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# ***COMMUNICATIONS***

from the International Brecht Society

## **BRECHT AND THE PARADIGM CHANGE**

Seventh International Symposium  
of the  
International Brecht Society

8-13th December 1986

**Volume 16, Number 2**



# COMMUNICATIONS

from the INTERNATIONAL BRECHT SOCIETY

Volume 16

April 1987

Number 2

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Valparaíso, Indiana 46383 USA

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

I find myself in the enviable position of having a surplus of material for this issue of COMMUNICATIONS, which features a report on the 7th International Symposium/Brecht Festival in Hong Kong, including abstracts of thirty-six papers presented at the Symposium. Participants who did not submit an abstract for inclusion in this issue are welcome to submit one by the next editorial deadline (October 1st) for publication in a supplementary report on the Hong Kong meeting which will appear in Vol. 17/1, November 1987.

An unusual feature of this issue is an original work of poetry by writer/graphic artist Harald K. Hülsmann of Düsseldorf, FRG, which appears side-by-side with a Japanese translation of the poem by Professor Tstomu Itoh of Gifu-City, Japan. (It is a fortunate coincidence that this poem, "Brecht in Dänemark," appears in the same issue as John Fuegi's report on a Danish Symposium on Brecht last October which focused on Brecht's stay in Denmark.) I welcome further contributions of this kind which add a new dimension to the journal, and in this instance thank Prof. Andrzej Wirth of Giessen, FRG, for encouraging Mr. Hülsmann to submit his Brechtian poetry/poetry on Brecht for publication. In addition, I would like to remind readers that--the current glut of material notwithstanding--the quality and coverage of COMMUNICATIONS is dependent on your reports (particularly those from our "foreign correspondents") to keep IBS members informed about Brecht productions, publications, exhibits, conferences, etc., for which you may use the form on the inside back cover. I am grateful to those who responded to my call in the previous issue for qualified translation assistance; there is still a need for (a) "contributing editor(s)" in the area of bibliography.

The article on Eric Bentley by Ronald G. Davis which appeared in COMMUNICATIONS 16/1 generated a fair amount of controversy (though not unexpectedly). Much of that has been productive, as exemplified by James K. Miller's detailed response (see "Letters to the Editor"). The letters appearing in this issue represent only those for which consent to publish was obtained; Mr. Bentley himself declined an invitation to respond, although he did suggest Mr. Miller as a qualified respondent. In response to the view of some readers that Mr. Davis' article was inappropriate for publication, I will only make brief reference to my experience last fall at the International Brecht Conference in Toronto at which Mr. Bentley presented a stimulating lecture entitled "Brecht and the Fallacy of Influence." Judging from remarks expressed by listeners both prior to and (in particular) following that presentation, it seems safe to conclude that Mr. Bentley and his work continue to provoke ample controversy among Brecht scholars and practitioners--which is to say that this debate is neither (inherently) personal nor fortuitous. Otherwise, as I have indicated to Mr. Davis, a certain level of decorum must be observed to permit this journal to promote substantive discussion of controversial issues; the letters appearing on the following pages reflect that policy.

Readers will notice some format changes in the current issue designed to improve the journal's appearance in comparison with Volume 16/1, while an additional computer software upgrade this summer should further enhance the Editor's flexibility in composing COMMUNICATIONS. I am particularly grateful to my student aide, Terry M. Duchow, for his assistance with the production of this issue.

Michael Gilbert

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

I'm amazed that five pages of IBS COMMUNICATIONS 16/1 were assigned to a self-promotional, unargued and meagerly supported disparagement of Eric Bentley based on a quote from the ephemera of Chairman Bertolt that is flourished out of context.

Should not R.G. Davis, in an attack as nasty as this, be required to pay attention to other evaluations of the Bentley translations and criticism of Brecht that might qualify or contradict his assertions? Should he not pay some attention to the chronology of the translations, and consider whether some are not more successful than others?

Apart from the quality of the Bentley translations, to lump Bentley and Esslin into one anti-Brechtian ideological pose is grotesque. Bentley has always had concern for Brecht's integral significance. Esslin has used Brecht primarily for ulterior anti-communist agendas. There is a difference.

Davis' diatribe ought to find no place in this publication.

Sincerely,

Lee Baxandall  
Work Force Communications  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Editor:

I've heard of chips on a shoulder, but R.G. Davis is lugging around a lumberyard of resentment on the subject of Eric Bentley. The weight shows, and is pulling down truth, grace, and common courtesy. Any blinkered formulation, any either/or pronouncement, on the topic of Bentley-Brecht, is going to miss the mark, the mark being human complexity and dialectics. I am sure Brecht criticized Bentley; I know he praised him. But both possibilities pale when compared with the fact of a fifteen year relationship that changed the face of our theatre. And here's an interesting one for Mr. Davis--did Brecht learn anything from Bentley? That awaits discovery.

P.S. Has Davis read the Brecht Commentaries?!

Sincerely,

Michael A. Bertin  
Arlington, Virginia

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Editor:

Ronald Davis may be hot on the trail of Hanns Eisler, as he says in the last issue of COMMUNICATIONS, but the journey seems to have put him in a mean-spirited mood when it comes to someone who was on that trail before him, namely Eric Bentley. Davis claims that Bentley is ill-suited to be an advocate, translator, or interpreter of Eisler and Brecht because Bentley has no "understanding, appreciation, and perspicacity about the dialectics of materialism" and the way Brecht turned words into socially progressive (not to be confused with mere social democratic) tools. And yet Davis himself betrays little of the dialectical sense one would expect of a student of Marxism. If Bentley has indeed played a contradictory role, we cannot turn to Davis to point it out because he only seems to see betrayal and unmitigated avarice in Bentley's career. Unfortunately, Mr. Davis brings to mind more of a neoconservative literary type countering a rival with a nasty letter to the New York Review of Books than an activist and artist criticizing reality in order to change it.

While Davis spends a good deal of space writing about Eisler in his contra-Bentley essay, his real passion flares when he speaks about Brecht and the way Brecht has supposedly been traduced by Bentley. My real passion lies, to the contrary, with the music of Eisler. It is worth looking at an example on which Davis dwells at length, The Brecht-Eisler Song Book. I am not so much interested here in how it was produced or in the political affiliations or non-affiliations of its authors as I am in the quality of the book that resulted, and its impact on the U.S. audience for Brecht's and Eisler's work. I believe the Song Book is a concrete test case for Davis' contentions, as I take them, that Eric Bentley (1) has depoliticized revolutionary artists in the interests of his own pocketbook and of middle-class acceptance; (2) has an accompanying lack of understanding of either their art or their worldview; and (3), as a result, has helped vitiate the potential long-run impact of an audience for progressive (i.e., revolutionary or Marxist) art, especially that of Brecht and Eisler. Of course, an underlying question is, how does one build an aware and substantial audience for these artists that is not based on faddish misunderstanding or downright distortion? (In the case of Eisler, there is only a micro-audience at present; at best, there are probably only several thousand people in the U.S. who are aware of his music at all.)

The Brecht-Eisler Song Book was published in 1967 (a few years past the peak in mass popularity of folk music) by Oak Publications, a publisher which specializes in folk music. As it is presented, the Song Book was clearly intended to gain an audience among amateur and professional performers who could accompany themselves on the guitar, and for whom Eisler's music would inevitably be tough sledding. Earl Robinson, a skilled composer with roots on the left, was a natural choice to present Eisler's music to an audience unacquainted with mid-European Kampfmusik and musical theater.

Eisler's entire output of vocal music is so predicated on political urgency that it would be difficult indeed to find forty songs for a collection such as the Song Book, which, taken as a whole, would give an apolitical impression. Nevertheless, Bentley's selection does not take the easy road. It

includes eight of nine songs from Die Maßnahme (1930), probably the most controversial work of the Eisler-Brecht collaboration. Anti-Stalinists have seen it as implicated in the ruthless spirit of Stalinism to come, yet the Stalinists and their successors have found its stark, unsentimental outlines disturbing as well. If one were to attempt to soften Eisler's and Brecht's revolutionary stance for a folkly audience nurtured on "Wimoweh" and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?", surely songs with lyrics such as "It is glorious to wield the word in class war!" or "Sink down in the slime, embrace the butcher, but change the world, it needs it" (as translated by Bentley) could have been omitted with a fairly clear conscience. The other thirty-two include many of the best known Eisler-Brecht songs, and not one is without its political implications, often pointed out in Bentley's notes.

On the other hand, Bentley also included in the Song Book works such as "To Those Who Come After: Three Elegies," written in Eisler's insistent, semi-atonal style. Few, if any, folk artists could easily attempt such complex songs, and indeed Earl Robinson provides no guitar chords, probably for that reason. Eisler produced a more tonal version of these songs when he settled in the GDR after he was expelled from the U.S. in 1947, but what we have in the Song Book is the original version.

I have no idea how many copies of the Song Book have been sold since 1967, or how many purchasers of the book have been moved to sing its songs and to explore the art of Eisler and Brecht further. I can speak for myself and say that in 1977 when I began to search out Eisler's music, no source other than The Brecht-Eisler Song Book was available to me in English. Davis is outraged that Bentley copyrighted his English version of Brecht's texts. I am not similarly outraged. Everytime I hear "This Land Is Your Land" deployed to sell an automobile or breakfast cereal, I long for the control a copyright would presumably bring. Davis thinks he has found a smoking gun when he reads Earl Robinson's letter, dated three years before publication, asking Eric Bentley to strengthen his translation of a song. I would have thought that that was what collaboration is all about, a process of mutual discussion and refinement. What Davis does not show is that the Song Book itself is anything less than a valuable contribution, true to the art and spirit of both Eisler and Brecht. And if that is so, Davis has a way to go to make his case against Bentley on anything other than a strictly ad hominem basis.

I cannot conclude without a comment on the confused paragraphs in which Davis lays out his understanding of Eisler's aesthetic. Davis counterposes the simple, tin-pan alley, "cathartic" approach of a Pete Seeger with Eisler's catholic, revolutionary, communist, advanced musical practice. There is no question that Eisler attempted to force together in an unstable fusion music which grew out of the most advanced experiments of early twentieth-century European concert music and the needs of a mass movement for singable, forceful songs and simple dramatic forms. All of his career involved the attempt to square this circle. In our own day, Luigi Nono, the Italian Communist composer, writes work on revolutionary themes, but of great aural complexity, not readily understandable to a working-class audience (not to speak of "normal" middle-class audiences). On the other hand, Mikis Theodorakis writes tuneful leftist cantatas with broad forms which people fill stadiums to hear. Hanns Eisler tried to do both things with such craft and inspiration that they could co-exist in the same piece of music. To fault an

Earl Robinson or Pete Seeger with not attempting such an impossible task is ridiculous. I believe Eisler's own attitude toward "popular" music was far more involved than Davis suggests. Eisler expressed the deepest respect for the song "The Peat Bog Soldiers," born in the concentration camps of the mid-1930's. I believe he felt similar respect for songs such as Florence Reese's "Which Side Are You On?," born in bloody Harlan. The songs in Pete Seeger's repertory would not have drawn his ire. What did affront him was the phony, the ersatz workers' choruses singing sentimental pop classics.

In the last years of his life, Eisler completed a set of thirty-nine songs on texts by Kurt Tucholsky. These songs are quite wonderful and set in a deliberately popular, if anachronistic manner, intended as competition against the seductive, shallow ways of Western mass music. As good as the Tucholsky songs were, it was not possible even for Eisler to recapture the organic line of cultural development broken by the Nazi victory in 1933. But in those last years he did meet a young student, Wolf Biermann. Biermann had no musical training, but he, too, wanted to start off again from 1933 and rebuild the revolution in music. Needless to say, Biermann's songs were not at all like Eisler's in content, craft, and style. Despite that, after an initial, somewhat comical reaction of distaste, Eisler came to appreciate that Biermann had his finger on a different pulse, the pulse of the potential mass audience in the GDR which might be interested in change and innovation. Eisler encouraged and protected Biermann and counseled him not to seek out formal musical training, lest he end up bound to the rulebook the musical bureaucracy in the GDR thought eternal. (Biermann spent several hours in 1985 describing to me his encounters with Eisler.)

The Eisler that could find such flexibility within himself in his last years would not have been so quick to decide just what was or was not "revolutionary communist" music as Mr. Davis.

Jim Miller  
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

\* \* \* \* \*

Response from Ronald Davis (to Mr. Baxandall and Mr. Bertin)

It is important to state that Michael Gilbert's editorial policy has aroused these responses. He accepted my submission and I thank him for his willingness to run my article because it "ultimately raised a significant issue concerning Brecht's reception in the U.S. and Bentley's role in it."

The difference between Bentley and Esslin described by Baxandall brings us to another level in this discourse. For the benefit of those of us who are Marxists, socialists, communists, or political riff-raff, perhaps Baxandall will disprove my assertion that the Manheim/Willett translations are more useful. And isn't that the issue at hand? Will Bentley's translations

incite people to think, understand, and activate their consciousness? I have found that Willett and Manheim are sharper, more helpful, closer to a dialectical edge, and pungently critical--all of which is needed in a happy-go-lucky America. It is not in my experience "a fact" as it is for Bertin that Bentley (and Grove Press) have "changed the face of our theater." My argument is that Brecht has been eaten through by a number of forces (anticommunism, academicism, directorial ignorance, etc.) and Bentley's translations have contributed to that state of affairs. Bentley stands as a liberal voice in a conservative culture. Consider the following:

"Neither Hambleton nor Reyher cared for Bentley's translations of these plays, neither Chalk Circle nor The Good Woman of Setzuan. On March 18, 1948 Hambleton wrote to Brecht that 'both Reyher and I feel that the Caucasian Chalk Circle needs something more than Bentley's pedestrian treatment. I wonder if it would be possible to obtain from you your latest German version of the play, so that any further work would have a definite relation to your script rather than to Bentley's version'" (from James K. Lyon, Bertolt Brecht's American Cicerone, Bonn: Bouvier, 1978, p. 129). And: "In May 1954, T. Edward Hambleton informed Brecht that he wanted to stage this play (Good Woman) at his Phoenix Theater in New York City. He and Reyher immediately began to make plans for a production. Among other things they hoped to use a translation other than Eric Bentley's." They tried but failed. Lyon writes: "When the production was finally mounted in 1956 (in the Bentley translation with Bentley himself directing) Hambleton spent many hours with Reyher during rehearsals and outside the theater going over details. Reyher's continued solicitude for Brecht's reputation in America caused him, rightly or wrongly, to be critical of the translation and of the production itself. He feared it would damage Brecht's reputation in America and he wanted to prevent what he felt would be a disaster" (Lyon, p. 152).

Ronald G. Davis  
San Francisco, California

In the next issue of COMMUNICATIONS (November 1987)--

Supplementary Report on the Hong Kong Brecht Symposium/Festival  
Barton Byg, "Brecht on the Margins--Film and Film Theory"  
Vasudha Dalmia-Lüderitz, "Brecht on the North Indian Hindi Stage"  
Shehla Burney, "Brecht in India"  
Li Jian-ming, "Brecht in China"  
Peter Beicken, "Some Unpublished Correspondence between Brecht  
and Marieluise Fleisser"  
Lamice el-Amari, "Brecht in the Gulf Region"  
AND MORE

## WAL CHERRY IN MEMORIAM

John Willett

Wal Cherry, who died in March of 1986 at the age of 53, was a pioneer of Brecht production in Australia, who brought his experience as practitioner and teacher to the Department of Theatre at Temple University in Philadelphia, which he chaired for many years. As a student at Melbourne University in the 1950s, he helped found what later developed into the Melbourne Theatre Company, an outstanding example of Australian subsidized theatre. He himself, following differences with the University authorities about policy, went on to create, convert, and run his own theatre at Emerald Hill in the same city. Among other first Australian productions which he staged was The Threepenny Opera, which he was again to direct in Adelaide in the mid-1970s. He directed a number of famous actors, including Zoe Caldwell and Barry Humphries, and was a strong supporter of Brecht's behaviouristic, non-introspective approach to performance.

This he brought with him to the California Institute of the Arts, where he was a guest director in 1976, and later to Temple University. There and at La Jolla he directed Fear and Misery of the Third Reich, and subsequently the mixed Brecht programme Love Songs in Hard Times in Philadelphia, a Brecht poetry reading (with Eli Wallach, Wolfgang Roth, and others) at the New York Public Theatre, and the Brecht-Kipling show Never the Twain at Richmond, Virginia. A good singer himself (to his own guitar accompaniment), he had a particular feeling for the Brecht songs, and in the entertainer Robyn Archer he discovered a potential singer of Brecht whom he inspiredly cast as the second Anna in his production of The Seven Deadly Sins for the inauguration of the Adelaide Festival Playhouse. Archer's Brecht recordings, too, are a testimonial to Cherry's insight and directing ability.

He was the writer of a number of good poems, a one-woman Antigone version called Steps in the Sand (for which he developed interesting and original production ideas), the musical Horrie's Alibi performed at Flinders University when he was Professor of Drama there, and a short novel, White Man's Legend, which was to be published late in 1986 and also adapted for Australian television. Despite his academic work, he would sooner have run a theatre any day than a university department, and it was good news when Tina Packer engaged him as a part-time artistic director of The Boston Shakespeare Company. Unhappily his fatal heart attack came just as he was about to begin work there, thus preventing what could have been a fruitful encounter between Brecht's concepts of theatre and a significant part of the American "apparatus."

Cherry was one of the rare people able to get the real Brecht out of the academic closet. We must hope b.b. is not going to be shoved back in there again.

(Editor's note: The preceding notice about Wal Cherry's death was to have appeared in COMMUNICATIONS 16/1, November 1986; the Editor apologizes for the delay in publication which was caused by the transition in editorship of the journal. Anyone who wishes to correspond with Peggy Cherry may write to her at 515 Elm Avenue, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19001, USA. Also, a scholarship fund has been established in Wal Cherry's memory; contributions may be made to: The Wal Cherry Scholarship Fund, c/o The Boston Shakespeare Company, 52 St. Botolph Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, USA.)

President's Report  
(Antony Tatlow)

I have to report on the activities of our Society during the last year and to draw attention of some problems we face.

Let me take the problems first. They were discussed at length in the Steering Committee and during the Business Meeting last December in Hong Kong. A note on that meeting is included in this issue as well as an account from the Managing Editor of the Yearbook regarding the difficulties he has encountered and how he proposes to solve them.

The Society engages in two activities: publications and public meetings. It meets regularly during the annual MLA conference, organises occasional Seminars, and holds International Symposia every three or four years. It has brought out a Yearbook since 1971 and, in addition, the journal COMMUNICATIONS, which Marc Silberman, starting with Volume 12, No. 2, transformed from a newsletter into the current format, appearing bianually. This change was widely welcomed. COMMUNICATIONS meets a need the Yearbook does not and cannot satisfy.

One suggestion at the Business Meeting was that the Society should exclude the Yearbook from the benefits of membership. In its current format, the Yearbook is cheap for members and absorbs a high proportion of our costs. Having members buy it at its "true" market price would certainly solve our immediate financial problems but might scupper us in the long run if we lost subscriptions as a result, and we would certainly lose the library subscriptions which at present subsidise individual members' benefits.

The Yearbook has a fairly respectable past, is firmly associated with the Society once again and intrinsically valuable. My own opinion is that we should keep it and explore ways of reducing its cost: either, as has been suggested, by reducing its size (it is now almost twice as large as the Suhrkamp version was) or by changing the method of producing it. John Fuegi will be reporting on his investigations into these possibilities. If one serious cause of delay in processing material lay with the publishers, desktop publishing might be the solution, assuming we can solve the problem of distribution. The Managing Editor assures us that he now has adequate institutional support, the lack of which previously slowed communications. It is, of course, vital that we find durable solutions for both the problem of costs and for the delays in publication since we are now considerably behind schedule.

Our Seventh International Symposium is the other main topic for report. I shall not attempt here to evaluate it. John Willett offers an account of the two major 1986 Brecht Symposia (Toronto and Hong Kong) in this issue. There will be fuller reports in the theatre journals. One such has already appeared in the February number of Theater Heute which raises interesting questions of evaluation. At the moment I am compiling a report on our Symposium, with many photographs of the productions, and I am sending a copy of it to the Brecht Archives in Berlin.

My original intention, which nearly succeeded, was to hold the Symposium in Beijing. It was scuppered by the campaign against spiritual pollution, either inadvertently or on purpose, and maybe that was just as well, for we



could never have had the variety of performances that we were able to mount in Hong Kong. Immediately after our Symposium, the anti-despotic forces in China, whose activities had taken a very public form, suffered another setback. Current opinion is that this will be temporary and that the cultural and political limits will be tested again. It will be interesting to watch to what extent the innovative directors will be curtailed in their activities. At the Symposium we saw an excellent example of such work involving Schweyk in the Second World War. As a result of the Symposium, there should be greater understanding of the problems faced by our colleagues in China, but also of the quality of work they are capable of producing. The Symposium certainly focused attention upon an (East-)Asian dimension for Brecht, not just for East Asians, but also as a defamiliarizing challenge to Western conventions and structuring of Brecht's work.

The productions in Hong Kong attracted over eight thousand spectators. As only two of them were in Cantonese, our expectations were exceeded. The press was uniformly positive and often enthusiastic about the quality of the productions. Delegates came from twenty-five countries. Our Seventh International Symposium is now behind us. What of our Eighth? It is not too early to think about it. The more support we need, the sooner we should set about justifying and looking for it. The University of Birmingham in England made an approach a year ago but failed to follow through on it. Another possibility is that we hold our next Symposium in the Federal Republic of Germany, and I am inclined to think this might be a good idea, offering us a challenge even as we can mount one.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Secretary-Treasurer's Report

(Ward B. Lewis)

Customarily membership dues have been solicited from both individuals and institutions immediately prior to appearance of the Yearbook. Dues have entitled members to a copy of the Yearbook plus two issues of COMMUNICATIONS, and this amount was marginally sufficient to pay for all three publications. Since the Yearbook has not appeared regularly, this arrangement has been overturned and the continued appearance of COMMUNICATIONS threatened. For that reason dues were solicited in January 1987 and the continuation of COMMUNICATIONS secured in the process. Paid members may or may not receive a Yearbook, while institutions demand one; no dues were solicited from them, but some have prepaid.

