminar will examine central issues of German social, political and cultural developments during the turbulent Weimar Republic. Particular attention will be devoted to the theoretical and methodological considerations involved in analyzing the interaction of cultural phenomena (literature, theatre, film and the visual arts), social and economic developments (the hyperinflation, harsh stabilization of the "Golden Twenties," and the Great Depression), and political currents (the revolution of 1918, the crisis of parliamentary government, and the rise of Nazism). Using the Weimar era as a basis for investigation, the seminar will examine how modes of literary and cultural analysis can inform social and political research and vice versa, exploring, for example, the social and political uses of language, the formation of working-class, Catholic, and youth sub-cultures, and the changing roles of gender in German society.

JOSEPH FUGATE, Department of German, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan writes concerning a successful production of Brecht's Fear and Misery of the Third Reich: "This . . . was an independent student-organized, -staffed, -produced, and, at least initially, student-funded affair. Dialogue and songs were in German and English . . . A first-rate performance, which attracted a large audience, including many students."



From the BRECHT-ZENTRUM DER DDR:

Sonderangebot: Plakatmappe "Theaterarbeit Brechts"--40 Poster (15 Texttafeln, 25 Bildtafeln); Format: P 2, verfügbar in deutscher, englischer, französischer und spanischer Sprache; Preis: 39,-- M

"Die Plakat-Ausstellung vermittelt einen Einblick in die Theaterstrategie und Inszenierungspraxis Brechts, die er von 1949 bis 1956 in der DDR verwirklicht hat und nach der auch heute noch am Berliner Ensemble gearbeitet wird. Eine Auswahl von Fotografien wesentlicher Aufführungen vermittelt anschaulich Eindruck von der Repertoiregestaltung, von Bemühungen um zeitgemäße Lesarten, von optisch eindeutigen Arrangements, von schauspielerischen Details, von der Arbeit der Bühnenbildner und Komponisten und stellt damit wichtige Charakteristika der Theatermethode Brechts vor."

(Available only through: BUCHHANDLUNG BRECHT, Chausseestraße 125, DDR-1040 Berlin)

From the GERMAN INFORMATION CENTER, NEW YORK:

BERLINER THEATERTREFFEN: Aufführungen von zwölf Bühnen hat die Jury des 25. Berliner Theatertreffens vom 2. bis zum 23. Mai eingeladen. Das Wiener Burgtheater ist mit drei Inszenierungen beteiligt: Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui von Bertolt Brecht (Regie Alfred Kirchner), Metamorphosen des Ovid von Achim Freyer und Mein Kampf von George Tabori. Aus Berlin ist Fred Berndts Inszenierung des Stücks Jedem seine eigene Wildnis von Doris Lessing (Schillertheater) am Treffen beteiligt. Bonn kommt mit Krieg von Reinold Goetz (Regie Hans Hollmann), Dortmund mit Platonow von Tschechow (Regie Annegret Ritzel), Frankfurt mit Vor Sonnenaufgang von Gerhart Hauptmann in der Regie von Einar Schleaf, das Hamburger Schauspielhaus mit Peter Zadeks Inszenierung von Wedekinds Lulu, Heidelberg mit dem choreographischen Theater Macbeth von Johann Kresnik. Außerdem, sind während des Theatertreffens Inszenierungen der Stücke Leben des Galilei von Brecht (Schloßtheater Moers, Regie Holk Freytag), Tote ohne Begräbnis von Sartre (Theater an der Ruhr, Müllheim; Regie Roberto Ciulli), Phaedra von Jean Racine (Münchener Kammerspiele, Regie Alexander Lang) und Traumspiel von August Strindberg (Staatstheater Stuttgart, Regie Axel Manthey) zu sehen.