I propose the following: the Yearbook should be cut off from the dues structure; if and when the Yearbook appears, the Editor or someone can sell it. That fraction of the dues allotted to the cost of the Yearbook will be returned to prepaid institutions and disgruntled individual members. Dues can then be reduced in the future.

# The International Brecht Society

Financial Report

August 20, 1986

March 20, 1987

balance: \$1507.60

receipts: \$3877.50

disbursements: \$1682.73

balance: \$3702.37

Deutsche Bank, Düsseldorf  
 (Konto-Nummer 7674146)  
 DM 632,96

DM 709,03

101 individuals have paid dues, and 22 institutions have prepaid. That is, a total of 123 as compared with 210 last year, when an additional 40 institutions could be billed. Dues payments are still wandering in, however, at the rate of about two or three per day.

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 (Editor's note: IBS Vice-President Darko Suvin reports that the ad hoc Dues Committee created at the IBS Business Meeting in Hong Kong, December 12, 1986 (members: Sigfrid Hoefert, Marc Silberman, Karl-Heinz Schoeps) will conclude its work sometime during the summer and make recommendations to the membership this fall. The Business Meeting was devoted to a discussion of the Society's dues structure/policies and the status of our publications.)  
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Managing Editor's Report Concerning the State of the Yearbook  
 (John Fuegi)

Wayne State University Press has assured us that the next volume of the Brecht-Yearbook (Vol. 13, "Brecht in Performance") will be out by the time this issue of COMMUNICATIONS reaches your hands. Despite the fact that, as of this year, the Yearbook will contain not only French, English, and German language materials, but also a piece in Spanish, the production process has moved along much faster than it has previously.

As a result of suggestions made by IBS members at an editorial conference meeting held in Hong Kong last December, the IBS is now exploring new technology with a view to seeing whether the production process for the Yearbook might be streamlined and made more cost effective with the use of desk-top publishing. Also, by the time the next issue of COMMUNICATIONS appears, it is anticipated that answers will go out to those who have submitted papers for consideration.

As always, thematic suggestions for future volumes are most welcome. One theme that has already been suggested is that of key technical terms used in contemporary Brecht scholarship, performance, and performance theory. Any reactions to that idea?

MLA CONVENTION, NEW YORK, DECEMBER 1986

The IBS sponsored two sessions at this past year's Convention of the Modern Language Association, held in New York City.

Session One: BRECHT IN LATIN AMERICA

Moderator: Leslie Damasceno, Princeton University

Speakers: Marina Pianca, St. Lawrence University; Judith Weiss, Mt. Allison's University, New Brunswick, Canada; Miriam Echevarria, University of Texas at Austin

This session amplified the discussion of Brechtian influence and conjunctural similarities in theatrical concerns and conventions found in Brecht and Latin American New Theatre at last year's session also organized jointly by the IBS and ATINT (See COMMUNICATIONS 15/2). Scheduled to appear at this session but unable to attend was Heinz-Uwe Haus (Institute for Theatre Directing, Berlin/GDR), whose contribution on Latin American theatre in exile working within a Brechtian framework (mainly Chilean theatre in the GDR) would have been a most welcome inclusion of influences, cross-references, and reinterpretations from the other direction (Latin America-Europe). Papers were invited complimentary to the theoretical and geographical focus of the 1985 session, with an emphasis on historical imperatives and pedagogical formulations (Pianca), the convergence between Brechtian technique and existent popular theatre forms (Weiss), a textual analysis of Brechtian influences as informed and modified by political circumscription in a specific country (Echevarria).

ABSTRACTS

Marina Pianca: "Brecht and Paulo Freire: Confluent Pedagogies for Latin American Theatre"

Brecht and Freire, a German playwright and a Brazilian pedagogue, are clear examples of the transnational character of cultural production when objectives are shared in response to historical processes. It would be simple enough to attribute this to the fact that both intellectuals developed their work with objectives derived from a Marxist interpretation of reality. Nevertheless, we contend that the determination to avoid a repeat of historical horrors and above all the commitment to changing a world in which those horrors happen, gives birth to a very special breed of intellectual: pedagogues for liberation. As Brecht himself said: "A new art does not exist without a new objective. Pedagogy is that new objective." Latin America, marked by a convulsive history, was particularly eager to share in that objective. Both Freire and Brecht were strongly present in Latin American Theatre on the road to that "new art" form. And both authors' techniques show interesting parallels: Gestus becomes "codificação" in Freire, while Verfremdung has its counterpart in the idea of "conscientização." This parallelism could be attributed to chance, but if we think of the objectives of a literacy campaign in Brazil, as Freire conceives it, and of Brecht's theatre in Germany, the element of chance is overshadowed by the fact that both intended to teach in order to provoke the possibility of changing history through their work. Similar techniques were the result of similar objectives

(Marina Pianca has been an organizer of Latin American theatre festivals and is Editor of Anuario: Nuevo Teatro en América Latina (Giol/ATINT, forthcoming)).

Judith Weiss: "The Problem of Identification and Distancing in Nuevo Teatro: Uses of the punto guajiro in Cuban Revolutionary Theatre"

The fusion or convergence of Brecht with an autocthonous theatrical tradition is illustrated by this author's study of the Grupo Teatro Escambray, specifically its use of the traditional musical forms of the punto guajiro and to a lesser extent the son in the earliest plays developed by the group. This mechanism is of particular interest in this case for at least two reasons: (a) the group's members had a stated interest in Brechtian techniques and Brecht's work, and (b) the population of the area where the group established itself consisted mainly of small landholders whose values reflected those of traditional peasants and tended to be resistant to change, although a large number of local inhabitants had joined the Revolution in the late fifties. The plays developed by the Grupo Escambray between 1969 and 1975 dealt with problems identified by surveys and social science studies: mistrust of collectivization, the political nature of Jehovah's Witnesses proselitism, and the integration/equality of men and women. Music, used in all the principal plays produced in the period 1969-75, provides narrative continuity, critical commentary, and entertainment. The punto guajiro, the main folk music idiom of the Cuban peasant, was employed in a double function: as a link (between audience and actors, between scenes, and between reality and fiction); and as a distancing device, through which the narrator or the chorus break the action with the telling of the tale or with invitations to the audience to assume a critical stance at key points in the play. The general thematic content of the décima verses composed for the music corresponds to the main rubrics identified in major studies of the Cuban and Puerto Rican décima; the tone and themes of the group's verses were sufficiently similar to traditional songs to make their subversion more effective.

(Judith Weiss is past manager of a Washington, D.C. Latino popular theatre group; her work on Cuban theatre focuses particularly on the Grupo Teatro Escambray.)

## Session Two: BERTOLT BRECHT THIRTY YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

Moderator: Michael Gilbert, Valparaiso University

Speakers: David Bathrick, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Barton Byg, University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Klaus M. Schmidt, Bowling Green State University; John S. Paul, Valparaiso University/Richard J. Wattenberg, University of California at Riverside

### ABSTRACTS

David Bathrick: "Vatermord or Regeneration?: Brecht's Baal and Roundheads in the GDR"

Recent productions of Baal by Friedo Solter (1982) and The Roundheads and the Peaked Heads (1983) by Alexander Lang indicate interesting new approaches to b.b. by what is now being called a move toward "Regietheater" in the GDR. Solter sees in the young Brecht something "wild," "unorthodox," "uncomplicated" . . . ("es ist Lebenshaltung drin!") which provides a re-

freshing alternative to Brecht's more "dogmatic" plays of the classical period. Lang takes a more politically orthodox play and through slapstick, textual revision and improvisation mutes its "orthodox" antifascist/anticapitalist message in order to bring out a relevance for all contemporary advanced industrial societies (including the GDR). Both directors end up making Brecht relevant for the contemporary theater life of the GDR while at the same time implicitly critiquing the more traditional Brecht image as it had been established by the "closed models" and rational optimism of the "Aufbaujahre" (Mother Courage, The Mother, etc.)

Barton Byg: "Brecht on the Margins: Film and Film Theory"

Brecht's influence on current American film is slight and indirect at best. The Brechtian tradition which does exist in the U.S. has been mediated by film theory, and now finds its most likely representatives among feminist avant-garde filmmakers.

Any direct influences Brecht might have had on film have been frustrated since the 1930's. Kuhle Wampe stands alone as a Brechtian film of the Weimar Republic, and similar avant-garde impulses in the Soviet Union ended with Stalin's intervention. Post-war attempts to link up with this tradition in the German Democratic Republic have been extremely rare. Brechtian influences can be found in West German films since the 1960's, but such works are least likely to represent "New German Cinema" in the U.S.

What has reached the U.S. since the late 1960's and early 1970's is Brecht's theoretical influence. In the context of discussing the Brechtian aspects of films by Godard, Straub/Huillet and others, the British journal Screen based hopes for a radical film practice on a synthesis of Brechtian, psychoanalytic, and feminist concerns. This synthesis has since fallen apart as psychoanalytic film theory threatens to become an aesthetic unto itself. Yvonne Rainer's 1985 film The Man Who Envied Women reconnects with Brechtian theory and moves toward restoring a concrete political dimension to the American feminist avant-garde.

Klaus M. Schmidt: "Is Brecht Still a Resistible Force in the American Theatre in 1986?"

In April 1986, the 30th anniversary of Brecht's death was commemorated at Bowling Green State University with a week devoted to theatre productions, film, an exhibition, and a symposium. All events were centered around the above question, which proved controversial. This preliminary report offers an assessment of the discussion prompted by this anniversary event. It focuses chiefly on the events at BGSU: 1) the unique back-to-back German and English productions of The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui with two entirely different casts and concepts by reknowned GDR director Heinz-Uwe Haus; 2) the results of a national poll among Brecht scholars and theatre practitioners; 3) the discussions at the symposium, which brought together a mix of scholars and theatre practitioners. The report also includes a brief look at another major Brecht conference in North America which took place in Toronto in October 1986, and a summary review of some of the major anniversary productions such as Happy End, broadcast by PBS, and Arturo Ui at the Stratford Festival Theatre in Canada.

Another significant item in the report is a preliminary release and interpretation of Brecht production figures gathered from Theatre Project reports and other sources, as well as a poll conducted among approximately eight hundred university and college theatre departments by Bowling Green. This inventory of actual Brecht productions during the decade 1975-85 will provide a sound empirical basis for future discussions on Brecht in America.

John Steven Paul and Richard Wattenberg: "Bertolt Brecht and the American University Theatre"

This paper seeks to estimate the importance of the American university theatre in the dissemination of the works of Bertolt Brecht in the United States in the thirty years since his death. Patterns of Brecht scholarship and production at U.S. academic institutions in that time period were traced by conducting quantitative analyses of 1) the amount of scholarly activity related to Brecht in two important academic journals in the field of theatre studies, Theatre Journal (formerly Educational Theatre Journal) and The Drama Review (formerly The Carleton Drama Review and The Tulane Drama Review); 2) doctoral dissertations related to Bertolt Brecht's dramatic and theoretical writing; and 3) college and university theatre productions of Brecht's plays. The available information suggests that the pattern of Brecht productions in university theatres parallels the pattern of scholarly activity in the three decades since the playwright's death. The peak years for research, scholarship, and theatre come in the early years of the second decade (1967-1976), with a marked decline in all three areas after 1976.

While the factor of assimilation of Brechtian ideas may account for the decline in scholarly productivity related to Brecht, it does not explain the apparent decline in Brechtian dramatic productions. In the face of the practically impossible task of questioning the thousands of university theatre directors in the United States about their priorities for choosing plays, one can only speculate in a not entirely uneducated fashion. It appears that following the turbulent 1960's, the university theatre finds its student actors and technicians, its faculty directors, and especially its audiences unmoved by and uninterested in drama of social and political protest.

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#### 1987 MLA CONVENTION, SAN FRANCISCO

The IBS will sponsor the following two sessions at the 1987 Modern Language Association Convention in San Francisco, December 27-30:

#### Session One: (RE)PRESENTING BRECHT: POSTSTRUCTURAL READINGS

Organizer/Moderator: Janelle Reinelt, California State University at Sacramento

#### Speakers and Topics:

Robert Miklitsch, Boston University: "Reading Differently--Galileo in Quotations"

Ellen C. Caldwell, Clarkson University: "Poststructuring Brecht--Pluralism and Propaganda in Galileo"

Sabine Gross, University of California at Santa Barbara:  
"Brecht Discourse--Dialectics of the Text, Dialectics of  
Reading"

Respondents: Darko Suvin, McGill University; John Rouse, Tulane  
University

### Session Two: BRECHTIAN DISCOURSES IN THE AMERICAS

Organizers: Carl Weber, Stanford University; Leslie Damasceno,  
Princeton University

Moderator: Beatriz Rizk, Graduate Center, City University of New  
York

#### Speakers and Topics:

Leslie Damasceno, Princeton University: "Brecht in Brazil"

Ronald G. Davis, San Francisco, California: "Brecht Reception  
in the U.S."

Respondent: Carl Weber, Stanford University

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### THE THEATRE RESEARCH DATA CENTER

(COMMUNICATIONS participates in the Theatre Research Data Center bibliographic databank project. This information is published as an unpaid advertisement for the benefit of IBS members unfamiliar with the work and publications of the TRDC.)

In November 1980 the officers and Executive Committee of the American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR) accepted unanimously the finding of its Research Committee to the effect that the most critical need in the field of theatre research was a computerized databank of references to theatre resource materials. Restricted and piecemeal bibliographic coverage and dispersed research resources had frustrated theatre researchers. The databank would establish for the first time a comprehensive and accessible base to support the research activities of theatre scholars, artists, and teachers. Publication of annual bibliographies of theatre research resources and direct access to the databank through online research services would begin a new era in theatre research.

Within six months fifty theatre scholars had volunteered to serve as field contributors for this databank project. By June of 1981 Brooklyn College had accepted the ASTR request to establish a Theatre Research Data Center and had offered to contribute to the Center's operations and publication of the International Bibliographies of Theatre (IBT).

Application was made to the National Endowment for the Humanities for support of a three-year theatre databank project budgeted to establish itself eventually as a self-supporting enterprise through marketing of its databank services and bibliographies. In May of 1982 the Endowment awarded \$160,000 for the project to Brooklyn College, to begin on October 1, 1982.

Since that time Theatre Department faculty members provided by the College to serve as the Data Center staff have worked with officers and members of ASTR, with other theatre professional societies and with individuals from the field to create a taxonomy of theatre arts which serves as a base for the databank structure. They have developed, by consulting with a broad spectrum of theatre scholars and artists, an international list of periodicals and books, over which the field contributors maintain surveillance. With the assistance of representatives from ASTR and other professional organizations, i.e., the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology, the American Theatre Association, the International Federation for Theatre Research, the International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts (SIBMAS), the International Theatre Institute (U.S.), and the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, the Theatre Research Data Center staff members have produced an effective data entry form and have applied the SPIRES software to the data needs of theatre researchers.

Meanwhile, international participation in the project has been growing. Presentations to the Leipzig and Glasgow meetings of the International Federation for Theatre Research (FIRT) and to the congresses of SIBMAS in New York and London, and dialogues conducted in Vienna in conjunction with the Second European Kabuki Conference, have generated considerable support for international collaboration. The Rockefeller Foundation Study and Conference Center at Bellagio, Italy awarded the Theatre Research Data Center a five-day International Conference on Theatre Research Data in September of 1984, co-sponsored by Brooklyn College, ASTR, and SIBMAS. Twenty-five theatre research representatives from fourteen nations approved the American form and contents of the bibliographies and recommended establishment of worldwide networks for data collection and dissemination. At their next annual meeting the members of SIBMAS voted into being a 25-member Commission for the International Bibliography. This Commission is charged with promoting worldwide participation in the accumulation of the databank and assuring the Bibliographies' continuing international effectiveness. Meanwhile the Austrian government has provided the Vienna Theatre Society with financial support for a center to coordinate collaboration between the theatre researchers of Europe and the bibliography project. The following nations will contribute directly to the contents of the 1984 International Bibliography: Canada, United Kingdom, Austria, West Germany, Italy, Spain, USSR, USA, Norway, France, Hungary, Israel, Poland, Yugoslavia, and South Africa. Seventy-six nations are represented by entries in IBT:83.

The International Bibliography of Theatre: 1983, our second publication, is our first full-sized issue. Published in September 1986, it is twice the size of the first, with 405 pages and 11,000 subject entries from 1,591 periodical articles and 519 books. Its international coverage is greatly expanded, its Geographical-Chronological Index improves considerably upon the services of the IBT:82 Geographical Index, the taxonomy has been simplified and the Periodicals List has grown by 100 titles. Data collection for IBT:84 is underway. Prices are: IBT:82, \$50 (individuals) and \$65 (institutions); IBT:83 is \$65 and \$85.

For further information call or write the Theatre Research Data Center, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York 11210, USA, tel. (718) 780-5998. Orders: Publishing Center for Cultural Resources, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012-2662, USA.



SPECIAL REPORT: 7TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, HONG KONG, DECEMBER 8-13, 1986

Opening Greetings from Senda Korea,  
Director, Haiyuza Theatre Company, Tokyo, Japan

Ladies and Gentlemen! Brechtians from many lands!

It is a great honour and pleasure to open this Symposium of the International Brecht Society.

It is now half a century since I first produced Brecht's Threepenny Opera in Japan. Interrupted by the war, I began to direct his plays again in 1953. Up till now I have done 26 productions.

As you know, I am not a theoretician but a practical man of the theatre. So I am particularly glad that my contribution to this Symposium is not an academic paper but rather in the form of productions. Didn't Brecht say: the proof of the pudding is in the eating? I wonder if you will like the taste of my pudding. In any event, I am not giving you the recipe, but the pudding itself. And I am always ready for even your strongest criticism as the start of a creative discussion.

I would just like to tell you briefly my impressions of the poster for our production (of The Good Person of Szechwan). It shows our main actress, Komaki Kurihara, in two roles, the good one and the bad one. It made me think of Brecht's poem about the Japanese mask. He describes how difficult it is to be evil. It is nicer to be good, but circumstances don't always allow this. Even in today's society, just being good is still difficult. I think my actress has succeeded quite well in not only contrasting the good and the bad, but also in showing the dialectical relationship between both moral concepts.

As for the so-called weariness with Brecht, well, I am fairly optimistic, although I must admit that Japanese interest in Brecht has weakened somewhat. Some of our intellectuals and young people do not want to face reality and try to escape by seeking refuge in a theatre of fictions and illusions. But other young people, and their number is not small, still find they can learn from Brecht and in the process they confront new realities. Interest in Brecht is growing among workers' theatre groups and their audiences. Some worker-dramatists have developed their own methods based on Brecht, and have written their own plays. The Japanese Theatre Directors' Association has organized a group to attend the Symposium. It is a little difficult widening the circle of those interested in Brecht but not impossible. And I hope the Brechtians who have come here from so many countries will strengthen my conviction. The so-called weariness with Brecht ought to be called weariness with thought, or lack of social action. I have absolutely no doubt about Brecht's efficacy, as long as the Brechtian method means understanding and intervening in the modern world.

I could give you a list of the reasons for my interest in Brecht, but to save time I am just going to speak of one of them. In many of his writings on art Brecht mentions the sciences. For him, science for science's

sake is as meaningless as l'art pour l'art. A theatre interested in social life and in contemporary behavior cannot get by without the help of the political and social sciences. That is what Brecht thought. Not even a simple murder can be explained by means of the "artistic imagination;" instead you need to use the whole of modern psychology and sociology. If Brecht were alive today, he would be using all the information available to him through communication theory, cybernetics, semiotics, anthropology, biochemistry, and so forth.

Naturally, the "Theatre of the Scientific Age" sounds a little suspicious today. Our social life is now subject to the pressures of science and technology. And science, which man has developed, threatens to destroy humanity by means of nuclear power and chemical weapons. The rationalization, automation, and expansion of industry threatens to endanger our daily life and our environment. But if we just shy away from this negative side of advanced technology and science and shout out the old slogans like "Back to Nature," "Back to the Old Ways," we will never reach a solution. We have to confront these things and transform them again into something human and useful. Brecht's method can help here, providing we develop it.

One other point. I value Brecht highly because, unlike other "realists" in the theatre, he had great regard for the playful and the fantastic. Even our highly-developed technology has received powerful ideas from the imagination. In a famous essay, Lenin mentions the connection between dream and revolution. The merely pragmatic does not really help us forward. The "art of living," which Brecht thought the greatest of all arts, is in my opinion the best method of bringing art and science together.

What I have said has been a little schematic and theoretical, and means nothing other than that I try to create this sense of pleasure on the stage. If my words have not helped you understand this, please judge what I wanted to say by my productions. Thank you for your attention.

Greetings to the 7th International Brecht Society Symposium  
Huang Zuolin, People's Republic of China

Friends and Fellow Brechtians:

On behalf of my colleagues as well as all lovers of Bertolt Brecht in China, allow me to say a few words of greeting to the Symposium. It is a great honor to be invited; we are very grateful to our hosts for their hospitality . . .

As a souvenir, I would like to present to the International Brecht Society an album of stage photographs of all productions of Brecht's plays performed in China. It is a meager offering, I am afraid, but it is just a start. And better late than never. Thank you.

**俳優座劇團演出**  
The Haiyuza Theatre Company

中國青年藝術劇院演出 布萊希特名劇  
高加索灰闌記

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Philistine standards . . . and moral rape

THE International Brecht Society has just held its Seventh International Symposium in Hong Kong, the first to be held in Asia.

It attracted around 300 participants, the performances were seen by large numbers of people and the delegates were impressed by the level of municipal support and the warmth of their welcome. The symposium was co-sponsored by the University of Hong Kong.