GOETHE-MEDAILLEN 1988: Der italienische Theater-Regisseur GIORGIO STREHLER wird mit der Goethe-Medaille 1988 ausgezeichnet. Nach Mitteilung des Goethe-Instituts in München sind die vier weiteren Priesträger in diesem Jahr der französische Soziologe Pierre Bourdieu, der spanische Komponist und Dirigent Cristobal Halffter, der amerikanische Historiker George L. Mosse und der tschechoslowakische Germanist und Übersetzer Moric Mittelmann-Dedinsky. Mit der Goethe-Medaille werden alljährlich Persönlichkeiten geehrt, die sich hervorragende Verdienste um die deutsche Sprache im Ausland erworben haben. Auch wird die Medaille als Ehrenzeichen für besondere wissenschaftliche und künstlerische Leistungen vergeben, die der Vermittlung zwischen deutscher Kultur und der Kultur anderer Länder sowie verständnisförderndem Austausch dienen (See Communications 16/2, pp. 63-65 for a review of Strehler's Paris production of The Threepenny Opera).

Los Angeles Times

Monday, December 28, 1987

Germans Push for Preservation of Villa Aurora

Politicians, Intellectuals Campaign to Keep Home and Library Intact

By PHILIPP GOLLNER, *Times Staff Writer*

Novelist Thomas Mann called it "truly a castle by the sea." Bertolt Brecht was a regular visitor there. Aldous Huxley used to drop in now and then. Charlie Chaplin, too.

Villa Aurora, a 22-room, Spanish-style mansion nestled in the hills of Pacific Palisades, served as a meeting place for many of Germany's greatest artists and intellectuals who fled Adolf Hitler and moved to Los Angeles in the 1930s and '40s, and their American friends.

Now a group of leading West German politicians and intellectuals have launched a campaign to preserve this piece of history. West German President Richard von Weizsaecker and former Chancellor Willy Brandt are among those supporting the effort.

The home was owned by the late German novelist and playwright Lion Feuchtwanger and his wife, Marta, who died last October. Marta Feuchtwanger willed the mansion and her husband's celebrated 36,000-volume library to USC.

But the university plans to sell the aging house and move the books to its downtown campus.

Exile Literature Center

The West Germans want USC to keep the house and they also want the books to stay at the Villa Aurora. They would like to raise enough money to repair the house's foundation—which could cost between \$600,000 and \$700,000—and use the site as a research center for German exile literature of the World War II period.

But if USC insists on selling the mansion, the West Germans said they might try to raise enough money to buy it.

They say the house and the library are inseparable and should be preserved as a monument to a literary movement that decried Nazism and promoted humanistic values.

"The library and the house are one entity, and that entity should not be destroyed," said Volker Skierka, a correspondent for the Munich newspaper *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, who wrote a biography of Lion Feuchtwanger in 1984. He is one of the leaders of the preservation effort, which began shortly after Marta Feuchtwanger's death on Oct. 29.

The library, one of the most comprehensive private collections on the West Coast, features thousands of first editions published from the 16th to the 20th centuries and includes several "incunabula"—books published before

Villa

Aurora is a tribute to a literary movement that was brutally suppressed by Hitler but flourished in exile in Los Angeles.

1500—such as a "Nuremberg Chronicle" printed in 1493.

The Los Angeles Times built the house in 1927 as a demonstration home featuring the latest in architectural technology and comfort.

Feuchtwanger, who was Jewish, bought the house in 1941 after fleeing the Nazis, who attacked his pro-Socialist writings and burned his books. Hitler's propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, described Feuchtwanger in a radio address as "a vicious enemy of the German people."

Famous Guests

Among the others who regularly visited the home were Thomas Mann's novelist brother, Heinrich, and writers Alfred Doeblin, Stefan Zweig and Ludwig Marcuse.

"This is the last authentic document of that era," said Reinhard Dinkelmeyer, director of the Los Angeles office of the Goethe Institute, which promotes the study of German language and culture abroad. "If you look through the guest list of the Feuchtwangers during the '40s and '50s, you have all the names of the people that formed the image of the Weimar Republic. This is an important chapter of German cultural and political history."

Harold von Hofe, a professor of German literature at USC and director of the university's Feuchtwanger Institute for Exile Studies, said the house is a tribute to a literary movement that was brutally suppressed by Hitler but flourished in exile in Los Angeles.

"The only building testifying to that [movement] in this country is the Feuchtwanger house," he said.

Skierka said President von Weizsaecker, former Chancellor Brandt and Hans-Jochen Vogel, chairman of the Social Democratic

Feuchtwanger Villa (cont.)

Party's parliamentary delegation, have written letters supporting the preservation effort. He said he plans to ask private foundations and the West German government for funding.

After a memorial service for Marta Feuchtwänger on Dec. 13 at USC, West German Ambassador Juergen Ruhfus asked USC President James H. Zumberge to reconsider plans to move the library. But Zumberge said the decision to move the books was final.

"The house will be vacated in terms of the books," Zumberge told Ruhfus. "The house needs serious repair. To be honest with you, it will not be cheap."

Zumberge promised that "we will not sell the house out from under your nose" and said the Germans could buy the house from USC, pay for the repairs and possibly borrow some of the library's books and temporarily keep them at the mansion.

USC officials said they would use the money from the house to pay for a planned Lion Feuchtwanger Memorial Library on a separate floor of a new campus library to be built in the next two to three years.

USC Executive Vice Provost Robert Biller said the books will be stored in the university's Doheny Memorial Library and in a storage facility across from campus until they are moved to their permanent home.

Sweeping View

On a steep bluff above Sunset Boulevard near Pacific Coast Highway, the Villa Aurora features a sweeping view of the Pacific Ocean from Malibu to the Palos Verdes Peninsula. From his study on the second floor, Feuchtwanger could see Santa Monica Bay and the verdant hills of Pacific Palisades.

The Times devoted extensive front-page coverage to the ground-breaking and opening of its demonstration house on April 28, 1928.

"The Los Angeles Times has

built here in Miramar Estates this dwelling which embodies in every detail and appointment the best material and workmanship," the newspaper wrote. "Only the finest materials have been used, and within these walls is every modern convenience known to home-making."

The kitchen employed the latest in technological convenience: an electric refrigerator, dishwasher and a "small utility motor guaranteed to polish silver, beat eggs and prepare refreshments."

Discussions in Evening

After the Feuchtwangers bought the house in 1941, it became a center for the community of German artists and intellectuals living in exile in Los Angeles.

Von Hofe said he remembers spending evenings at the house listening to Lion Feuchtwanger read from his books. Heated discussions often followed the readings, he recalled.

"Everybody would wait for Thomas Mann to say something before anyone spoke up," he said. "I felt too intimidated to say anything when Brecht was there or Thomas Mann was there."

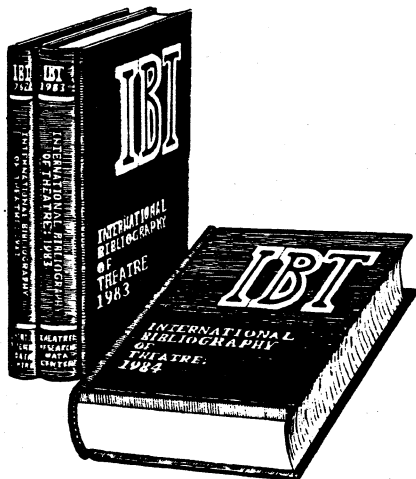
After her husband's death in 1958, Marta Feuchtwanger became the doyenne of the German intellectual community on the Westside. Her elaborate wardrobe and

regal manner earned her the nickname "Queen of the Night" among her circle.

She saw herself as a citizen of the world and promoted cross-cultural dialogue in meetings at the Villa Aurora.

"I am happy to be a citizen of a country that combines the legacy of my German heritage, with the traditions of many other nations," she wrote in her autobiography. "As an American, one is very close to all the peoples of the world."

The International Bibliographies of Theatre 1984; 1983; 1982.



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