But the director of the Brecht Archives, Dr Gerhard Seidel, was refused a visa and could not attend.

The society expressing its deep regret to Dr Seidel, I quote one paragraph from this letter:

"It seems that under the rules of the Hong Kong Government you would have stood a much better chance of admission had you been a footballer, a jockey, a pop singer or a businessman. As a mere scholar and keeper of one of the world's most important literary archives you fell under an automatic ban which no Hong Kong authority, it seems, felt inclined to relax. Such philistine standards are incomprehensible in a place which, so we imagined, seeks to promote East-West traffic in ideas as well as in

policy of denying visas to Soviet bloc nationals seemed out of date in view of the changes that have taken place in China.

I addressed this letter to the Director of Immigration and brought it in person to the department on November 20.

After an initial perusal, I was received by a courteous middle-level officer. He explained that Dr Seidel's case had been carefully considered, that his department anyway merely implemented a policy determined elsewhere, and that such cases were scrutinised by the Special Branch, the Political Advisor's office and sometimes by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

I asked his department to consider my arguments and to reconsider the case and to wait until the vice-chancellor of Hong Kong University. He agreed to do so.

The vice-chancellor's hand-delivered letter of November 21 requested a reconsideration of the case.

In letters both dated November 24, the officer I spoke with sent me and the Director of Immigration sent the vice-chancellor replies

which were received on November 26.

The Director of Immigration assured the vice-chancellor that they had taken into consideration all the points in my letter and a discussion which the registrar had had with his department. Their decision would have to stand.

One therefore receives the impression of a courteous but firm refusal after a thorough reconsideration of the facts of the case, conducted at the highest levels of the department. I would like to believe this version, but cannot reconcile it with the following facts.

After my visit to the Immigration Department on November 20, I returned to the university, where I received a telephone call 2½ hours after leaving Moody Road.

A junior officer was on the line, and he told me that they had "carefully reviewed" the case and were regrettably unable to alter their decision.

The Immigration Department is located in Tsing Sha Tsui East, the Special Branch and the Political Advisor's office, I believe, on Hong Kong Island, and the FCO is certainly to be found in Whitehall. I cannot help wondering just

A shadow was cast over the International Symposium by the refusal of the Hong Kong Government to allow GDR Brecht scholar Gerhard Seidel to attend. Upon the suggestion of Symposium participants, IBS President Antony Tatlow wrote a letter to Seidel, a portion of which is quoted in his subsequent letter to the Editor of the South China Morning Post reproduced on the left. The remaining part of the letter reads: "Your film (on Brecht's life and work) provoked a number of conflicting views, and we needed you here to discuss these and many other matters in connection with Bertolt Brecht . . . It is disgraceful that you should have been refused permission to join us, particularly as other expected guests from the GDR had to withdraw . . . It is ridiculous that so important an international conference should take place without a single representative of the country where Brecht chose to live and where the answers to many questions lie." (Editor's note: According to John Willett, Heinz-Uwe Haus was refused permission to attend the Symposium by the government of the GDR.)

how scrupulously they reviewed the case. They certainly did not wait until all the evidence had arrived, and those 2½ hours included the lunch break.

Three delegates with Middle Eastern passports attended the symposium: one middle-aged man and two middle-aged women.

One came from Algeria, a lecturer at Oran University. One came from Kuwait, where he lectures on English Literature at the university; he holds a Syrian passport.

The third also has a Syrian passport, she has lived for 10 years in Australia, where she is lecturer in Semitic Studies at Sydney University. She is married to a lecturer in Germany at the University of New South Wales, who was also attending the symposium.

I had personally guaranteed the two delegates with Syrian passports and also had several telephone calls with the department on their behalf. They had received visas and so were able to come to Hong Kong.

At the airport these three suspect persons were taken aside and subjected to a lengthy examination. They explained they were attending an international academic conference and could produce evidence to substantiate this.

Nevertheless they underwent lengthy interrogations lasting, I understand, up to 1½ hours. After this rigorous questioning, the man was let through.

I find it significant that they strip-searched the two women. What were they looking for? Plastic explosives in their underwear? Or was this simply the most efficacious form of humiliation?

One of these women had *The Penguin Book of Women Poets* in her luggage — subversive material indeed, especially as it contained one of her poems.

She was invited to sign a statement that she had not been ill-treated during the investigation, and she did so in order to escape from their clutches.

I met her two days later. She had been unable to sleep. My impression was that she had been psychologically traumatised by the event and, under the circumstances, I think we might call it moral rape.

ANTONY TATLOW

INTERNATIONAL BRECHT CONFERENCES IN TORONTO AND HONG KONG:  
A COMPARATIVE REVIEW

John Willett

No list was (to my knowledge) published of the estimated 500 people who took part in the Toronto International Brecht conference from October 22-25. But I was one of the few who attended both this and the subsequent International Brecht Symposium in Hong Kong (December 8-13), with c. 300 participants). Let me then try to summarize these two stimulating occasions, major commemorations of the thirtieth anniversary of Bertolt Brecht's death, and brainchildren respectively of Pia Kleber and Antony Tatlow.

What was so unusual in both cases, apart from the total commitment of the brainparents, was the place given to live theatre, along with the high quality of the related performances. Anybody who has not been to such meetings knows that the peripheral Brecht events, when not local and amateurish, are apt to be the result of misplaced self-recommendation by the performers. But in the fourth quarter of 1986, "30 years after/30 ans après" the death of BB, the theatre component in each case was stronger than the academic.

Thus Toronto had the Berliner Ensemble giving its first and only performances in North America since its founding in 1949, as part of a simultaneous International Festival of a dozen foreign and Canadian companies. Hong Kong, again under the auspices of a festival, had companies from mainland China, Japan, India, and the Philippines as well as two from Hong Kong itself, all playing Brecht. There were also individual acts including, in Toronto, Ekkehard Schall, Riki Turofsky, Dagmar Krause, Eric Bentley, and (in a one-woman play by Manfred Karge) Lore Brunner; in Hong Kong, the singer Robyn Archer and the ping-tan artist Zhang Yunxian. Much of what I saw and heard in both places was first-rate.

Admittedly the aim, and to some extent the scale, in each case was different. In Toronto the convening body was University College, or, more precisely, its Drama Programme under Colin Visser, which wanted to give Canada generally and its own students in particular an authentic introduction to Brecht's work and to the great range of issues which it raises. Thanks to the backing secured by the convenors, notably from the Mirvish family (owners of the Toronto Royal Alexandra and the London Old Vic Theatres) and from organizations in both halves of Germany, they were able to offer a wide choice of alternative programmes, both dramatic and academic, without trying to impose any particular direction.

Individual events at the Toronto Conference/Festival often clashed, so that nobody could have followed the whole course of the critical arguments or attended all the performances, let alone have done both; and since the selection of speakers was sometimes erratic, it was a bit of a hit-or-miss affair from the audience's point of view. Nonetheless, there were virtuoso acts from Lore Brunner and (particularly for those who had not seen him before) Ekkehard Schall; Steven Kent's production of Mother Courage with Toronto actors on Astrid Janson's great oblique set was original and effective and kept that difficult play moving; the Scottish "7:84" company achieved a freshness that Brecht would have respected; the Berliner Ensemble showed us revitalised productions of The Threepenny Opera and The Caucasian Chalk Circle; and the University College students caught (for once) the poetry and ambiguity of Drums in the Night as Brecht wrote it.

A number of the visiting speakers were asked to give the Toronto University audiences an account of Brecht's (or rather his works') fortunes and misfortunes in particular parts of the world: the two Germanies, Britain, France, Latin America, the Arab Countries, China, Spain, Scandinavia--though not the USSR or the United States. There were round table discussions on such unsurprising themes as feminism and political theatre; there were also a series of master classes for directors and actors, of which that given by Joachim Tenschert was generally agreed to have been remarkable. Others spoke on themes of their own choice, of which "Brecht and Acting," as demonstrated by Martin Esslin and "Brecht and the Fallacy of Influence," a slightly wicked jeu d'esprit by Eric Bentley, were perhaps the most entertaining. As for the related arts, Edward Laufer gave a convincing first vidicaiton of Roger Sessions's long-forbidden Lucullus setting. On the periphery there were showings of films, three art shows (including bronzes by Toronto Brecht translator Martin Kastner), and downtown cabaret performances every evening with the Scots providing much of the energy.

In Hong Kong, the meeting began rather more austere under the previously announced title of "Brecht and Paradigm Change." But the very sight of the platform, with President Tatlow flanked by the two great octogenarian Brecht directors--Senda Korea, who acted in Gustav von Wangenheim's "Truppe 1932" in pre-Hitler Berlin, and Huang Zuolin, who was a pupil of Granville Barker at Cambridge--immediately told us that we were in for something special. The critical jargon largely blew away to disclose the main changes in question as being those currently taking place "in China's social and cultural practices"--to which the assimilation of Brecht's theatre was clearly relevant. And soon we were seeing what this assimilation meant, and how it related to Brecht's own interest in the oriental stage, as shown in a number of fascinating productions.

Among these were, on the one hand, Chen Yong's apparently Russian-influenced large-scale "musical" production of The Caucasian Chalk Circle with the same Youth Art Theatre that staged the seminal Beijing Galileo in 1979; on the other, Senda's stylish and perfectionist Good Person of Szechwan--rather more Western in feeling--with the Tokyo Haiyuza Company had just been playing on its China tour. Speakers emphasized how Brecht had influenced some of the new Chinese playwrights, and showed video-tapes to illustrate their point. The same is evidently true of the Japanese, though no examples were shown.

I had to miss the locally-produced Arturo Ui, but students of the recently founded Hong Kong Academy performed a transplanted Simone Machard, where the dream scenes were acted and danced by figures from traditional Peking Opera. The Calcutta Unity Theatre under their director Sekhar Chatterjee played Pontu Laha, a cleverly realized Bengali transplant of Puntilla which was amusing and remarkably clear to follow despite the constrictions of a small studio; they also brought their own excellent musicians. The keenly committed PETA (Philippine Educational Theatre Association) group showed scenes from The Caucasian Chalk Circle, making ingenious use of minimal space and equipment; there were good reports, too, of their subsequent performance of the whole work.

**BRECHT 30 ANS APRÈS**

Colloque International et Festival de Théâtre

THE INTERNATIONAL  
BRECHT FESTIVAL  
國際布萊希特節

Against such convincing evidence of Brecht's persistent vitality, which was amplified by a number of speakers from the Far East and echoed by those from South Africa and the Arab countries, we had the jaded views of the West German victims of Brecht-Müdigkeit, who seemed to see the Brecht heirs and the Berliner Ensemble as an obstacle to the re-functioning of Brecht, and his plays themselves as a hindrance to their own younger playwrights. In between the two extremes came contributions from France, England, and the U.S. whose general purport was that there is still considerable American interest in Brecht on the level of college and regional theatres; that France has experienced something of a lull in Brecht productions during the 1980s even though former Brecht exponents have risen to controlling positions; but that in Britain both interest and understanding of Brecht are still on the increase, for there the plays continue to intrigue and challenge the big subsidized theatres, and the poetic, musical, and design aspects of his work are starting to be properly appreciated.

That, broadly speaking, was the essence of two very productive meetings --the one charged with the excitement of the unfamiliar for an area where Brecht is by no means a household word; the other a great demonstration to Brecht's supporters that his work is still full of life, and that his continued relevance in our rapidly changing world is a challenge to them to think and think again. New problems arise: how far do the plays have to be changed to meet other conventions and assumptions, and/or to be related to topical issues? What has to be done with the songs and the music, given not only the remoteness of the "Neue Musik" of the Weimar Republic but (for example) the special conditions of a tonal language like Cantonese, where pitch can convey meaning? Is it a disadvantage that (in Antony Tatlow's words) Brecht's plays are "pegged to the level of the theories of their day?" How long can we go on expecting audiences to understand his political concerns (Hitler--who is he? Class struggle--what is that?), and what have they to do with ours?

All this suggests a need to re-do Brecht much as Cézanne "re-did Poussin in accordance with Nature," applying his discoveries and his approach in radically altered circumstances so as to create new works. Alternatively we must situate the plays so that their terms of reference--whether historic or artistic--can be as clearly understood as when he wrote them, and their point as vividly made. Does this mean changing and relocating them? My own feeling was that the various versions which Brecht made of his main plays already offer a choice of texts, and if none of these is valid for our own time, then no changes by any of today's directors are likely to improve it. For it is not just Brecht's writing but its relation to a significant context that has to remain charged with life, engaging the audience's imagination so that they feel his lasting connection with the modern world.

In the poetry this is clear enough: his poems work best if left undocored. With the plays however, ill-informed attempts to make their theme more topical, or to update language and attitudes, can dislocate, weaken and trivialize the work by cutting it away from its original roots.

Toronto seemed to bear this out. The "modern" touching-up of Mother Courage and The Threepenny Opera--in the one case by substituting some kind of Latin American folk balladeer for the scene titles, in the other by introducing a black-clad pop singer to sing "Mack the Knife" and make various cute but pointless reappearances--were simply embarrassing, whereas the stripping of Drums in the Night of all misdirected "improvements," whether by adaptors or by Brecht himself, revealed it as a surprisingly powerful work full of sudden shifts of level and tone.

In Hong Kong, however, it quickly became evident that the situation outside Europe and North America (the only areas which Brecht actually knew) is very different. On the one hand there is a plainly greater need to translate the plays into other cultures, not merely another language, if their story and purpose are to be understood at all; on the other hand, there are militant social and political movements that want to apply or refunction Brecht's work for objectives of which he would surely approved.

Either way, there are immediate practical considerations which may override the broader arguments for respecting what Brecht wrote. Certainly, none of those at the Symposium would have disagreed with the non-Europeans, who cited some impressive evidence of the inspiration which he offers to writers and theatre groups in less developed societies currently battling against imperialism, corruption, and apartheid. Yet this cannot be used as a justification for willful manipulation of the plays to titillate more sophisticated audiences or show off the individual contribution of some fashionable director, however "progressive" his professed politics. It seems indeed to be in the technically and aesthetically advanced theatres of developed countries that the interpretation of Brecht most needs to be kept simple and free of gimmicks. For they are the ones most likely to mangle his language and pervert his plays.

These are some reflections prompted by two remarkable opportunities to see Brecht as others see him. In Toronto and Hong Kong he underwent his own favorite process of Verfremdung, of distancing or alienation, of being presented to an informed audience as something rich and strange. The result was that the participants were liable to be struck by problems more or less marginal to the main topics of discussion, which for some reason had not occurred to them before. Why do all the engagements and weddings in Brecht's plays, for instance, go so farcically or disastrously wrong? Not only that in Die Hochzeit, but also Eva's, Virginia's, Anna Balicke's party at the Piccadilly Bar, Grusha's marriage to the dying man, even Macheath's in the stable? Why is there no instance of fatherliness to offset the many motherly figures; and why do all the fathers but Balicke appear to be single parents? Again, what came of Brecht's famous interest in sport? Did he ever see American football or baseball (or boxing for that matter), and what did he make of them? No mention of sport in the Arbeitsjournal.

It all seemed a far cry from "Paradigm Change," a phrase that seldom recurred at Hong Kong after the opening sessions. But this is what happens when scholars and theatre people begin to get really interested: they arrived feeling perhaps slightly Brecht-lagged, then found their foreign colleagues raising a whole range of apparently simple questions which demand to be followed through. It will be surprising if any of us in the future is able to compartmentalise Brecht and divide the German (or European-American) writer from the various Brechts now being experienced by the Third World. For we have found out how illuminating it is to share each other's views of him. No writer who prompts fresh insights and new opinions three decades after his death can be held to suffer from durchschlagende Wirkungslosigkeit. Or, as Descartes might have put it, Brecht makes us think; there he is.

## ABSTRACTS--7TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM, HONG KONG

Arnold Blumer, University of Stellenbosch, Republic of South Africa:

States of Emergency:

Some Thoughts on Brecht's Fear and Misery of the Third Reich

In regard to the reception of performances of Brecht's play Fear and Misery of the Third Reich the question arises why some of these performances in foreign countries were successful and others not. My paper tries to answer this question: Apart from the fact that audiences who are/were directly affected by a state of emergency are more able to relate to this play, three factors seem to have determined the reception of this play:

1. Directors and actors have always made a choice out of the twenty-seven scenes of the play and this choice had a profound influence on the way in which the audience would perceive the play.
2. The directors' and actors' interpretations of the chosen scenes have influenced the audiences' perception.
3. It is the audience which constitutes the meaning of a performance.

My paper suggests that it was not only Brecht's interference with director and actors which led to the disastrous performance of the play in New York in June 1944, but also his Eurocentric attitude, his (perhaps unintentional) disregard for his American audience's cultural background.

The conclusion at which my paper arrives is that performances of this and other Brecht plays, especially in non-German-speaking countries, have to take the cultural differenciae specificae of their audiences into account.

James R. Brandon, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA:

Asian and Western Theatre Relations:  
Fifty Years After Brecht

In the 1930s, Brecht and other European theatre artists found many practices and theories of Asian theatre compatible to their artistic agendas. Seeing Mei Lanfang perform in Moscow, Brecht (and Meyerhold and others as well) recognized that the non-realistic performer in an Asian theatre form was perceived by the audience on two levels: as actor and as character. In the West, and especially in realism, emphasis was upon content--the "drama"--plot, character, theme. In Asian theatre, it was clear that "codes" of performance and of acting were equal in importance. Just as the character resides in the larger world of the drama, the actor resides in the larger world of artistic-theatrical codes in the Asian experience. When audiences knew the theatrical codes, as they did in Asia, acting was not formalistic but expressed a deep reality of the culture. Brecht responded sympathetically to the duality of actor-character found in Asia because it supported his own political and artistic theory of alienation in acting.



In general, Western theatre artists of the 1930s, such as Brecht, were not concerned with Asian theatre per se. (They never visited Asia, for example.) Rather, as Western theatre artists, they used Asian theatre, were stimulated by it, or borrowed from it as they wished. They were making Western theatre for Western audiences. They were also reflecting the prevailing Eurocentric belief in Western cultural superiority and the historical accident of Western political dominance of Asia. Today interchange between Asian and Western theatre artists is more equitable. It is notable that fifty years after Brecht's brief encounter with Mei Lanfang, scores of young American and European actors are studying Kabuki and Chinese Opera and Kathakali acting in Asia, as pupils of Asian master performers. They are performers and they return to their theatre cultures bringing non-Western theatrical codes, ingrained in bodies and voices, and an interest in Asian theatre for its own sake, not merely as material for Western adaptation or exploitation. This marks a significant artistic change. More than that, it exemplifies the profoundly altered political and psychological relationships between Asian and Western theatre artists that exist today as compared to Brecht's era half a century ago.

Vasudha Dalmia-Lüderitz, Universität Tübingen, FRG:

#### Brecht in Hindi--The Poetics of Response

It has often been claimed that folk theatre forms are particularly suitable for adapting Brecht's plays--that the "two-dimensional" dance theatre of Asia, with no tradition of "realistic-naturalistic" depiction could approach Brecht straight, as it were. This assumption is examined here, in view of the profusion of Brecht productions since the 1970s with a definite trend towards folk and dialect versions. The first part of this paper then traces the historical significance of folk forms in the context of modern Indian theatre and the possible link with traditional poetics. I begin with a brief survey of classical Indian aesthetics, the origin of the concept of "rasa," taste, in a treatise on drama (parts of which go back to the second century B.C.) and its subsequent elaboration into a highly sophisticated system of aesthetics. This is followed by a short account of modern drama in Hindi as it developed in North India from the last century onwards: the interplay of folk, urban-popular, and literary drama under conditions of colonialism and the impact of popular English theatre and literary models from the West.

In correspondence with the worldwide political movements in the 1930s, and then under very different conditions in the 1960s and '70s, there were efforts to rediscover and use contemporaneously the theatre forms of the "people." The acquaintance with Brecht's theatre and the correspondence with folk theatre at large which it seemed to offer provided further possibilities for renewal and urbanization. Aesthetic models, long absorbed into devotional theology or which had become parts of scholarly exercise were increasingly associated with folk forms in the interests of forging an encompassing national tradition. This national tradition was then, by extension, also linked with Brecht.

The second part of this paper seeks to unravel this complicated intertwining by juxtaposing characteristic features of folk theatre, in this case the "svang" of North India, with similar formal aesthetic features of epic theatre as Brecht himself envisioned it.

It is possible to demonstrate firstly that the "rasa" aesthetics provide a diffuse approach to folk theatre, coloured as they are by strong national interests which seek more to level out than define differences. Secondly, it can be shown that the intentions of folk and epic theatre contradict rather than complement each other, even if in practice it is not always possible to distinguish sharply between functions. To "expand" the folk form, then, in the interests of Brecht's theatre is not a straightforward process, since the folk form is not expanded on its own grounds, it is transferred to an urban setting. The awareness of traditional modes of performance, the patterns of audience expectation cannot be transported with it. The change or modulation cannot have the expected audience response once we do away with the assumption that we are dealing here with pan-Indian traditions which function under all conditions.

In the city, the folk play retains a certain exotic aura. The effects of absorbing Brecht into this tradition--sometimes pleasing, sometimes unwieldy--do, however, create new patterns of expectations in their turn, so that a certain change does take place. And occasionally there are attempts at playwriting and producing that break through urban-rural and class barriers, and for these Brecht remains stimulating, even necessary.

Ronald G. Davis, San Francisco, California, USA:

Hanns Eisler and Charles Seeger--Music of the U.S. Left

There are a number of ways to look at Brecht reception in the USA--for example, one can look at the production of Brecht plays, or the number of classes on Brecht taught at universities, or Brecht's influence on the other arts such as poetry, film, and music. The importance of music, I think, has been slighted.

The specific case discussed in this paper is the acquaintance of Charles Seeger and Hanns Eisler in the U.S. and their differing views on/approaches to making music for the left. Seeger (father of Pete Seeger) was the mentor/precursor for the left folk-political music of the '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s, and what's left of that tradition today. In 1934 Seeger, a member of the Composers' Collective (a CP/USA-sponsored group) wrote an essay for Modern Music in which he defended a proletkult view which by 1938 was turned sideways to become a grassroots concept of making music for Americans. Hanns Eisler's suggestions (for example, to the ILGWU Chorus in 1938) involved a broad approach: "use the best poets and the most advanced composers." As a Schoenbergian-communist composer he wrote, and urged others to write, music which went beyond tendenz or kitsch. Seeger's views eventually dominated the American left, while Eisler's music has been largely ignored (and even disassociated/discarded from productions of Die Mutter or Die Maßnahme, in distinct contrast to Weill's scores for Brecht plays). The paper is an outline for a book concerned with the making of complex art for the left.

Lutz Dannenberg and Hans-Harald Müller, Universität Hamburg, FRG:

### Bertolt Brecht and Logical Empiricism

In the first part of the paper, the authors criticize the existing interpretations of Brecht's "Keuner" story "Die Frage, ob es einen Gott gibt," and present an interpretation of their own, focusing on the parallels between Herr Keuner's argument in the story and the logical empiricist principle of verifiability.

Citing original sources, the authors demonstrate in the second section that Brecht was not only familiar with the principle of verifiability, he was personally acquainted with several of the leading figures in the logical empiricist movement as well. The paper ends with a survey of the areas of Brecht's theoretical concerns and literary work which were influenced--to varying degrees--by his interest in logical empiricism.

Josette Feral, Université de Québec à Montréal, Canada:

### Alienation Effect and Multi-Media, or: Brecht Inverted

In most schools of theatre, the theories of Brecht form an important part of the core curriculum of the aspiring actor. As a result, his theory of "alienation effect" has attained the status of dogma. Why, then, should one speak again today of a theory which has evidently become almost a theatrical imperative, replacing traditional approaches to character portrayal?

Numerous examples may be cited, all of which indicate that the phenomenon of alienation has become an implicit though non-theorized principle of contemporary theatre: the dehumanizing of the characters of T. Kantor (La Classe morte); the clownish or oriental transformation of the characters of Mnouchine (Les Clowns, L'Age d'Or, Richard III); the affectation of the figures of A. Vitez (Bérénice); the mediated coldness of the characters in G. Lavaudant's Les Céphéides; the mechanization of R. Wilson's characters in Einstein on the Beach; and the mechanized hysteria of the characters in R. Foreman's Penguin Touquet. All of these may be analyzed as examples of a distancing or alienation effect similar to that which Brecht referred in his texts.

Inspired by parallel trends in the arts, new technologies, and multi-media performances, a new theatrical movement has come to life, a movement that has amplified and displaced the process of alienation, moving it away from the actor and from his relationship with the character he portrays, while reserving it for all that surrounds and absorbs him. This new trend is seen in the work of Trisha Brown, of Andy de Groat, Laurie Anderson, Meredith Monk, Bob Ashley . . . but also in the work of the SQUAT Theatre.

Since the above cases cannot be considered to be pure examples of Brechtian alienation effect (at best, they are neo-Brechtian), Brecht should not be construed to be a theoretical or even a practical point of reference here.

Such a conclusion poses certain questions. For instance, how are we to explain the preeminence of alienation effect in modern and post-modern theatre while foregoing all references to Brecht's theories? And further, how are we to understand Brechtian alienation effect in light of a non-Brechtian theory? An attempt is made to answer these two questions while focusing attention upon the theoretical and philosophical presuppositions that have given rise to both Brechtian and non-Brechtian manifestations of alienation effect.

Gerhard Fischer, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia:

On Integrating Brecht, the New Left and the Alternative Movements:  
The Development of Emancipatory Theatre from 1970 to 1985

The establishment of an emancipatory (realistic, critical) young people's theatre is one of the most significant and lasting impulses to emanate from within the New Left of the late 1960s, resulting in a radical transformation of this area of cultural production. Twenty years later, this theatre --characterized best by the productions of the GRIPS-Theater of West Berlin --offers an example of a successful and independent appropriation of the legacy of Brecht, demonstrating the continuity of some of the central tenets of Brecht shared by the New Left (insistence on political enlightenment, self-determination, emancipation, solidarity, democratization) that are equally part of the demands of the new protest movements of the 1980s. After its breakthrough and success in the early 70s, GRIPS' concept of emancipatory theatre had to be defended against the pressures of the Tendenzwende (paradigm shift interpreted in the narrower sense of the socio-cultural and political reorientation in the Federal Republic), particularly with regard to the crisis of the New Left. This development can be seen in the overcoming of an earlier ideological dogmatism, centered around the notion of proletarian struggle and a vision of the historical mission of the proletariat (which was central to Brecht and a necessary component of his historical context but which was found to be inadequate in the experience of the new left), while still insisting on the necessity of a precise sociological and historical analysis along with a critical, non-illusionistic, i.e. distantiating realism.

The change can also be seen in the development of what can be defined as political, a definition that goes beyond describing the context of social relations in the framework of existing societal groups and institutions, to include and to emphasize new forms and modes of social organization and interaction, integrating an analysis of everyday life experiences in a so-called private sphere as the area where politics begin, to wit the emphasis on a subjective factor to portray all aspects of a person's life experiences including dreams, wishes, fantasies, emotions. The continuity can also be seen in the importance of a historical dimension that is an integral part of emancipatory theatre, with the aim of mediating between the generations of '68 and '86: to protect the progressive demands and achievements of the new left and to make these intelligible to today's young people. It is no coincidence that one of the latest GRIPS productions for young people shows a decisive Brechtian content and form again: Voll auf der Rolle (1984) deals

with the experience of Fascism and contemporary attitudes (including pro-Fascist sentiments, hostility towards foreigners) of young West Germans. It does so by presenting a play-within-a-play on two historical levels (1945 and 1984), in which a Lehrstück-experience is being demonstrated, supporting and illustrating the effectiveness of Brecht's claims of theatre as a laboratory of social, emancipatory learning.

Rainer Friedrich, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada:

#### Postmodernist Elements in Brecht's Work

In a recent attempt at answering the question "what is postmodernism?" Ibab Hassan has offered, in lieu of a definition, a series of postmodernist features (definiens, as he calls them). In many of them one easily recognizes characteristics of modernism, such as fragmentation with its preference for montage, collage, the cut-up literary object, paratactic structures, and open form; decanonization of all conventions of authority; irony; hybridization of genres; carnevalization and the concomitant espousal of polymorphous perversity; ritual participation; constructivism. More specifically: in montage, parataxis, open form, irony, hybridization of genres, audience participation, and constructivism we discern the central features of Brechtian modernism. The hybridization of epic and drama in his epic theatre is the very core of Brecht's concept of modern drama--at the time of its conception a veritable scandalon for traditional theorists of the genres. Freud's concept of "polymorphous perversity," long before N.O. Brown gave it the wide currency it possesses today, had found its dramatization in Brecht's early play Baal. All this seems to lend support to Gerald Graff's thesis of the "myth of the postmodernist breakthrough:" postmodernism, Graff argues, "should be seen not as a break with romantic and modernist assumptions, but rather as a logical culmination of the premises of these earlier movements, premises not always clearly defined in discussions of these issues" (G. Graff, Literature Against Itself (Chicago, 1979), p. 32).

Graff's thesis could be shown to apply even to the core features of postmodernism, the decentering of the subject and the deconstruction of subjectivity. F. Dallmayr has most aptly and succinctly summed up this element in postmodernism. To postmodernist thinkers, most notably M. Foucault and J. Derrida, influenced by Heidegger and Nietzsche,

the malaise of modern and contemporary life can be traced, either directly or indirectly, to its anthropocentric and subjectivist thrust or its focus on the thinking subject; according to some, the malaise has already reached a crisis stage with the result that the "end" or "death of man" is imminent (if not an accomplished fact). Spokesmen differ as to the nature of proposed antidotes or substitutes for modern subjectivity and individualism; but a preferred (though not uniformly endorsed) remedy consists in a radical shift of attention, aimed at dislocating or "decentering" man in favor of overarching structures or systematic relationships" (F. Dallmayr, Twilight of Subjectivity (Amherst, 1981, p. 11 (emphasis added))).

True, autonomous subjectivity has become the (albeit problematical) hallmark of modernity since its beginnings in Renaissance humanism; its "deconstruction," the concomitant "decentering of the subject," and the theoretical anti-humanism it engenders may therefore be said to mark off postmodernism from modernism. And indeed they do. However, in the modernist conception of subjectivity there is an inherent tendency of a surrendering to its opposite--the objectivity of "overarching structures or systematic relations," both natural and social. Thus in the postmodernist espousal of "selfless-ness" (Hassan), its negation of subjectivity and the ensuing anti-humanism proclaimed by Derrida and Foucault, we witness the actualisation of this inherent tendency in modernism, registering again, with Graff, postmodernism's continuity, rather than its break, with modernism.

A case in point of such continuity is the work of Antonin Artaud, one of post-modernism's canonized authors (postmodernism, in the process of de-canonization, creates its own canons). Artaud's theatre of ritual participation, with its advocacy of the retribalization of life and society, implies, as Roger Shattuck has pointed out, "surrender(ing) individual consciousness and even individual life to a higher collectivity" (New York Review of Books XXII, no. 18 (1976), p. 23). Artaud's theatre "decenters the subject"--hence his good standing with the postmodernists. Artaud's work also marks the point at which postmodernism may become antimodern: the "decentering of the subject," resulting in Artaud's notion of "a liberated life which sweeps away human individuality and in which Man is only a reflection," (Artaud, in The Theatre and its Double) amounts to a regression to pre-individuated forms of communal life. Shattuck did not hesitate to discern in Artaud's discarding of subjectivity a "totalitarian mind."

In his early plays Baal and Man is Man, and in the Taniko-group of Lehrstücke, Brecht is closest to Artaud's theatre. The common denominator is the "decentering of the subject," the central theme in these plays. In an analysis of these plays, with frequent reference to some of Brecht's theoretical texts, the proposed paper attempts to demonstrate that the early work of Brecht anticipates the post-modernist deconstruction of subjectivity which lends it its topicality. This topicality, as my paper will show, is a dubious one: the emphasis of my analysis will be on the problematic, if not dangerous, nature of the post-modernist project of decentering the subject in favor of overarching structures.

This problematical aspect comes most clearly out in Brecht's Lehrstück The Measure Taken. In analysing the anticipation of the postmodernist subject in Brecht's early work and in pointing out its implications, I shall try to show that it is at odds with another central project of postmodernism--its "war on totality" (Lyotard), on the totalizing system, behind which the specter of totalitarianism is said to lurk.

The concept of modern subjectivity is fraught with inherent difficulties: no doubt, it is thoroughly problematic. To simply discard it by way of deconstruction and by decentering the subject in favour of overarching structures may be a solution of sorts, but a solution that resembles the cutting of the Gordian knot. To solve the problem by abolishing what is problematic conjures up, in this case, the very specter of totalitarianism on which post-modernism has declared war.

Ulrich Gaier, Universität Konstanz, FRG:

Dialektische Dramaturgie Brechts,  
dargestellt am Kaukasischen Kreidekreis

Die von Brecht Ende der dreißiger Jahre entwickelte und im Messingkauf niedergelegte Theatertheorie zielt nicht mehr wie die Theorie des "nicht-aristotelischen Dramas" auf möglichst rein gestaltetes und spielbares episches Theater, sondern auf ein zwischen dramatisch einfühlbarem "Karussell-Typ" und episch distanzierbarem "Planetariums-Typ" dialektisch gespanntes Theater, das den Zuschauer durch die widersprechenden Kommunikationsangebote erst wirklich befreit--von Illusion einerseits, von Belehrung andererseits. Diese Dramaturgie ist wegen des scheinbar genauen Anschließens des "Kleinen Organons für das Theater" (1948) an die Theorie des epischen Theaters der frühen dreißiger Jahre nicht beachtet worden, obwohl Brecht in den "Nachträgen zum kleinen Organon" (1954) dessen einseitige Gewichtung der "hauptsächlichen Seite des Widerspruchs" zwischen "Erleben und Darstellen, Einfühlen und Zeigen, Rechtfertigen und Kritisieren" herausgestellt hat. Entsprechend wurden auch die für eine ambi- oder polyvalente Textkonstitution wesentlichen Paragraphen 38-41 des "Kleinen Organons" mit ihren Hinweisen auf "Skizzenspuren und Echos" anderer möglicher Vorgänge neben den "herausgearbeiteten" Vorgängen unbeachtet gelassen. Der Brechtsche Stand der Theorie im Messingkauf ist grundlegend für die Stücke seit Leben des Galilei sowie für die Bearbeitungen "klassischer" Stücke. Die dialektische Struktur wurde für den Galilei bemerkt, dort aber als ein Übergangsphänomen betrachtet (Buck) oder als "Drama der Widersprüche" bewertet. Für die andern Stücke gilt immer noch die Auffassung von der Diskrepanz zwischen der vermeintlich rein epischen Theorie Brechts und der (neben epischen "Effekten") dramatischen Wirkungsmächtigkeit seiner Stücke. Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis wird exemplarisch interpretiert als gespannt zwischen den kommunikativen Angeboten "Utopie" ("Der Streit um das Tal"), "K-Typ" und "P-Typ" (Grusche-Handlung) und "Volksballade" und "P-Typ" (Azdak-Handlung) sowie zwischen den Repräsentationsformen des Utopischen und des Historisch-Parabolischen. Hinweise auf andere Stücke (Leben des Galilei, Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder, Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti) werden ergänzend und zum Beleg der Allgemeingültigkeit der dramaturgischen These gegeben.

Reinhold Grimm, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA:

Bertolt Brecht's Chicago--A German Myth?

The paper investigates, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the image of Chicago as it appears in Brecht's writings from the early 1920s onward; it demonstrates that this image is in no way restricted to the famous Chicago plays In the Jungle of Cities, Saint Joan of the Stockyards, and The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui. The author arrives at a twofold conclusion: first, he shows that Brecht's image of Chicago remains profoundly ambiguous throughout, despite certain shifts of emphasis; second, invoking Carl Sandburg's Chicago Poems of 1916, he proves that Brecht's attitude towards America as represented by Chicago corresponds exactly to that of the young Sandburg. Hence, what Brecht has created is not a "German myth" but rather a genuine if highly personal reflection of that contradictory "American myth" which contains the "American dream" as well as the "American nightmare." (For more details, see "Bertolt Brecht's Chicago--ein Augsburger Mythos?," in Brecht 85: Zur Ästhetik Brechts (Berlin-GDR, 1986), pp. 224-234.)

George M. Gugelberger, University of California at Riverside, USA:

#### Brecht in/and Africa

Brecht has had a formidable impact in Third World countries. Exemplary for this reception here in Africa is Guiné, Kenya, and Nigeria. Contrary to expectation, however, it is not the staging or the adaptations of Brecht plays which is discussed in this paper, but rather the use of Brecht the poet.

It has been said that "well after his death in 1956 Brecht the poet remained like an unsuspected time-bomb ticking away beneath the engine-room of world literature." That this ticking away is strongly felt in Third World countries is an indicator of a literature considerably more concerned with relevance, topicality, in short: politics. How and why his poems are so important to some African writers is shown via an analysis of the Guinean Alioum Fantouré's novel Le Cercle des Tropiques; the citation strategy of Ngugi wa Thiong'o in Decolonizing the Mind, Barrel of a Pen, and Writers in Politics; some agit-prop plays by the young Nigerian Tunde Fatunde.

The examples discussed in this paper show increasingly how Third World writers oppose the recolonization, canonization, and classic-fication that characterizes Brecht reception in Western as well as Eastern Europe and in the United States.

Walter Hinderer, Princeton University, USA:

#### Schiller, Chicago and China: The Aesthetic Function of Foreign Elements in Brecht's In the Jungle of Cities

Adaptations and transformations of specific thematic and aesthetic devices are characteristic for Brecht's dramatic work. He tried to overcome customary expectations by alienation and to stimulate intellectual judgement by distancing the spectator from the obsolete models of the past. As Hegel once put it: "The known exists only because it is known but not recognized." To make the audience recognize the unknown side of the known Brecht employs a variety of aesthetic devices. In the case of the play In the Jungle of Cities he stated that he worked very hard in order to make the plot completely alien, that is, in his words, to point to the obvious. Chicago and China are one of the key elements of his aesthetic devices which he uses in his play In the Jungle of Cities in an especially intriguing experimental fashion. I would like to analyze the function of these elements and to direct the attention to a third aspect: the transformation and critical challenge of specific motives of Schiller's plays The Robbers and Don Carlos. At first glance Chicago and China seem to be references to foreign cultures, different behaviour patterns, a rendering of a different atmosphere, but they may serve actually as an aesthetic model for new experience. The references to Schiller, however, demonstrate the ideological difference between the idealistic plays of the past and theater of the modern world. In Garga and Shlink he confronts not only the world of the idealist and the realist, two different cultures and behaviour patterns, but also describes the changing system of values: alienation, the total breakdown of communication, disillusionment, loneliness.



Brecht shows how the modern city destroys basic human relationships, threatens individuality and even language. Not without reason, the "jungle" also refers to the "jungle" of words, to the destruction of language. The main aspect of the paper will be Brecht's use of foreign elements, the way he produces, adapts and transforms them and an analysis of the aesthetic reality he is able to construct with these elements. This complex pattern of transformation is mentioned not without irony in one of Brecht's notes. He states: "George Garga resembles A. Rimbaud in appearance. He is essentially a German translation from the French into the American."

Sigfrid Hoefert, University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada:

The Brechtian Heritage in Spanish Children's Theater:  
An Analysis of Alfonso Sastre's Chalk Circle Plays

Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis and the Story of the Lime Circle by Li Hsing-tao were the major sources for a cycle of plays by the Spanish dramatist Alfonso Sastre. They appeared under the title El circulito de tiza in the late sixties and were meant for the "teatro infantil" of the Spanish-speaking world. The first part of this work ("El circulito chino") refers specifically to Li Hsing-tao and takes place in China; the second part ("Pleito de la muñeca abandonada") makes specific reference to Brecht and is set in Madrid or Barcelona. The second play has also been published independently as Historia de una muñeca abandonada (1964) and has received considerable attention. It has been performed in Spain, Cuba, Italy, the two German Republics, and other countries; it has been translated into several languages, has been adapted by an East German playwright, and rests firmly on Brecht's chalk circle interpretation.

However, since Sastre's plays are intended for an audience consisting primarily of children, the Spanish dramatist has put emphasis on presentational aspects, and has consciously moulded his work in such a way that it appeals to, and is understood by, young people. Moreover, Sastre has also dealt with theoretical questions that are connected with his endeavour. In this regard, he also had recourse to Brecht. Even the title of his pertinent deliberations, "Pequenísimo organon para el teatro de niños," indicates this.

I propose to analyze the intertextual relationship which exists between Sastre's Historia de una muñeca abandonada (i.e., the second part of El circulito de tiza) and Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis. The first part of the cycle will not be analyzed because it does not relate to Brecht; it is based entirely on Li Hsing-tao's version of the chalk-circle motif. In addition, I would like to examine Sastre's theoretical position vis-à-vis the work of Brecht. It is hoped that thereby the impact which Brecht exerted in this field of artistic endeavour will become manifest.

# 高加索灰欄記

The China Youth Art Theatre in Bertolt Brecht's

## THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE

Johann Holzner, Universität Innsbruck, Austria:

Die Nachgeborenen zitieren neue Vorbilder:  
Auseinandersetzungen mit dem literarischen Erbe in der  
österreichischen Lyrik der Gegenwart

Eine Durchsicht der wichtigsten österreichischen Literaturzeitschriften (Literatur und Kritik, manuskripte, protokolle und Wespennest), und zwar aller Jahrgänge von 1975/76 bis 1985/86, im Hinblick auf Widmungs- und Porträtgedichte, bestätigt zunächst, was Winfried Woesler in einer Untersuchung über die literarischen Bezugsfiguren in der deutschsprachigen Lyrik der Gegenwart schon für die sechziger und siebziger Jahre festgehalten hat: daß österreichische Autoren weit seltener als ihre deutschen Kollegen explizit auf Vorbilder verweisen, an Grundanschauungen und Verfahrensweisen ihrer Vorläufer erinnern. Doch aus diesem Ergebnis läßt sich keineswegs der Schluß ziehen, daß sich die österreichischen Autoren weniger dem literarischen Erbe verpflichtet fühlen als etwa die Autoren aus der BRD und aus der DDR. Das Ergebnis täuscht, was allein das Beispiel Brecht anschaulich demonstriert.

In einer kulturellen Atmosphäre, in der literarische Werke nicht mehr auf Ablehnung oder gar auf Zensur stoßen, dafür jedoch unterschieds- und widerspruchslos konsumiert werden (was in Gerhard Jaschkes Gedicht "porträt eines wahren kulturfreunds" mit beißendem Spott thematisiert ist), in einer solchen Atmosphäre verbietet es sich geradezu, Vorbilder und Bezugsfiguren auf den Status von Klassikern emporzuheben. Darüberhinaus wird die Aneignung der Tradition aus der Sicht der Autoren nicht geleistet, sondern untergraben, solange das Erbe mehr oder weniger nur konserviert, nicht aber kritisch und kreativ fortgeführt wird--sei es auch bis zu dessen totaler Entmachtung. Deshalb ist es nicht weiter verwunderlich, daß sich in Österreich nur mehr ein einziger Lyriker von Rang findet, der an die Ästhetik, an die poetischen Verfahrens- und Gestaltungsweisen Brechts kontinuierlich nahtlos sich anschließt, weil er keinen Grund sieht, diese als obsolet zu betrachten, nämlich Erich Fried. Gleichwohl läßt sich bereits in seinem Werk nachweisen, was dann wesentlich deutlicher in den Gedichten etwa von Friederike Mayröcker und Ernst Jandl zu sehen ist: daß die Sprache des literarischen Erbes in der zeitgenössischen poetischen Praxis nicht bloß als Instrument übernommen, als solches manchmal sogar ausdrücklich abgelehnt wird, indessen weiterhin als Material dient, das neu auszulesen, neu zu bearbeiten, zu einem völlig neuen Gebäude zusammenzufügen ist.

Herbert Knust, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA:

Brecht's Dream Playing: Between Vision and Illusion

Receptive to modern psychology, but averse to introspection and critical of psychotherapists, Brecht frequently used the dream motif in lyrics, drama and prose, mostly in crucial contexts. Against the background of various strands of dream theory nourished by popular beliefs, philosophical speculation, medical interest and literary imagination, Brecht's exploration of the poetic and pedagogic potential of dream messages utilizes the dialectic nature of dreams, i.e. their retrospective and prospective interplay with waking reality, giving cause for illusion as well as prophecy.

In Brecht's early fascination with visions, nightmares and disillusionment prevail. With emerging ideology and developing literary technique, traumatic dream experiences are politicized and endowed with provocation for change. While specifying social repression as cause of dreams, Brecht became increasingly interested in their anticipatory function. Protest, rebellion, and judgment are frequently expressed in pivotal dreams; voices from the underworld, exile imagery and other elements of "alarm" influence the productive alienation of dream scenes.

Whereas "Traum von einer großen Niesmacherin" uses dream distortion for satirical effect as a form of epic theater within a dream, "Das Theater, Stätte der Träume" exposes emotional theater at large as a heedlessly concocted drug-dream, with special reference to the American scene (Los Angeles, the city of marketable dreams). But in contrast to escapist dreams as protectors of sleep, the activist Brecht proposes vigilant dreaming in brightness as a product of stage illumination and work elucidation, alerting an enlightened consciousness.

If the dream motif itself was already part of a theme treated by Brecht, he did not fail to adapt it to his own dramaturgic end, as in his Jeanne d'Arc versions, Schweyk, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, or, for example, in his film script "All Our Yesterdays". The ambiguity and provocative open-endedness of Johanna's religious dream mission blended with her sobering descent to the lower regions is tied to the progressive awakening of Simone Machard in critical dream sequences, comparable to the dream sequences in "Die vier Träume des Arbeiters Jen" in the Tui novel or the five dreams of the waterseller Wang in Der gute Mensch. Schweyk's visions, seemingly less complex than Simone's, are similar in their combination of individual psychology with the contrasting techniques of epic theater, raising crucial socio-political questions. Especially noteworthy is Der gute Mensch, in which Brecht plays with the dream on several levels: the dream within the play, the dream within the dream, and the play as counter-dreamplay--opposing Strindberg's epoch-making Dreamplay in a number of particular thrusts, including "epic" technique and contradictory assimilation of oriental philosophy.

After exile and war the frequency of dream scenes in Brecht's works declines. The early nightmares and the complex politicizing dreams give way to golden socio-economic dreams within reach ("Die Erziehung der Hirse," "Lied vom Glück"), but then yield to skeptical dream visions in the Buckow Elegies. Brecht's dream imagery thus moves from metaphors of doomed existence via challenging trials of cognition to cautious visions of social promise. He did not ignore the subconscious, but he countered psychoanalysis dialectically with socioanalysis. This confrontation implies a response as well to Freud's Interpretation of Dreams.

戲 劇 學 院 演 出

A School of Drama Production

# 阿茜的救國夢

The Visions of

Simone Machard

(in Cantonese)

Astrid von Kotze, University of Natal, Durban, Republic of South Africa:

**First World Industry and Third World Workers--  
The Struggle for a Workers' Theatre in South Africa**

The paper traces how over the last four years theatre has emerged as a force to be reckoned with within the democratic labour organisations in South Africa, and particularly in Durban, Natal, where cultural action as an organised movement is at this stage unique. I describe the work of the Durban Workers' Cultural Local (DWCL), a group composed of workers and cultural activists and chart out how, in spite of many obstacles, we have struggled to make no less than 14 plays, over and above the poetry and songs performed at mass meetings of worker groupings.

The overriding element all participants share is their suffering as exploited labour and their union membership which arises out of the realisation that in unity is strength. The paper hints at some of the problems cultural workers are faced with daily--Brecht's observation that "the great working masses of the people are on the move; the activity and brutality of their enemies prove it" is most applicable to the South African political situation. Transport, accommodation, the lack of suitable spaces to work in, and the time factor are singled out as the greatest problem areas in doing cultural work.

In a document prepared by the DWCL in July 1985, the importance of cultural work alongside other forms of struggle is asserted for three reasons:

"(1) Because even if we are culturally deprived as workers, we demand of ourselves the commitment to build a better world.

(2) Because we cannot abdicate, hand over the responsibility of this world to others. There are too many intellectuals, teachers, politicians and bosses ever ready to 'civilize' us and reap all the harvest for themselves.

(3) Because we have been culturally exploited time and time again: we have been singing, parading, boxing, acting and writing within a system we did not control. So far black workers have been feeding all their creativity into a culture machine to make profits for others . . . This makes us say that it is time to being controlling our creativity; we must create space in our struggle--through our songs, our own slogans, our own poems, our own artwork, our own plays and dances. At the same time, in our struggle we must also fight against the cultural profit machines."

In consultation with union leaders, shop-steward councils, and the workforce on the shop floor, members of the DWCL decide when and where production and presentation of work takes place and which new projects should be tackled. Accountability to the progressive groups to which the participants belong is an important feature of all the work.

On the basis of a number of questions regarding the function and origin of plays and the central figures and conflicts portrayed, the paper then attempts to group the plays made by the DWCL into 5 broad categories: (1)

strike plays--done by workers of specific factories and workplaces, depicting their class-struggles in the area; (2) plays depicting the class-struggle in a fictional way; (3) plays dealing with the worker in his township community; (4) plays about migrancy, showing the contradictions migrant workers have to endure; (5) historical plays. One play in particular is singled out and described more fully, both with regard to the workshop-creation and the performance history: The Long March, a play done by dismissed workers from BTR Sarmcol, one of the big multi-national companies.

Finally, the paper hints at some of the characteristics of worker plays and suggests that a definition of "popular culture" must be looked for in products such as those of DWCL.

Edmund Licher, University of Groningen, The Netherlands:

"Nichts ist also der Tod"--  
Eastern and Western Elements in Bertolt Brecht's Thinking  
About Death and Identity

Bertolt Brecht was one of the European writers who consistently viewed man's identity in its relation with death. His inspiration on this score consisted of basic philosophical writings on the problem, both from the Eastern and from the Western cultural domain.

In the poems of the very young Brecht (1913-1918), dying is depicted as inevitable, but at the same time the reader is presented with an attitude that should enable him not to be vanquished by death: going down in splendour. The influence of Nietzsche is obvious. In Baal and in poems composed around 1920, death itself is painted as a slow but irresistible process of decomposition and of the individual's absorption into impersonal nature. An essential element of Brecht's conception of death in this stage is doubt of the personality as a temporal continuum, including the epistemological and ethical implications of such doubt. This anti-religious and anti-metaphysical starting-point offers possibilities of development in various directions --towards a Western atheist-materialist view of death and the individual as well as towards an a-metaphysical Eastern one.

A motif repeatedly used by Brecht from 1922 onward till his death in 1956 is the "Totenbetrachtung." In the scene "Bäume am Abend" in Baal, human identity is considered from the point of view of death, but for the first time focusing on the connection between individual and social identity. In the poem "Merkwürdig" (1924), the I-figure inspects the embalmed corpse of Tilly in Altötting. His wonder was caused by more than only the dead man's social and historical role. It also has to do with transience of all identity in death. Galy Gays monologue in Mann ist Mann (1926, Scene 9), is another example. In this scene the question of the self is posed by reducing that self in a role play to its smallest unit and size: to a dead body in a coffin. Brecht "secularises" the Buddhist denial of the unity and indivisibility and imperishability of individual personality and the conception of rebirth by making Galy Gay, standing next to the coffin in which he himself is supposed to be lying, ponder the same reflections as are uttered by the Buddhist monk Nagasena (Milinda's questions).

A significant shift in Brecht's opinions regarding the value of individual personality and individual death may be observed in the Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis. This is also true of the philosophical background of his reasoning. On the face of it, the "Kommentartexte" might well be dogmas inspired by Buddhism, but we are no longer dealing with one individual's death and reincarnation in another individual, which is useful for a "wrong" community (Mann ist Mann), but with the giving up of one's personality--an action represented by dying--for the sake of a higher principal, a collective, now envisaged as the whole human race. Some parts of the "Kommentartexte" show a striking resemblance to Lao-tzu.

The Eastern representations--Buddhism, Lao-tzu, but also Chuang-tzu and Mo-tzu--are still present in the background of Brecht's "retifications" of Lucretius' and Epicurus' descriptions of the fear of the death: "Die Trophäen des Lukullus" (1939), two poems in the "Lehrgedicht von der Natur der Menschen", "über die Todesfurcht" (Me-ti), and "Als ich in weißem Krankenzimmer der Charité" (1956). This "Lucretius aggregate" shows that, where the most quintessential problem of human existence is concerned, Brecht brings the materialism of Lucretius and Epicurus up to date by making it shade off into historical and dialectical materialism.

Ursula Mahlendorf, University of California at Santa Barbara, USA:

The Psychological Dynamics of Group Interaction  
as a Structural Principle of Brecht's Drama

Brecht's anti-psychological stance is well-known. Nevertheless, if we look closely at the web of social relationships he portrays in his dramas we find a keen observation of and striking insight into social processes. Brecht's portrayal of group behavior parallels sociological research which began in the late 1930s. The paper finds the most important structural principle which organizes Brecht's plays to be the group interaction pattern. This parallels Steinweg's work on the role of the Lehrstücke in Brecht's work as a whole.

At different stages of Brecht's career we can observe new and different interpersonal process patterns in his plays. These reflect changing, underlying social value orientations and theoretical practices. Rather than analyzing the changes in his plays from an ideological perspective, I attempt to understand them from his use of group dynamics and processes which I see based on his praxis as a socially-committed man of the theater. As examples for analysis, I have chosen his early play Im Dickicht der Städte, with its underlying family interaction pattern. I contrast this group process to the pattern of the small task-oriented group which underlies his Lehrstück Die Maßnahme and his late play Der kaukasische Kreidekreis.

# HONGKONG

Siegfried Mews, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA:

Portraits of the Artist as Committed Writer:  
Brecht in the Context of Literature

Owing to his indisputable status as a major literary figure, Brecht has not only spawned an entire scholarly industry that shows no signs of abating but has also aroused the keen interest of other writers. The first major fictionalized portrayal was penned by Lion Feuchtwanger (b. 1884), Brecht's older friend and occasional collaborator in Munich and Berlin during the twenties as well as in Californian exile in the forties. His novel Erfolg (1930) provides a portrait of a thinly disguised Brecht--who served as the model for the figure of the engineer Kaspar Pröckl--as an angry young man and poet who provocatively flaunts his anti-bourgeois sentiments by means of his unkempt appearance, proletarian garb, and disregard of conventional sexual mores.

Whereas Feuchtwanger's fascination with Brecht is tinged with a touch of irony befitting an erstwhile mentor, young Marieluise Fleißer's 1924 encounter with Brecht in Feuchtwanger's Munich flat resulted in a traumatic experience for her that she sought to come to terms with in several texts that were published as late as the seventies.

In contrast to Fleißer's intimately autobiographical approach that tends to consider Brecht's politics as incidental, Feuchtwanger devotes considerable attention to Pröckl's single-minded commitment to Marxism--the touchstone for subsequent portrayals. Notably, Günter Grass, in Die Plebejer proben den Aufstand (1966), a play that hovers uneasily between documentary theater and illusionary drama, between Künstlerdrama and Revolutionsdrama, implies strongly that the Chef, in essence a model of Brecht, failed to act in accordance with his artistic creed that demanded the application of the insights gained via the dialectic theater to social practice. In his trilogy Die Ästhetik des Widerstands (1975-1981), Peter Weiss takes issue with the fact that Brecht did not exemplify the congruence of private life, art, and politics that the young narrator had come to expect from his initially revered model.

In opposition to both Grass and Weiss, Christopher Hampton, in Tales from Hollywood (1983), a play about the exiled German writers in California, does not subscribe to the notion that art has a political function and categorically rejects the premise of the engaged writer. Unaffected and unburdened by the recent German past, the post-Brechtian British playwright--Hampton was born in 1946--approaches his topic with a degree of levity that results in farcical elements and tends to overshadow the play's underlying seriousness. In fact, Hampton--inspired by both his unwitting mouthpiece Ödön von Horváth, who incongruously appears in Tales from Hollywood, and his contemporary Peter Handke, who provocatively titled his 1968 essay "Horváth ist besser als Brecht,"--goes considerably beyond Weiss as well as Grass by not only dwelling on the discrepancies between Brecht's theory and practice but by challenging the very premises of his theater and thereby providing yet another flagrant instance of Brechtmüdigkeit in the West.

Addenda/Corrigenda  
COMMUNICATIONS,  
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The page citation for the first reference in Ronald Davis's response, p. 7 of this issue, should be "p. 126" instead of "p. 129" (author's error).

In the article by Bruce Shapiro reproduced on pp. 66-67, a printer's error in the original document resulted in the use of "Lehrstücke" throughout the text where it should read "Lehrstück."

The abstracts from the Hong Kong Symposium appear in alphabetical order by author; the abstract by Dannenberg/Müller should therefore appear before the one by Davis.

The Editor wishes to thank Marc Silberman for his assistance in compiling the annual bibliography (pp. 78-80), and Prof. Randa Duvick, Valparaíso University, for her help with translating several abstracts submitted in French.

Finally, the outside cover of the previous issue of COMMUNICATIONS should have read "Volume 16, Number 1" (as indicated correctly on the inside cover). This issue is indeed Volume 16, Number 2!



Roswitha Mueller, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA:

### Brecht and Film

When talking about Brecht's thoughts on the specificity of cinema, the term montage is used all too often to bridge the gaps between different media, genres, or authors. Yet, without a precise description of what is meant by montage, the term becomes meaningless. Four points of comparison can be established to come to a closer definition of Brecht's views on montage. Outside of Brecht, the comparisons draw on the thoughts of Roland Barthes, Sergei Eisenstein, and Walter Benjamin. The relation of the part to the whole and of continuity to discontinuity are central in the debate. Eisenstein's stress on the relationship of each individual shot to the general theme contrasts sharply with Barthes' emphasis on the autonomy of each tableau. Benjamin, who dealt with the relation between *gestus* and fable in Brecht, is closer to Barthes than to Eisenstein when he denies the importance of the fable for the dialectical impact produced by epic theater.

Brecht's own pronouncements on this subject are quite complicated. At first glance, Brecht's insistence in the "Small Organum" that the fable is the heart of the play seems to contradict Benjamin and move him closer to Eisenstein's description of the relation of the individual representation and the total montage. The *gestus* can thus only be thought of as relatively autonomous.

However, Brecht's and Eisenstein's concepts of montage are not entirely congruent, either. Their difference is rooted in their respective conception of what "the whole" signifies. For Brecht, the fable is just a larger part, ultimately a fragment. It means nothing but the entire composition without any connotations of totality. Eisenstein, on the other hand, was from the beginning more concerned with organicism.

In the course of transposing dramatic theory into film theory, the relation between *Gestus* and fable plays an important part. Brecht stressed interruption, discontinuity, and the separation of individual parts to a much greater degree for film than he did for his plays. The reason for this shift must be sought in Brecht's view of film as following the laws of visual rather than dramatic art. Consequently, film is to Brecht a static art, a series of tableaux, whose compositional aspects are of primary interest to him. This orientation to the individual element, or, in Brechtian terms, to the *Gestus*, bears witness once again to Brecht's inductive method of composition. The greater emphasis on interruption in film as compared to theater is a safeguard for the spectator's productive potential in the sense of a critical ability to counteract the greater illusionistic power of film, something which Brecht recognized at least since his encounter with Hollywood.

unity theatre  
CALCUTTA

Chetana Nagavajara, Silpakorn University, Nakorn Pathom, Thailand:

Brecht's Relevance: A Thai Perspective

Brecht came upon the Thai public with a big bang, so to speak. The exposure to Die Ausnahme und die Regel in 1976 was an auspicious beginning, for the drama readily proved its relevance by being supportive of the highly liberal social and political order prevalent during the "Golden Age" of Thai democracy between October 1973 and October 1976. The encounter with this Lehrstück was significant also from the artistic point of view: Brecht's theories concerning the role of amateur actors, the art of improvisation and the obliteration of the dividing line between actors and audience could be fully realized, since these elements were inherent in the Thai traditional theatre. Subsequent encounters with Brecht, alas, could not benefit from a similarly propitious political climate, and when Der gute Mensch von Sezuan was staged in 1979 by the Drama Department of Chulalongkorn University, it did not create quite the same impact. The director, a professor of drama, wanted to use Brecht as part of the dramatic training, and the exemplary virtues of the Brechtian drama were identified as characterization, development of plot, literary language, scenic effect, and music. The professor was quite explicit about her scepticism towards Brecht's own aspiration to make the theatre an instrument of social change; nor did she have faith in the theoretical underpinnings of epic theatre. All in all, Brecht could still provide entertainment, and the play was given a very vivacious performance that somehow wavered between high comedy and comédie larmoyante. A similar problem beset the staging of Die Dreigroschenoper, produced by the Drama Department of Thammasat University in 1984. Whatever the director's intentions may have been in terms of anti-bourgeois criticism (this director was also a professor), the play came off as being rather tame, for the cast, consisting of well-bred university students and distinguished members of the haute bourgeoisie, could not quite capture the acerbity of the Brechtian original. Again, relevance was not propped up by conviction in either the Brechtian technique or the Brechtian message.

A new approach was discernible in the 1985 production of Leben des Galilei by an amateur group called "Troupe '28." This was a sober reading, faithful to the text, an interpretation that gave the audience a chance to ponder over the intellectual and philosophical message. This low-key, "un-heroic" Galilei reminded the Thai public of its current political leadership whose art of survival more than sufficiently exemplified the famous line "Unglücklich das Land, das Helden nötig hat." But to some, this was too much of a literary reading, and unexciting as a stage performance. A more extrovert treatment of Brecht was desired. Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder, performed in 1986 by the Drama Department of Chulalongkorn University, responded to this demand, and probably went too far in the direction of non-literary histrionics. Ostensibly staged to commemorate the International Year of Peace, the performance failed to bring off the anti-war message, for its commitment to pageantry, music, and dance turned this Courage into a juicy musical. It would appear that most Thai directors remained stubborn in their belief that they could play Brecht without subscribing to his social message and his dramaturgy.

It is obvious that, apart from the "discovery" of Die Ausnahme und die Regel and the sobriety of Galilei, the Thai stage has not had much success with Brecht. There are a number of constraints to be overcome. Amateur actors and directors simply have difficulty rising to the demands of such plays as Die Dreigroschenoper or Mutter Courage. In the name of relevancy, Brecht has been used to attract a progressive young audience, but real knowledge of, and sympathy with, his work and theory are still lacking. Drama Departments at major universities in Thailand have been concentrating their efforts on producing practitioners (mostly for T.V. studios), and not critics or scholars. Directors have perhaps relied too much on their intuition, which has not proved infallible. In a country far remote from Brecht's own, it is not likely that Brecht can thrive without solid "Brecht Studies." Inputs from the sister discipline of Germanic Studies have not yet created any impact on the stage. As for the audience, the absence of translations of Brecht's works means that a "Brecht literacy" is also lacking. There are other plays more commensurate with amateur productions which remain to be explored. On the whole, Brecht may have proved to be relevant here and there, but the Thai theatre still has a long way to go before it can claim him as its "contemporary."

Jan E. Olsson, Uniwersytet Mikolaja Kopernicka, Torun, Poland:

#### Trends and Arguments in Staging Mother Courage

The stage history of Mother Courage and Her Children is the main battlefield for the argument concerning Brecht's idea of model productions. For some early reactions, here are a couple of headlines from the newspaper coverage of the opening night in Wuppertal in 1949, one of the first productions to be confronted with Brecht's claims:

"Bert Brecht errichtet Regiediktatur" (Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Bochum, October 4, 1949)

"Bert Brecht als Theater-Diktator" (Schwäbische Landeszeitung, Augsburg, September 30, 1949)

"Autor befiehl--wir folgen" (Rheinpost, September 16, 1949)

But soon the model became victorious, and up until the mid-sixties confidence in its basic solutions prevailed. The change in attitude which then occurred was linked to the effort to actualize the action and the allusions for a contemporary audience according to Piscator's words that the classical play should be "brought into the field of experience of every new generation of spectators," which a positive critic of the Bochum production (see below) quotes. One of the methods is to remind the audience of more recent wars and of the armaments race. Peter Palitzsch, in his Stuttgart production of 1970, sent warriors from all ages onto the stage, from Roman legionnaires to soldiers from the Second World War. In Essen, in 1971, Claus Leininger surrounded the stage with a palisade of dummy rockets. A peak in the history of these endeavors was the Bochum production of 1981. In the scene where Catherine pays with her life for rescuing the besieged town of Halle, she does not beat her drum while sitting on the roof of a farm house, but rather while sitting at the percussion set on the stage. In response to her action, an authentic jet fighter is hauled down from the flies. Catherine climbs onto the wings of the airplane and hammers with her fists at the cabin. But she is shot down by soldiers wearing uniforms from the Thirty Years War!

A test for the realization of Brecht's epic dramaturgy is the treatment of the scene introductions. Often they were not projected as in Brecht's own production but recited instead. Sometimes an effort was made to integrate this recital into a fictional sphere loosely associated with the action of the play. So, in Münster, in 1965, a ragged German soldier from World War II gave the introductions. By means of a change in lighting, the same soldier could make his entry as a skeleton. The speaker of the introductions in Hildesheim in 1972 appeared in continuously changing uniforms and was thereby identified as "the eternal soldier." Solutions with this tendency run the risk of missing the point made by introducing the scenes with fragments of a chronicle. The change in the reception modus (in Brecht's model), which for a brief moment makes the spectator a reader, was also meant to change his/her attitude toward the stage action, making him/her more active and critical. The introductions belong to Brecht's devices for inserting footnotes and comparative leafing into the "spectator's art," as he put it.

Wolfgang Pasche, University of Cape Town, South Africa:

#### Role Play and Ritual Play in Brecht's Lehrstück

The first part of the paper evaluates research which has dealt more precisely with the nature of role play in Brecht's Lehrstück than Steinweg had previously done in his pioneering work on the this topic in order to substantiate my argument in part two that the ritual way of playing ("rituelle Spielweise") demanded by Brecht has nothing in common with the performance of a cult as so often implied by critics.

In part one, reference is made in particular to Karl W. Bauer's distinction between the Brechtian concepts of Nachahmung ("imitation"), Einfühlung ("empathy"), and Rollentausch ("role exchange") on the one hand, and the concepts of "role-taking," "empathy," and "role distance" in interactionist role theory on the other. In basing his argument on Ottomeyer's theory of action, Bauer demonstrates clearly that whereas Nachahmung, Einfühlung, Rollentausch, as well as the central aesthetic category of Verfremdung are merely the methodical means to an end in Brecht's Lehrstück, "empathy" and "role distance" as components of a general ability to interact and communicate are the very aims to be achieved by the participants in the interactionist role play. Whereas Brecht's Lehrstück is an innovative and utopian form of theatrical treatment of the experience of reality which aims to teach the participants dialectical learning by means of the critical portrayal and analysis of qualified texts, the interactionist role play has no interest in a socially orientated aesthetic education but merely aims to foster linguistic-cognitive behavior structures that enable the individual participant to acquire an identity balance.

In part two, a distinction is made between a conservative cultic ritual and a progressive non-cultic ritual by referring to modern sociological, psychological, and neurophysiological research which has not only shown that no human social order can exist without ritualization, but has established a difference between a form of ritualization which develops into an orthodoxy of mere social compulsion described as "ritualism" or "pseudo-realization"

by Erik H. Erikson, and a ritualization that represents "a creative formalization". Similarly, Friedrich Hacker distinguishes between ritualization that enforces fetishism and ritualized thought patterns that stimulate critical thinking and feeling practices. It is precisely because critics have failed to take cognizance of this that they have invariably maintained that Brecht's Lehrstücke are cult plays, whereas it is demonstrated how Brecht expects from the participants in his Lehrstücke an exposure of the affirmative function of cultic rites by means of the dialectical interplay of imitation and controlled criticism. This has nothing in common with the performance of a cult, as corroborated by the distinction between the role play in Brecht's Lehrstück and the role play in the interactionist role play discussed in part one of the paper.

David Punter, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong:

Alienation, Analysis, Transference: Some Reflections  
on the Messingkauf Dialogues

This paper is a meditation on the Messingkauf Dialogues, and specifically on one passage:

The self-evident--i.e., the particular shape our consciousness gives our experience--is resolved into its components when counteracted by the A-effect and turned into a new form of the evident. An imposed schema is being broken up here. The individual's own experiences correct or confirm what he has taken over from the community. The original act of discovery is repeated.

I give an account of the process Brecht is describing here, and I compare it with aspects of the psychoanalytic process, asking particularly about the components of transference and counter-transference in the relationships between director, actor, character, and audience.

I also concentrate on relating Brecht's thought to the body of ideas and practices known as the "New Paradigm." In an attempt to figure these ideas, and also to enter into the Brechtian text, I develop a dialogue form in the paper. Participants include the epistemologist, the ecologist (Bateson), the physicist (Heisenberg), the group relations consultant, the psychologist, the philosopher, and the poet (Blake).

My central contention is that analysis is rendered requisite by alienation in one of the older senses of that term: as dislocation, social malfunctioning, madness. It attempts to "cure" this condition by reproducing some of its elements in, as it were, laboratory conditions, and by encouraging the patient into the transference. Brechtian drama can also be seen as a curative mode of representation, in which the conditions of alienation are reproduced and intensified with a view to encouraging freedom from habituation. Among other things, this has to do with the evolution of new modes of relating to the unconscious. The experientalist mode of the new paradigm, as I describe it, also requires a simultaneous interpretation of similitude and distinction: an acknowledgement that the unconscious is and is not ourself.

But we cannot come to this situation directly. We can come to it only by passing through the scrutiny of re-presentation: by engaging in a continuous dialogue between freedom and power, that which we appear to will and that which appears to will us. For that re-presentation to be possible, there has to be an Other: a temporary objectification through the A-effect of our personal or human predicament in terms of which we can engage in the dialogue in a more than solipsistic way. We need to purchase brass so that we have some material with which to bring about this sculpting.

Janelle Reinelt, California State University at Sacramento, USA:

Rethinking Brecht: Deconstruction, Feminism  
and the Politics of Form

The paper attempts a possible articulation of Brechtian dramaturgy, feminism, and deconstruction, or, more generally, post-modernism. The vigorous debate about whether feminism should be considered a post-modernism has some features in common with the question of how far Brecht can be seen as a precursor of post-modern aesthetics. Brecht and feminism are often strange bedfellows, but they nevertheless share several crucial features which center this debate. First, the political agenda of both Brecht and socialist-feminism is inseparable from their art. The task of Brecht and also for feminist theatre is to interrupt and deconstruct the habitual performance codes of the majority (male) culture--their stance is always adversarial vis-à-vis the prevailing hegemony. Both Brecht and feminism emphasize the possibility of change, that things might be other, that history is not an inevitable narrative. Feminism is and Brecht was historically embattled in the struggle to make art which dismantles the political and artistic status quo.

The search for means of subversion of bourgeois ideology in performance links Brecht and feminism to some of the critical projects of post-modernism, such as the analysis of identity as an ideological construction, the deconstruction of social practices and theatrical conventions, and the suspension of closure in favor of praxis. Foregrounding these affinities, however, displaces and obscures the radical engagement (in Sartre's sense) which marks both Brecht and feminism.

Brecht posits a subject capable of recognizing and to some extent transcending his/her own positioning within social practice. The implicit theory of the subject in Brecht's work is the subject in process, crisscrossed by the contradictions of competing practices, a site of ideological struggle which does provide grounds for dialectical change. There is, in short, a notion of agency which informs the texts, the acting style and the theory.

In feminism, the crisis of representation has similarly posed the problem of agency. If women are silenced within male discourse, how is it possible to struggle to overcome and reconstruct female experience? Deconstruction is a negative practice which denies the present without access to a new future. The role of the subject is what is at stake in both feminism and Brecht. The requirements of the active subject, capable of surpassing a given ideological grid cannot be subsumed under either Althusserian Marxism or

French feminism. In practice, just as with Brecht, the texts of feminist artists re-assert a female I, not only "fixing the not-but" which is a negative relationship, but also by staging female experience and appealing to a political practice aimed at ideological struggle. Agency is assumed here, too.

David Roberts, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, Australia:

#### Brecht and Tradition: Two Contending Models

The paper opposes two models of the relation of Brecht's plays to the tradition of European drama: the dialectical and the scientific. Whereas from the dialectical standpoint Brecht's dramas represent the negation which is simultaneously the preservation, critique, and continuation of tradition, the model of paradigm change stresses the epistemological break with a pre-"scientific" bourgeois drama, which subjects the theatre of illusion and identification to a systematic ideological critique. The change of function of the theatre proclaimed by Brecht defines the relation of the new to the old not in terms of the dialectical continuity of Aufhebung, but of the discontinuity of Verfremdung, the operation of historical specification which breaks the object out of the continuum of history. The contending models involve fundamentally different concepts of history and reflect the conflicting reception of Marxism as (Hegelian) philosophy of history and as the historical science of society. The paper argues that the model of paradigm change permits a more adequate account of Brecht's theory and practice than the dialectical. Brecht's rejection of Aristotelian teleological drama is one with his rejection of the continuity of tradition and history, and must be seen in the context of the avantgarde movements of the time. Brecht's epistemological break signals not only the crisis of the tradition of European drama, but of the whole modern paradigm of progress, irretrievably shattered by the Great War.

John Rouse, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA:

#### Brecht and the Question of the Audience

This paper compares Brecht's theatre work on his Hofmeister production with that of the Wooster Group on L.S.D. (Just the High Points) and, in more detail, with the Robert Wilson-Heiner Müller collaboration on the Cologne segment of The CIVIL warS. The comparison focused on the question of the audience--on the work the differing models expect their spectators to undertake, on the pleasures and freedoms they offer, and on the point of view, or lack of it, which they attempt to persuade the spectator to adopt.

Brecht frequently insisted that his productions be considered not as developing organically, but through montage. On the other hand, the "separation of the elements" we see operating in the interaction of projection, box set, and acting in Der Hofmeister is limited by Brecht's insistence that all the separated theatrical arts work together to mediate the fable as the ges-

tic representation of an historically determined social interaction. Further, Brecht linked this representation to a call for "co-storytelling" on the part of the spectator--to a proposed action within the spectator's immediate historical moment through which the spectators, acting together as part of a social totality, could "rewrite" the Hofmeister's story of capitulation by bourgeois intellectuals to those in power. And this proposed solution is validated by the appeal to what Roland Barthes calls an "ideal meaning," presented straight in every scene as the Law that selects and arranges a specific tableau, a specific symbolic demonstration from the plenitude of the imaginary. The work of Wilson or the Wooster group refuses the appeal to this Law, in part out of a political suspicion that the means by which representation could appeal to an ideal meaning have already been pervaded by a dominant power the theatre is therefore compelled to re-represent. With this refusal, the Brechtian tableau falls apart; the montage principle extends to every element of production, including the text. The theatre no longer tells a story, but provides story-elements for the spectator to structure together during or after the production. Such an approach can no longer fulfill the political function to which Brecht committed his theatre. But the contemporary avant-garde considers this loss of function a consequence of the social reality in which artist and spectator find themselves, a reality in which the montage technique becomes itself a political act, an act of resistance, as Müller has put it, against the "imperialistic occupation of the imagination by the pre-fabricated clichés and standards of the media."

Karl-Heinz Schoeps, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA:

Bertolt Brecht's The Visions of Simon Machard: New Aspects

As Manfred Wekwerth reports in Schriften. Arbeit mit Brecht (Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1973, pp. 67-79 in particular), Brecht mentioned in discussions with friends and students in the mid-fifties that he, Brecht, was very dissatisfied with the reception of his theory of theater. In Brecht's opinion, misunderstandings arose since he omitted the description of one of the most important elements of his theater: the role of naivete ("die Rolle des Naiven"). He brushed aside estrangement, even dialectic theater, and postulated the aesthetic category of naiveness ("die ästhetische Kategorie des Naiven"). When asked for concrete manifestations of "das Naive" he pointed to The Days of the Commune and Joan of Arc. Simone Machard, therefore, can be seen as the practical application of his new aesthetic category. This would also explain his insistence that Simone must be played by a child of eleven.

The names of characters in the play Simone Machard also suggest some hitherto unknown sources for the play: Simone Weil and Otto Katz, who wrote under the pseudonym Andre Simone. Brecht corresponded with him, and it is very likely that Brecht knew Simone's book J'Accuse in which Simone describes the ideological underpinnings of the fall of France in 1940 in Marxist terms. This book had just become a bestseller in the USA when Brecht arrived. Simone Weil, the "Saint Joan of the Workshops," was a bourgeois-turned-Marxist French resistance fighter who eventually became a mystic and ended in an insane asylum.



Elinor Shaffer, University of East Anglia, Norwich, England:

### Brecht and the Cabaret Tradition

Brecht's career in the theatre began not with Baal, but with his early ballads and sketches for the cabaret. The influence of the Munich cabaret and especially of Frank Wedekind, whose last performances Brecht witnessed (Wedekind died in 1918), can scarcely be overestimated. It is in this context that one can see the extent to which Brecht inherited an already full-fledged innovative performing tradition of political satire and literary parody of thirty years' standing. Wedekind's own pioneering contribution to the German stage has still to be properly assessed; there is no modern edition of his works. Much that he wrote was written for cabaret, or done in cabaret, or set in the cabaret. His own connection with cabaret went back to its early days in Paris, formative years in which Parisian song, mime, and circus left their stamp on Wedekind. The itinerant Wedekind, among others, brought the new styles to German-speaking centres--to Berlin, Munich, Vienna, and Zurich. The German cabaret from about 1895 in Berlin, with Christian Morgenstern's "Galgenbrüder," Max Reinhardt's "Die Brille," Ernst von Wolzogen's "Überbrettel," Reinhardt's first "Schall und Rauch" in 1901, and in Munich "Die elf Scharfrichter," which supported many of the dramatic writers of the day who could not get a hearing in the theatre proper, and which was under constant scrutiny from the police (it was ultimately closed when it performed five of Wedekind's banned plays), forms the essential background to Brecht's theatre. The committed anti-bourgeois, anti-imperial, anti-militaristic satire of the cabaret, and its espousal of new experimental forms, through the persistent parody of established historical and neo-classical drama, as well as through parody of the new, thereby made palatable and eventually familiar, formed Brecht's attitudes towards theatre and his practice in it. These ingrained oppositional habits were expressed in a variety of specific political alliances at different different times in the history of cabaret. The now well-known Brecht/Weill and Brecht/Eisler collaborations of the twenties are only another phase of a long established tradition. Not only Brecht's cabaret pieces but his theatre as a whole is informed by the posture and tone, the "Gestik," of the early cabaret.

Marc Silberman, University of Texas at San Antonio, USA:

### The Politics of Representation: Brecht and the Media

Any discourse about the real and the relationships of power which govern it cannot escape an examination of how we represent "reality" and how those representations constitute that very reality. In short, the notion of representation is a strategic terrain, not only of theoretical but also of political importance because it implicates the struggle for ideological domination: whose representation of "reality" will prevail and how will it be seen? Using Brecht's reflections on realism as a starting point, I investigate the referential notion of the image which posits a correspondence between the real and its representations in order to interrogate how an image

produces knowledge about "reality" under specific and changing historical conditions. After sketching a brief history of representation, or a political phenomenology of the image, I ask whether the fundamental realist epistemology has been exhausted in the sphere of televisual imagery. I summarize several theoretical models proposed by various cultural critics (Marshall McLuhan, Theodor W. Adorno, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Jean Baudrillard) and then suggest how one might negotiate the linkage between representation, social change and historical subject in the (post-)modern context.

Darko Suvin, McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada:

The Metaphor of "Heavenly Food" as a Parable for Modern Times  
in Leben des Galilei

The paper is an excerpt from a larger work meant for a book, which starts from Barthes' old aperçu that a semiotic approach is on the agenda of Brechtian criticism. BB himself was a pioneer of applied semiotics in his practice as well as theory (Gestus, Verfremdung, parable). The larger work discusses the present alternative of semiotics between an exclusive syntactical anti-historicism cum scientism (Greimas) vs. a socio-historical semiotics in which pragmatics and semantics englobe the necessary but insufficient syntactics; it then goes on to discuss theatre theory and to identify any "performance text" as a parable (Brecht, Lotman) whose tenor or referred-to meaning is a feedback into the audience's Possible World. Its third part wants to exemplify and test the theoretical approach by analyzing the system of dramaturgic agents and imaginary spaces in the final version of Leben des Galilei. It will proceed in part from the sustained metaphor of food and examine how this metaphor is deployed into a parabolic narrative about an integral, non-alienated pleasure as legitimate appetite. It is only the section on semantic spaces or metaphoric systems in this play that constitutes the present paper. In the larger work, this is to be done in interaction with the system of dramaturgic agents, and to be followed by a feedback test of the initial theoretical positions.

Outline of the presentation:

1. On Metaphor and Parable
2. Earthly vs. Heavenly Food as a Sustained Metaphor
  - 2.1. "Right Seeing" and "Wrong Seeing"
  - 2.2. The Polysemous Telescope and the Battle of Books
  - 2.3 The Light that Failed
  - 2.4. Food of the Stomach and of the Mind
3. The People, the Heavenly Food, and Utopian De-Alienation  
for Us

羅賓·艾卓爾與米高·莫利

Robyn Archer & Michael Morley

布萊希特之歌  
"Brecht & Co"

Philip Thomson, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, Australia:

Nihilism, Anarchy and Role-Playing:  
The Young Man from Augsburg

It has become the norm in Brecht studies to view Brecht's early period, the Augsburg years, as a time of nihilism and anarchism, from which Brecht ultimately escaped through recourse to the systematic rationality of Marxism. This paper challenges both parts of the nihilism theory and argues that the Brecht of the Augsburg period led a satisfying and in some ways even idyllic existence, and that Marxism was the answer not to the youth's supposedly unstable and self-destructive world-view, but rather to the young man's later experiences in the metropolis Berlin.

In between the Augsburg years and Brecht's espousal of Marxism lie some five years during which the young man from the southern provinces makes the transition to Berlin, which closes off forever the boyhood sphere and confronts the young writer with the big wide world. It is the harsh reality of the metropolis Berlin, not the alleged psychological or existential sufferings of the Augsburg Brecht, which we must connect with his turning to Marxism.

The anarchism, vitalism, and nihilism of the pre-Berlin Brecht are part of a role-playing process and an experimentation with various guises and identities, not the reflection of existential distress. The young Brecht's masks and roles, borrowed from Villon, Rimbaud, and Kipling, are widely discussed, but usually as defense mechanisms. The assumption is that the masks' purpose is to conceal, and that the truth behind the mask is to be sought in the opposite direction; thus, studied indifference is the desperate defense of a threatened psyche, anarchic nihilism is the destructive expression of an alienated personality. But imaginative writers can try on masks not only to conceal their true face but also for the pleasure and excitement of adopting different guises. The writer is and is at the same time not the mask. Thus, the young Brecht's anarchism and nihilism are not to be taken too seriously. Close analysis, particularly of the poetry, reveals a writer who is self-aware, on top of his imagined worlds, not their prisoner.

The argument for an experimental Brecht who tries on various masks rather than a neurotic Brecht who erects defense mechanisms is strengthened by numerous accounts of his life in Augsburg which add up to a picture of relaxed freedom, self-confidence and lack of tension. Perhaps the very absence of stress and turmoil in the young writer's existence stirred him to create, as a kind of compensation, the wilder and more savage aspects of his writing, the brigands and pirates, the amoral Baal-types and nihilistic adventurers, all of whom disappear when the young man from Augsburg gets to the cold and challenging reality of the big city.

香港話劇團粵語演出 教父亞塗發跡史

Hong Kong Repertory Theatre presents

*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (In Cantonese)

Ma. Luisa Torres-Reyes, Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA):

Brecht and the Philippine Revolution:  
Anticipation of Freedom in Theatre

In Philippine society's ongoing collective and hegemonic struggle for liberation historically sustained by the nationalist and democratic aspirations of the Filipino people, Brecht's theatre has found fertile ground for growth and development. It has embodied the various ideological and structural contradictions which cut across Philippine society, becoming inextricably rooted in the complex and dynamic demystifying strategy of the people's collective project.

In a society where the forms, norms, and practices of theatre and other cultural media have been made to serve the ends of passivity and complicity with an oppressive, class-delineated and neo-colonial order, Brecht's theatre has at once helped unmask the social realities in the Philippines and presented for the people a utopian anticipation of their future society. In the context of the people's struggle for liberation, Brecht's theatre is not mere theatrical novelty; it has produced critical minds and has propelled people to act decisively to become part of the historical effort to realize a genuine social transformation.

Although the Brechtian encounter in the Philippines had begun long before the declaration of Martial Law in 1972, it was during the dark days of the dictatorship that true Brechtian theatre began to take root; it was at that point that Brecht and the Filipino merged to produce something which was no longer Brecht's theatre alone, but rather what is referred to as the "Brechtian" theatre in the Philippines. Under conditions of extreme poverty, blatant violation of human rights, and neo-colonial subjugation of major areas of Philippine life, the people found in Brechtian theatre the power to collectively overcome their plight. In the late 1970s, it helped keep the fires of resistance burning in the city and in the countryside. In the tradition of the so-called "seditious drama" in Philippine theatre history, it braved the wrath of direct and indirect suppression to be able to play an active role in the larger arena of the culture of resistance.

Brechtian theatre tells of the people's indignation against the dictatorship. The plays of Bertolt Brecht, such as the Life of Galileo and Caucasian Chalk Circle, have been presented in translation in different Philippine languages or adapted for various Philippine audiences, along with many other theatre productions which, inspired or influenced by earlier productions of Brecht's texts, have tried to embody the Brechtian Gestus as understood in the Philippine context. As staged in the theatre halls, in academic settings, in the streets of the city, and in the remotest island in the countryside, Brechtian theatre at once breathes the air of oppression and that of liberation. Set against the backdrop of Philippine realities, the scenic design and narrative, the acting and character, the direction and motivation combine to underscore the theme of tyranny and injustice and point out the need for actors and audience alike to be part of the organized effort to transform society. For Brechtian theatre in the Philippines, actors need not play a role; they only need to act out their very lives.

In a society like the Philippines, the Brechtian Verfremdungseffekt becomes not only a reorientation of the mind and heart, much less of mere theatrical technique; it is at once a revival of the collective political energy which had been long stifled and a redirection of the citizens' political will towards a real power of the people. In the early 1980s, just as the dictatorship tottered to its fall and its rage became most intense, Brechtian theatre, along with other community theatres and both emergent and residual progressive cultural forms and practices, not only helped make the people think critically but act positively and immediately as well, further multiplying the ranks of the concerned citizenry engaged in a unified action for national determination and survival. As the ranks have swelled, the need for Brechtian theatre become more compelling.

In the Philippines, therefore, one can never draw a line of demarcation between the struggle for liberation and the Brechtian theatre. To do so is to marginalize the struggle and render insignificant the many lives put on the line in the culture of resistance. It is also to overlook the unique characteristics and specific power and dynamism of Brechtian theatre in the Philippines and its capacity to change lives once its essence is imbibed by the people. As such, in the Philippine context, the people's struggle and Brechtian theatre converge into one political arena. Indeed, in the course of the hegemonic struggle for liberation in the Philippines, Brechtian theatre has not only helped make the people understand their plight in a new critical light; it has also enabled them to take concrete and urgent action, to intervene in the shaping of their national destiny. That hegemonic process did not end with the ouster of the dictator, so Brechtian theatre in the Philippines is there to stay. Together, Brechtian theatre and the people's struggle have worked to help the Filipino people to look into their future with even greater determination and hope while, in the past, many of them only looked painfully at their plight. When Philippine society finally undergoes a genuine social transformation along with the rest of the Third World, Brechtian theatre shall have clearly become an integral part of the anticipated change of paradigm.

Richard Wasson, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA:

Brecht Decodes the Codes:  
Gender and Class in The Good Woman of Setzuan

As Marxist and modernist innovator, Bertolt Brecht inherited from the literary tradition of the West a code for the representation of class conflict that depicted it in gendered terms. At the center of this code is an isotropism between the feminine and the good. Spirit, soul, heart, love, nurture, purity, and goodness all ally themselves with the feminine. On either side of the feminine are the contending classes, almost always male and engaged in struggles with each other that ultimately become violent. The politically negative class is represented as unable to communicate with the feminine, as criminal, as animal, as demonic, as drunken, violent, and ultimately bent on the rape of the pure feminine. The positively represented class acknowledges the superiority of the spiritual feminine, learns to communicate with it, has its heart and/or soul converted to charitable and generous social action by it. The code's structure moves toward two different

plot or metaphoric configurations: the first tends toward the exploitation and rape of the feminine, the second toward establishment of the family. The former trope presents a picture of the state or nation usurped by an undeserving and reprehensible class, the latter the picture of the nation as unified family, not warring classes. Balzac's Ursule Mirouet, Bronte's Shirley, Disraeli's Sybil, Gissing's Demos, Gaskell's North and South, Strindberg's Miss Julie, Ibsen's Hedda Gabler, Shaw's Major Barbara, and Lang's Metropolis are some examples of works that contain this code and its variations.

In St. Joan of the Stockyards, Brecht sharply and acutely attacked that code. Positing class struggle as the essential ingredient in the social process, these works positioned the feminine as a force not only outside it, but able to give direction to its development. Unlike Shaw's Major Barbara, a character Brecht had before him as he wrote, St. Joan's attempts to occupy an ideological space that simply doesn't exist: she finds out too late that she can serve one class or another, but cannot influence both from spiritual ground.

In The Good Woman of Setzuan, Brecht uses the cross-dressing Shen Ti/Shui Ta to further deconstruct the code. Presented at first as the good-hearted and generous woman, she gives up her room (and the money from a prospective customer) to give the gods a place to rest. Yet she finds she cannot continue to be charitable to humans without impoverishing herself. Disguising herself as a male, she takes on the attributes of the heartless capitalist who calculates only his own gain. In a witty parody of the trope in which a cold capitalist heart is moved by feminine love, the capitalist Shui Ta loans the loving Shen Ti money so she can marry the exploitative Yang Sun. But more importantly, Brecht parodies the code which places the feminine as nurturing mother outside of class struggle. The cross-dressed and pregnant character finds that motherhood puts her squarely in the realm of the economic: she must now provide for a child. She starts a tobacco factory where the exploitation of the workers is justified by the needs of the coming child. In the scene where Yang Sun speeds up the production of the workers while the pregnant character stalks around the stage, Brecht joins the issue of material production and reproduction with that of the reproduction of the species. The nurturing feminine is not positioned in some spiritual realm outside the social relations of production, but squarely within them. Shen Ti/Shui Ta's immersion in the social relations of production shows up the illusion of the gendered code of class struggle: both the masculine and the feminine exist within the boundaries of class struggle and all the ethical problems it produces. No longer can the spiritual feminine be the sign of reconciliation of opposing masculine forces, but is rather a full fledged participant in the contradictions of a capitalist society.

Carl Weber, Stanford University, Stanford, California, USA:

#### Vaudeville's Children and Brecht

From an entry in Brecht's diary in October 1921 to notes in his Arbeitsjournal in the fifties, the impact actors, performances, and theatrical techniques of the American vaudeville tradition had on Brecht's thinking and

practice can be traced in his writings, and many of his co-workers and friends provide us with reports corroborating such an influence. Specifically, Brecht's concept of Gestus owed a lot (for instance) to the acting mode he observed in performers as Charlie Chaplin, Lillian Gish, or James Cagney. Though originally based on American films he saw and admired in Germany before his exile, even the first disappointing encounter with American theatre practice in 1935 during the ill-fated production of The Mother in New York didn't diminish Brecht's respect for the actors, directors, and designers who represented this tradition in the Broadway musicals and movies he saw. After his return to Europe, he continued listing New York, along with Moscow and pre-Hitler Berlin, as one of the three theatre capitals of the age. When he had arrived in California while in exile, his experience with the film industry of Hollywood and the commercial Broadway system resulted in some revisions of his views, but he nevertheless retained a great amount of admiration for the values which the quickly vanishing vaudeville tradition had to offer. The consequences of his American visit in the mid-thirties had been visible already in plays such as Mother Courage and The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui. After his return to Germany in the late forties, when he was given the opportunity to test and develop his theatrical concepts with his own company, many details of his productions at the Berliner Ensemble manifested his creative use of American models and techniques, whether derived from the Broadway stage or Hollywood pictures. Examples can be cited on every level of his directorial practice: acting, staging, design, the use of musical comedy techniques, and so forth. This influence extended also to the composition of his acting company, procedural methods, the introduction of previews in the German theatre, and other matters. It goes without saying that specific techniques were used in a thoroughly critical manner, although Brecht's eclecticism in employing whatever seemed to fit knew few limits. In this context, it is regrettable that the projected production of an American play with many songs, namely Barrie Stavis' The Man Who Never Died, never materialized. Brecht's adaptation and direction of a script that followed quite closely the musical theatre model would have shown us his adoption of a specifically American form for an American topic. The paper provides a general survey of a field which deserves to be explored in a much more detailed manner, analyzing the specifics of each of Brecht's appropriations from the American tradition.

Clas Zilliacus, Abo Akademi, Abo/Turku, Finland:

### Hamlet, Brecht, and Benno Besson

Brecht's extant comments on Hamlet date from 1928 onwards. Discussions of his stand on the play (evidenced by his evaluations of it, in plot summaries, adaptation work, material such as a "Zwischenszene," etc.) generally receive limited attention in works on the relationship between Brecht and Shakespeare (e.g., Symington 1970, Baum 1981).

Brecht viewed the play with a fair amount of reservation. In his 1931 radio adaptation, for example, he cut the last five scenes, and allotted air time was not his only reason to do so: the ending was "seines verwickelten und skurilen Inhalts wegen für das moderne Theater nicht mehr geeignet." In a letter written in 1949, Eric Bentley tried to talk Brecht out of a reading of the Fortinbras monologue as peripety. Brecht granted him the point, but only half-heartedly. He seems to have been sceptical about Hamlet on two counts, both of which made counter-measures imperative. Firstly, Hamlet as a man who acts must not be rendered heroic; secondly, the play must not be infused with an air of immutably destiny.

Benno Besson, who may perhaps be considered Brecht's most gifted pupil, has undertaken no less than seven Hamlet productions since the mid-seventies. Two of these--one in Swedish in 1979 and one in Finnish in 1985--were staged in Helsinki. Since I was responsible for the 1979 text, and worked as the director's interpreter during rehearsals, I am fairly familiar with his staging concept.

Besson's point of departure is Brechtian dialectics. The measures considered imperative by Brecht are foregrounded in his productions of the play. Besson, however, finds them readily available in the text as received. He uses a number of alienation devices--or rather, approaches--in order to defocus the protagonist. Audience awareness of the mutability of human destiny is effected through an oscillation between a tragical and a comical impetus. This is conveyed through the *mise-en-scène*; no rewriting is deemed necessary. Besson trusts Shakespeare in a way Brecht did not.

Besson's conviction that it is "all there" makes his reading of Hamlet, Brechtian *per se*, recognizably post-Brechtian. His means of alienation, geared to Brechtian ends, differ notably from those of his predecessor. Thus his Hamlet has palpable traits of the pre-Elizabethan vice; the play is enacted in masks and in an indeterminate locale in order to emphasize the legendary aspect of the fable told, and to counteract a historico-psychological mode of reception.

# 高加索灰闖記

## 總監

國際布萊希特節

THE INTERNATIONAL BRECHT FESTIVAL



Harald Hülsmann

BRECHT IN DANEMARK

Vor der Fischerhütte sitzend--

am Abend--

in der Stube hinter sich

das Bild des Weisen wissend

Nicht aufgehängt

da hier wohl keine Zuflucht

zu erwarten war

Keine Sicherheit

vor dem Zugriff

jener Hände

die den Genossen

die zurückgebliebenen

jetzt die Nasenbeine

und mehr einschlugen

Den Blick natürlich

auf das Meer gerichtet

Immer schon der Ort derer

denen die Grenzen des Landes

nur Linien zur Verengung waren

Und irgendwo dahinten

hinter den Wolken am Horizont--

von der sinkenden Sonne gefärbt--

das Amerika der Schlachthöfe gewußt

Amerika das Schlägern und Geschlagenen

Europas seine wildwestlichen Chancen bot

デンマークのブレヒト

夕方に 漁師の小屋の前に

すわっている――

うしろの小屋には

「懷疑」と呼ばれている賢人を描いた

掛け軸はかかつていなかった

かくれ家は

あてにならなかったし

あとに残った同志の

鼻骨などを今や

うちくたく

あのこぶじから

のがれるすべは

ここには

なかったのだ

眼はもちろん

海に向けられていた

陸の境界が

せばめられた線となっていた

人々の逃げ場所はきまつて海だ

そしてどこか向うに

夕日に染められた――

水平線の雲のうしろに――

周知の新天地のアメリカがある

ヨーロッパの乱暴者や被害者に

西部の荒野で活動の機会をあたえたアメリカが

## PRODUCTION REVIEWS AND REPORTS

Brecht's Good Person in Milwaukee/USA

Roswitha Mueller

The performance of Brecht's The Good Person of Szechwan by The Professional Theatre Training Program of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Fine Arts under the direction of Heinz-Uwe Haus belongs to the triumphant chapter of American university theatre productions. The odds for success were not great. To begin with, it was an act of bravery to tackle one of Brecht's most difficult plays, difficult especially for American audiences who are generally not accustomed to dealing with problems of poverty in the theatre.

The production was an exceptional event, not only because it was "Brechtian" without concessions to audience taste in questions of pacing, completeness of text, and love of detail--in itself a rare incidence in the history of U.S. Brecht performances--but also because it was able to engage the spectators in the unrolling of the fable. This is not to claim that there was no "splitting of the audience" into those who felt that these problems were none of their concern and walked out, and those whose interest kept them in their seats. One reason for this successful reception was the right mixture of disrespect on the part of Heinz-Uwe Haus for Brecht's classical status, and of understanding what mattered to the Brecht of the Schau-stück: the proper balance between entertainment and reflection, or better, the merging of the two. Like everything in Brecht, entertainment is culturally and historically specific. One person's laugh is another's yawn. It is to the credit of the director to have brought into play (his own GDR background hardly warrants this) American comic sensibilities to such a degree of perfection.

The most fortunate touch in this respect was his choice of a black actor (Lewan Alexander) for the water-seller Wang. What made this choice seem particularly felicitous was not just the reference to the racial factor in American sociological stratification, but also the inclusion of the distinctly different forms of expression in language, gesture, and humor of the blacks in this country. Wang's wrangling with the gods--a species of Wall Street agents with a touch of Barber Shop Quartett quaintness--brought out the clash between hard economic facts and empty ideological chatter better than the Shen Te/Shui Ta transformations which have the same function in Brecht's play. Unless Shen Te/Shui Ta is played against the role, that is, as tough Shen Te and low key Shui Ta, the irony in Brecht's use of "good" and "bad" is lost. Most modern American audiences are likely to take a sweet Shen Te straight, wondering about the sentimentality of a playwright who is known for his emphasis on distancing. The Shen Te/Shui Ta of the Milwaukee production (Ellen Boyle) was played with vitality and great physical agility, which is a great step in the right direction. Occasionally, she had too much of the naively innocent air of an Alice in Wonderland about her to pass for a slum prostitute, even an angelic one.

Casting and characterization of minor roles was carried out with intelligence and considerable skill. The difficult "Family of Eight" passages succeeded precisely for this reason. Instead of rushing through and blurring the differences, extreme gestural precision and imaginative differentiation turned each episode into an event of interest. Likewise, the portrayal of the barber Shu Fu (Mark Corkins) as a fop with a delightful ballet routine added sparkle and complexity to an otherwise rather drab figure in the play. The procedure is one of exaggeration to the point of caricature, which works well with minor figures and contributes some of the colorfulness of popular dramatic forms so dear to Brecht. The widow Shin (Linda Balgord) and Mi Tzu (Tina Witek) were accomplished examples of this approach. Major figures like Wang, Shen Te/Shui Ta and Yang Sun, relied more on complex and contradictory portrayals. As a result, Wang, for example, was able to trace a clear development from fatalistic submission to the gods to a more rebellious attitude toward them; and the brilliant conception of the role of Yang Sun as a mixture of cry-baby, charmer, victimizer, and opportunist was rivaled only by the actor's (James Devita) near acrobatic virtuosity of movement.

In its sparseness and very Brechtian exposure of the technical apparatus, the stage design, on first impression, seemed like a cross between a railway station and a building site. A closer look revealed more detail--rarely decorative but always humorous. The carpet dealer's beat up VW Bug, the dumpster decanting the three Gods in their more delapidated state, the manhole denoting the nether regions of society, first housing Wang and later on the gods, the tobacco shop contained in an elevator, all appealed to a typically American sense of the comic. Some of this spirit even spilled over to the musical score, subverting and popularizing it, but only minimally and at specific and appropriate moments. For the most part the score remained untouched. Musical director and accompanist John Komasa brought the music of Paul Dessau, so rarely heard in this country, to a startled but ultimately appreciative audience thanks to his fine performance.



**HEINZ-UWE HAUS** (Director) was born and raised in Germany and currently resides in Berlin (German Democratic Republic) with his wife and child. He trained as an actor at the Filmhochschule Babelsberg; as a director at Deutsches Theater Berlin; and as a scholar of cultural theories and theatre studies (Diploma of Culture; Doctor of Philosophy) at the Humboldt-Universität Berlin.

From 1971-1975 Mr. Haus was director at Deutscher Theater Berlin and from 1975-1982 he worked as director and mentor at the Institut für Schauspielregie Berlin. Since 1983 he has done much directing and teaching abroad and has been a guest director for productions in Cyprus, Italy, Greece and England. He is currently the Artistic Advisor of the International Workshop and Study Center for Ancient Drama in Oiniades, Greece.

In addition to directing, Mr. Haus has taught Brechtian staging methods and dramaturgy at the theatre and German departments of various American universities. He was also a visiting professor at Villanova University (1980), New York University (1982), Kenyon College (1984), and Bowling Green State (1986).

Mr. Haus' directorial credits include productions of *Splendor and Death of Joaquin Murieta*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Mother Courage and her Children*, *The Fall of the Centaur*, *Pericles*, *The Suppliant Women*, *Hecabe*, *The Robbers*, *Baal*, and *Arturo Ui*. Over the past sixteen years he has been a participant in the international festivals of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Portugal, Greece and Great Britain.

Notes on Preparations for the Milwaukee Production of Szechwan

Heinz-Uwe Haus

## THREE UNWORLDLIES IN HEAVEN

The gods' sojourn on earth takes a deplorable course: they degenerate from scene to scene until they can no longer conceal their powerlessness despite all the pompous talk. In terms of gestures and gesticulation it could mean that, initially, they walk forcibly and quite cautiously and almost on tiptoes over the earth; later they crawl forward with their nose in the dirt just to flee from it. The water salesman who receives them down on his knees departs from them in an upright position and helps them to walk.

## WHAT DO THE GODS HAVE IN MIND?

The gods are in search of a good man, who lives a worthy life and through his life justifies the world as tolerable, not in need of change. Hence, they invent the "good man." In doing so, they generously overlook the fact that Shen Te and Shui Ta are one and the same person. As typical "Tuis" they understand their (state-affirming) art to explain the topsy-turvy state of relations as the general standard of behavior and to accuse anybody who walks on his own two feet of stupidity and immorality.

Wekwerth suggests attitudes such as "formulating away", "defining away" --i.e., arguing beyond, not taking notice, appealing, demanding victims, demanding virtue, in short: beautiful appearances. The day-to-day life of class struggle is full of it, or, as Brecht used to see it, full of them, i.e., those who "only contemplate."

Important is the play of the group as a trio and the assertion of specific individuality (before the public everybody distances himself from the other). Figures should not be mystified--therefore one should search less into the characteristics of the individuals and more into the comedy of the situation. It begins where they have preconceived opinions and categorical imperatives; they will never falter.

## SHEN TE/SHUI TA

Characterization is to be accomplished with the attitude of body, gesture, diction; two histrionic figures. Shen Te is not to be idealized, Shui Te not to be played as a masked scoundrel and villain. What she does is done full of wit, villainy, and friendly laughter, yet without any sentimentality. In her behavior she is vital and gracious, with lust, vigor, and cheekiness. She likes to give and she gives quickly and easily. We should not deny the trade, but rather accentuate it.

As Shui Ta she is hurrying about on the field of sensible reason. Somewhere I found the following idea (from a production concept): In the behavior of Shui Ta "played" by Shen Te we can trace the development from the apparently reasonable person under given circumstances to the criminal one. Adaptation to constraints or the attempt to utilize them for oneself is at

the same time a sell-out of human values. More important than the question of whether she is good or bad is the division of the world into those having possessions and those having none. Shen Te's graciousness is the reverse of Shui Ta's harshness and vice-versa.

#### NEITHER DRYLY DIDACTICAL NOR FUZZILY LYRICAL

I am afraid that the laconic, grim, tender "poetry of teaching" gets lost in any translation; therefore we should primarily concentrate on the parable rather than on the analysis.

The poetic dream play, as we know it from Murieta and Zentauren, thrives on the awareness of the changeability of social relations. Therefore there is no anxiety in the face of proposals that do not fit into the "model." What Brecht established can be trusted: "To 'see' theatre is an enjoyable learning experience." The question is no longer one of repertory, or the effect of propaganda, since the ensemble today lives consciously in persistent interaction with society and its struggles. The events should be presented to the audience over the course of three-and-a-half hours as under a microscope, with a view to sharpening its ability to observe. Brecht: "What is necessary is the sharpening of the senses and attitudes in order to heighten pleasure . . . The more a spectator is capable of preparing himself for differentiated joy, or letting himself be prepared for it, the better a spectator he is."

#### WANG'S ARGUMENTS

The "seven sins" are those about which Ghandi warned the people. The Mahatma defined them as: politics without principles, riches without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, trading without morality, science without humanity, adoration without a willingness to make sacrifices.

Wang's religiosity makes him an advocate and rebel of the suburbs. He is intent on implementing heaven on earth. His questions are probing; he takes the gospel and his dreams seriously.

#### WHERE IS "SEZCHWAN"? -"ALIEN MILIEU" AND ALIENATION

Brecht locates the events in legendary China. He thereby hopes to achieve alienation: the spectator is to rediscover day-to-day events as something uncommon. The Sezchwan of the parable is not an existing city, but a fictitious modern metropolis. It would be misleading for the play to show a specific race, nationality, and manner. (Highly revealing are the stages of development in Besson's work on the play since 1956 in the GDR). We have to maintain our own world of stage events, so that it might recall as many "locations" as possible, where even today Sezchwan is still a reality. The fact of alienation is less noticeable in the visual aspect than in the relationships between figures. Chinoiserie will not suffice.

#### UNREALISTIC SIMILE, YET HARSH REALITY

The eight-member family and all the other suburbanites provide the dynamics of the group. Their situations are to be the center of attention: Shen Te/Shui Ta is only a typical example of it. On the one hand, Brecht re-

veals the desperate struggle of existence of an intermediate social stratum: tradesmen, traders, craftsmen, owners of houses, prostitutes; we have to show that these figures are a bit unstable, they are at the crossroads, their way leads either to the possession of means of production, or to the proletariat. On the other hand--and we wanted to concentrate on this--Brecht illustrates the productivity of man who becomes crippled in the world of Seichwan. People incorporate more possibilities than they are in a position to realize. We should show why people are like that, what the productivity of each individual consists of, and by what means productivity is impeded before it can be unfolded. The development of dramatic art can go hand in hand with the development of the art of viewing; this is our chance for a "poor theatre."

#### CONFLICT BETWEEN THOSE WHO POSSESS AND THOSE WHO DO NOT

Forlorn and even crazy is he who, out of instinctive friendliness, insists capriciously on doing only good to everybody, unless he tends to be a martyr. Whoever wants to survive in the given social system sometimes has to be "reasonable"; that is, firm and unfriendly. We have to take care that our social images and references give pleasure to the spectator who is equipped with certain political knowledge. Therefore the differentiated audience has to find by itself the different points of intersection; the narrative aspect must combine them.

#### INVESTIGATIONS MADE BY OTHER DIRECTORS

Besson noted for his Berlin production in 1970: "We found a declaration of war vis-à-vis the situation which still exists in great parts of the world, in the so-called affluent countries in the same way as in India, Latin America, or Italy . . . Brecht's play is a militant play because it shows our audience the necessity of putting an end to the situation through which such a productive personality as Shen Te is led astray or destroyed."-- Serban deliberately outlines his 1976 New York production as "after-Brecht." To him the play is "raw theatre:" "raw in the sense of unadulterated, extremely close to people and therefore potentially much more accessible." Ultimately, for his 1976 Zurich production, Wekwerth accentuated: "It is not the gods who decide what the world (including the world of theatre) has to look like, rather they are confronted with reality. Therefore, no fairy-tale in which the emergence of the gods is virtually awaited, but a world, people, and a stage, where any emergence of the gods would actually appear absurd. From here the play could take on many of the features of a comedy, which were intended, so far as I can see, by Brecht."--All of these ideas have to be "stored" if we want to realize our conception.

#### DECLARATION OF STRUGGLE

In the court scene, the contradictions between "the haves" and the "have-nots" conflict with each other. They should be emphasized. Both groups stand with their backs (more or less) to the public, but the judges should face us rather directly. The statements of the "haves" should be uttered like platitudes and should be "sold" well. The offenders put everything on a card and do not rehearse. Everybody walks into the witness box anew for each new sentence and then returns to the group. Chorus reactions are enclosed reactions. Separated, but half-facing the group, are Sun and his mother, thereby organizing the dialectics of the conflict.

The Threepenny Opera, Directed by Giorgio Strehler  
Théâtre Musical de Paris, October 1986-February 1987

Petermichael von Bawey, American College in Paris

The first page of the Théâtre Musical's program has Rudolf Schlichte's 1928 portrait of Brecht followed by Brecht's note of February 10, 1956 to Strehler: "I wish I could confine all my plays to you in Europe, one after the other." The tone for the current production is set: Strehler, the heir of Brechtian theater, Strehler the director who knows Brecht the man, the poet, and his theater (Le Monde, 14 November 1986) has staged The Threepenny Opera once again. This is underlined in the "Moritat" of Mack the Knife, which opens the play, sung not by Michael Heltau who plays Mack, but by Bert Brecht on a cracked disc.

Giorgio Strehler's first work on The Threepenny Opera was in 1956 at the Piccolo Teatro in Milan, with Brecht present during final rehearsals. Two more productions followed in 1972 and 1976, but the 1956 version was staged in Paris in 1960 at the Palais de Chaillot, by invitation of Jean Vilar. Similar to the 1956 version, Strehler's current production displaces the action to another time and place. In 1956, Brecht approved Strehler's innovation; thus it is understandable that Strehler used it again. Brecht's Victorian England gives way to post-World War I America. America the new hub of capitalism, the vanguard of commercial society is deemed more suitable to show the relationship between crime and business than Imperial England, particularly in making Brecht's point that successful criminals are good business men. Mack the Knife's illegally acquired funds have greater value when laundered through U.S. banks than remaining in Empire bank coffers. Surely this point is not missed by the French, who have experienced currency restrictions and illegal currency scandals since the Socialists came to power.

Ezio Frigerio's set captures the jungle of America's cities of the Twenties. Tin-lizzies, dim alleys, auto-repair garages and brick high rises with fire escapes mark the stage. Hollywood style gangsters and keystone cops replace Soho low-life and London bobbies. Yet Franca Squarciarino's fashion designs, especially for Polly and Jenny, exude the European chic of the fin de siècle. This historical anachronism adds charm and naivety to Barbara Sukowa, who plays Polly, and vampishness to Milva who is Jenny, but it undermines Strehler's America. Schnitzler's air yif of decadent Vienna sweeps in: Milva, with fire-red hair, looking like Claire or a Klimtian femme fatale of the Ringstraße, draws the attention and applause of the audience.

A more jarring dissonance is found in Strehler's imagery of Peachum's army of beggars, now transformed into an army of victims of the war. As war cripples march or crawl across the stage, Strehler's America fades once more. Historical imagination turns to the Berlin of 1918 as Strehler's imagery brings to mind the horror of war captured in the surrealistic paintings of Georg Grosz. To be sure, a theatrical effect was achieved, the audience responded enthusiastically, but at the expense of Brecht's anti-culinary theater.

The November issue of Le Monde de la Musique (No. 94) carries an interview with Strehler. He readily admits that the Brecht of the sixties, the decade of counter-culture, is not the Brecht of the eighties, the decade of high-tech culture. Yet for Strehler, The Threepenny Opera is still the work of Brecht's anti-culinary theater, the theater that takes issue with the digestive art of bourgeois consumption. Strehler holds that the anti-culinary theater combats the spectacle of the bourgeois theater; and, more importantly, he indicates that Brechtian aesthetics oriented his staging of The Threepenny Opera. But in this I think he failed. Strehler's potpourri of temporal and spatial dislocation brought forth a mixed imagery that was for the most part so removed from the norms of French cultural traditions that the theoretical aspects of Brecht's aesthetics did not emerge in his production of The Threepenny Opera. The result is culinary art, or as Le Monde put it: "pour tous un beau spectacle pour les fetes." Le Monde comments further that while Strehler's production won in nostalgic beauty, it lost in irony and aggressiveness, necessary in attacking normative morality. Had Strehler brought into his production cultural material common to his audience, the results might have been different. Rather than an opaque Hollywood America, the gangster world of Monmartre and Pigalle juxtaposed with the plush international banks of the Champs Elysées could have created a more aggressive social conflict in the play's action or even elicited discomfort in the audience. The brothel scenes in the images of Toulouse-Lautrec, the songs of Polly and Jenny in the style of Edith Piaf and those of Mack the Knife in the manner of Maurice Chevalier might have thrown a different light on some French cultural idols. It could have transformed this production into something more than just "a beautiful spectacle for the holiday season." At least, it would have put Brecht's anti-culinary theater on stage as well as on paper.

Let me explain. Already in 1920 Brecht advocated experimentation with the material of drama. He wrote: "In part we will take primarily old things as material." He felt the theater did not lack material for the stage. What was missing in the theatrical representation was a careful treatment of well-known works from a new point of view. His concern with existing cultural material became a methodology apparent as early as Baal where he used a contemporaneous drama (Johst's Der Einsame) for his production. He sought to extract what he called the material value (Materialwert) from existing works. The new theater needs tradition but not in re-presentational form. A classical or well-known work must not be staged, thought Brecht, "the way it really was" in the past, in historicist fashion, but rather in Walter Benjamin's sense of "brushing history against the grain." In his use of familiar material, the old content becomes the formal aspect--in a new production holding a socio-historical and critical position against its former (normative) content. He stated: "... in the extraction of the gestic content of a familiar work, the intellectual postures that are to be revealed can be situated (by the producer and user) against the material." Consequently, the actions of Brecht's characters and the imagery of scenes are distanced (entfernt) and thus evident to the audience. But the familiar material emerging as gestic content counters ("brushes against the grain of") its original source ("the way it really was"). This produces a dialectical hermeneutic that mediates between the accepted or normative cultural experience and the contemporary dramatized reality. Strehler's production neglects these theoretical considerations of Brechtian theater. The result is a holiday musical or a cracked disc of Brecht's critical voice. In short, Strehler's Threepenny Opera is a pleasant if anodyne sound among the shrill notes of today's high-tech culture.



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Du 31 Octobre 1986 au 8 Février 1987

Représentations du mardi au samedi à 20 h (sauf les 6 Novembre, 25 Décembre et 1er Janvier)  
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## **L'OPERA DE QUAT'SOUS**

**Opéra en un prologue et huit tableaux**

**Livret de Bertolt BRECHT**

**Musique de Kurt WEILL**

**Mise en scène de Giorgio STREHLER**

Direction Musicale : Peter FISCHER

Décors de Ezio FRIGERIO

Costumes de Franca SQUARCIAPINO

### **CONFERENCE REPORT:**

**Brecht Symposium, Copenhagen, Denmark, October 2-3, 1986**

**John Fuegi**

On October 2 and 3, 1986, in a suburb of Copenhagen, a small international Brecht Symposium was held. Among the speakers at the conference were the Danish scholar-journalists Rudi Hassing, who spoke on Margarete Steffin, and Hans-Christian Norregard, who spoke on the background of Brecht's stay in Denmark; Jan Knopf (FRG), who provided details on the new Brecht edition, and Carl Pietzcker (FRG), who spoke on Brecht's neurosis with regard to a supposed heart ailment; and John Fuegi from the U.S., who gave a lecture entitled "Die Geschäfte des Herrn Bertolt Brechts." The proceedings of the conference are to be published in German within a year, according to the organizers.

Of particular interest to international Brecht scholars will be the work of Hassing and Norregard, as it is based on newly discovered documents drawn from Danish archives and supplemented by interviews with people who knew Brecht, Weigel, Steffin, and Berlau in Denmark in the 1930s. Taking a fresh look at this period, both Hassing and Norregard shed considerable new light on an era often commented upon by Brecht scholars but all too rarely examined from a strictly factual point of view. Norregard carefully separates legend from verifiable fact in the matter of Brecht's relationship, real and imagined, to Niels Bohr's atomic physics institute in Copenhagen. Hassing, having obtained all of the relevant hospital records of Steffin in Denmark and elsewhere, gives a chilling account of the demise of a co-worker on most of Brecht's major plays from c. 1932 until her death in Moscow in 1941. Hassing also shows the ways in which the heirs of Steffin have been treated since her death.

Jan Knopf reported at both the conference itself and in subsequent correspondence that, as far as the contribution of others such as Berlau, Steffin, and Hauptmann to the plays published under Brecht's name is concerned, these matters cannot be taken up in the new "Brecht" edition since "that particular train has already left the station."

PEN, PAINT & PRETZELS  
and  
TUFTS ARENA THEATER  
present

## FANSHEN

by David Hare

directed by Bruce G. Shapiro

February 24–28, 1987

The following article by Bruce G. Shapiro first appeared in **Prologue**, the Bulletin of The Tufts University Theater, Volume 42, No. 3, February 1987 on the occasion of his production of David Hare's Fanshen. A further note on this production is included on p. 70 of this issue of COMMUNICATIONS.

## THE LEHRSTÜCKE

What differentiates a playwright from a scriptwriter is the former's concern with the structure of his text: that is, the theatrical structure. Many scholars, students, and critics consider the literature of plays, but they often neglect the structure of those same works. Plays are all too often only discussed as literary expressions of themes, plots, and ideas. It is as if the essence of the play were always in its writing and not its "writhing." However, many times the actual purpose of a play, its essential concept, is present in that play's theatrical structure – in every aspect of its structure, from the arrangement of its scenes to the linguistic structure of its dialogue.

In general, audience members are tacitly restricted by sociopolitical conditioning; the sophistication of their theatrical appreciation is thereby limited. As a result, the theatrical structure of plays has been inadvertently homogenized by the audience, maintaining a constancy of theatrical purpose. Much of the American theatre audience is resistant to shifting its dramatic perspectives, hence revolutionary forms wind up playing to only very small audiences. This is an ironic twist in a free society, for a theatrical culture which must constantly follow only one acceptable structure is actually promoting artistic self-censorship; it slowly exterminates itself. Certainly, the content – themes and plots – of American plays may be varied, but until the theatrical structure of plays may be effectively manipulated by the playwright with creative freedom, the theatre's artistic purpose can never evolve with any degree of cultural force.

The difficulty audiences have in appreciating new and different theatrical structures is fundamentally compounded by the American actor's inability to advance in performance an understanding of those structures. Actors too are restricted by sociopolitical conditions; and, their appreciation of variant theatrical structures is also limited in their performance training. Most American actors learn their art in a vacuum – the classroom, where they study acting and not the acting of plays. As a result, actors perform in the same way from play to play with the same constancy of theatrical purpose. If all plays are acted alike, without regard to their theatrical structure, then asking the audience member to differentiate between them becomes something like asking a physician to diagnose a variety of different diseases when all the given symptoms appear the same: the task becomes impossible. The perpetuation of a single type of acting is as totalitarian as the constant demand for a single, recognizable, theatrical structure.

It is the actor's job to apply purposeful and also adaptable performance skills to a playwright's creation. Acting performances must always conform to the theatrical structure of a play – to the conceptual purpose of a play. Often a play's essential concept is present in its theatrical structure. The actor, as the leader of the theatrical experience, creates a performance which leads the audience member through the theatrical structure of the play towards an appreciation of its conceptual purpose: that is the energy, the dynamics of the acting performance.

As I have implied already, acting cannot be taught in a classroom. It cannot by itself be learned. Of course, certain of its principles and skills can be identified and developed, and many theatrical structures can be explored, but for acting itself to happen, an audience must be present. In the traditional classroom, the audience is absent; hence, there can be no performance, and performance is the crux of an actor's training. In effect, the classroom is a place where students of acting learn *about* their art, but not the art itself.

Likewise, learning to be an audience member cannot be taught in a classroom. One can teach *about* being an audience member, but all too often such efforts result in the diseducation of someone who eventually becomes a critic. Like acting, learning to be an audience member only happens in conjunction with a live theatrical performance.

One of the playwright's great challenges is confronting the dilemma of the restrictions of sociopolitical conditioning. More often than not a playwright's public acceptance is predicated upon his ability and willingness to conform to society while still maintaining substantive integrity. For a playwright, toying with the theatrical structure is too dangerous; it could effectively prevent or even destroy his reputation. Consequently, throughout the whole of dramatic history, when compared to the number of playwrights and plays, there have been relatively few revolutionary changes in theatrical structure. Significant changes in theatrical structure have usually happened slowly, following the lead of the sociopolitical conditions: society has changed the look of the theatre, but the theatre has rarely, if ever, changed the look of society.

There has really only been one truly great playwright whose work was conceived as part of a significant alteration in the theatrical structure: Bertolt Brecht. 1986 was an important year for the Brechtian theatre in that it marked three decades since the playwright's death. Last October,

## THE LEHRSTÜCKE by Bruce G. Shapiro

scholars and theatre artists from countries around the world – from China to Germany to California – gathered at the University of Toronto for the International Theatre Festival: Brecht 30 Years After. Brecht's own theatre, The Berliner Ensemble, under the artistic direction of Ekkehard Schall, Brecht's son-in-law, made their premier North American appearance as part of this festival, performing *THE THREEPENNY OPERA* and *THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE*. Eric Bentley, Martin Esslin, and John Willet, among others, delivered lectures and conducted workshops aimed at examining Brecht's theatrical legacy.

There has always been and will continue to be a great debate over the influence of Brecht – about his plays, his theories, and his politics. The fact is, however, as most will agree, that like any other theatre, Brecht's theatre can only be truly explored in practice, when it is brought to life in performance; for the most part (in spite of Brecht's feeling that his Epic Theatre should be applied to Shakespeare), that only happens with the production of one of Brecht's own plays – *MOTHER COURAGE* or *THE GOOD PERSON OF SETZUAN*, for example. But, certain theories of Brecht's are applicable in the performance of other modern plays, especially plays that deal with social change or political upheaval. For, the thrust of Brecht's revolutionary theatrical structure was the playwright's desire to bring about change – not only theatrical change, but real, effective, sociopolitical change.

Given the contemporary sociopolitical situation of the theatrical structure, as described above, one of Brecht's theatrical concepts may be most useful to us in the present environment: the *Lehrstücke*, or the learning-play. The *Lehrstücke* was developed by Brecht during his experiments with Epic Theatre in the 1930s. Its purpose, and hence the theatrical structure of the *Lehrstücke*, is significantly different from that of the traditional modern realistic theatre: simply put, our modern social realism attempts to portray the problems of everyday life in a manner consistent with their appearance in the real world; the *Lehrstücke* emphasizes learning through involvement (on the actor's part) and through active critical reasoning (on the part of actor and audience alike, together). The learning-plays never pretend to be representations of the real world; they are more like critical presentations of certain sociopolitical aspects of humanity. Modern realism is like a living fable, offering morals to the audience via their empathetic involvement with the characters in the story. The *Lehrstücke* presents moral options, asking the audiences to distance themselves from the characters as living beings so as to critically evaluate the actions of those characters. The actor in the modern realistic theatrical structure is expected to portray a fully fleshed out living person on the stage. The *Lehrstücke* uses acting to represent a variety of things, not just the actual characters – such as, ideas, events, reports, statistics; the performer in the

*Lehrstücke* is himself required to learn from his own performance by presenting a variety of ethical choices and demonstrating a selected few. In the *Lehrstücke*, the performer may be called upon to play many characters of both sexes; this rarely occurs in the modern realistic structure. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the *Lehrstücke* is designed to promote change through learning, through critical thinking. It uses itself to turn the theatre into a forum for the revolutionary exchange of ideas; as such, it has the opportunity to become one of the most productive "classrooms."

We must avoid a dangerous confusion at this point. For it is not actually the material of the play, the content or subject as it were, that provides the lesson. The lesson of the *Lehrstücke* is in its theatrical structure, a structure which at every point advocates change. The play confronts the performer and the audience together with certain events, situations that demand change, and it then goes on to show the various possibilities for effecting that change. Although the story of the play may itself be about change – and this may be the most effective *Lehrstücke* model – the play is not necessarily advocating this particular change. It is about the ethics of change; it is an ethical lesson. It is for this reason that the most potent *Lehrstücke* are based upon historical events, events which can be evaluated and criticized with a didactic objectivity.

David Hare's *FANSHEN*, upon its opening, was described by reviewer Michael Coveney as a "marvellous play that... is the nearest any English contemporary writer has come to emulating Brecht." But, *FANSHEN* lacks all the literary traits which make Brecht a great writer. It is literary in its own fashion, but it is not composed in a Brechtian style verse. It does not contain the poetic songs which identify a Brecht play. Nor does *FANSHEN* contrive all the contradictory twists of dialogue which make Brecht sound so confusing. It is in fact more accessible than Brecht from a literary point of view. Where *FANSHEN* comes closest to Brecht is in the theatrical structure of the play, its emphasis on change, its use of epic slogans and banners, its use of the performers as not only portraits of characters, but also as narrators, commentators, and thinkers. In short it is as the *Lehrstücke*, the learning-play, that *FANSHEN* is most imitative of Brecht.

I think it is important that America as a great world leader see itself in the *Lehrstücke* on the global stage. It is a great mistake to perform in that *Lehrstücke* as the antagonist – the iron heel on the face of all the other players. That will only foster the antithesis of our aim: the spread of human freedom. We must learn from the Brechtian *Lehrstücke* that the truly great leader is the one who possesses the face of hopeful and productive change. The protagonist of the *Lehrstücke* is the teacher, the one who fosters the human ideal by planting the seeds of change. And, that is also the greatest actor.

– Bruce G. Shapiro

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Theatre, Medford, Massachusetts USA.

# "I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."

GOODMAN THEATRE OPENS 1986-87 SEASON WITH BERTOLT BRECHT'S "GALILEO"

THE GOODMAN THEATRE OF CHICAGO OPENED ITS 1986-87 SEASON WITH ROBERT FALLS' PRODUCTION OF *GALILEO*. THE FOLLOWING INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY GOODMAN DIRECTOR OF ARTS STEVE SCOTT AND DRAMATURG TOM CREAMER FOR THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOODMAN THEATRE, ON STAGE.

**How long have you been working on *Galileo*? What interested you in it?**

Last year, when I was asked by the Goodman Board of Directors what kinds of plays I would be doing if I were artistic director, the first play that came to mind was *Galileo*. I keep going back to Brecht's work as if it were a bible of sorts. It's a play I've always wanted to do and, in a way, it was almost an unconscious choice. Rather than me picking the play, the play says it must be done now, like some sort of crystal ball that tells you what you should be doing. The great plays do that. Afterwards, you have to analyze *why*.

One reason for choosing *Galileo* is that it's a play that embraces all the elements of theater. It's a play of size, a play with great humor, great humanity, and great intelligence. It's quiet. It has great intensity in its two character scenes. And it's a play with music, crowd scenes, and huge potential for movement. So many of the new works and other plays we see only grab one element of the theater. This one has it all.

I have only been working on this play actively since January 1, but the images for the play started happening, and I started playing around with them, before that. Again, it's like the crystal ball tells you what play to do, and then, in a way, you let it work on itself within your head.

**Is there a special reason why you selected *Galileo* as your first show in your inaugural season as the Goodman's artistic director?**

It's a play about beginnings. In his speech in the first scene Galileo says "...Everything is in motion! A new age is coming..." It's a great play to start out with. I can't quite articulate it, but it's a play that I wanted to challenge everybody involved in the production. I wanted to put myself to a test, put the theater to a test and, ultimately, put the audience to a certain test—to see if we can do it, and to see how they respond to it. It's a play that is so much about challenging old conventions and sweeping away the past.

**How does *Galileo* relate to the rest of the season?**

What's fascinating about *Galileo* is that it's the play Brecht never finished. It's the play he was working on all his life. So many of the themes of his other plays we see in this one. It encompasses so much of Brecht's life, his teachings, his work; that whole exploration of the artist in society. Which, I think, is a very interesting theme, and certainly a subject for a new artistic director coming into a new theater with its thorny rosebed of board of directors, critics, audience, and funders.

The next play that came to mind, then, was *Sunday in the Park with George*. *Galileo* is a play that uses a scientist as a metaphor for the artist. *Sunday in the Park* is a play about an artist, Seurat, who really thought of himself as a scientist, with the same sort of pursuit of truth, bringing a new age of painting to his time. And just as *Galileo* deals with the oppression of a 17th century scientist, *Sunday in the Park* deals with the oppression of the artist—in a very contemporary way.

**How about *The Tempest*?**

I've always felt the connection between *Galileo* and *The Tempest*. The scientist/artist is very much at the heart of both plays, as is the question of where science leads us and where art leads us. Galileo renouncing his past at the end of the play is not unlike Prospero at the end of *The Tempest* renouncing his art and trying to figure out what the nature of art is in the world, how important it is, what it really means, what power art has to change the world to make people see the world differently. I feel science has the same connection, and the same question can be asked; that is, what are the responsibilities of science to the world?

**Do you ever worry about Brecht's image as a difficult, political, intellectual playwright?**

I think most people see the name of Bertolt Brecht and flee from the theater. I think our image of Brecht is of a rather severe man, who is going to teach us something we don't want to hear and who won't entertain us. And I have seen a number of Brecht productions around the country that are invariably the kinds of failures that would keep me from going to see another Brecht. Yet, in Chicago, I have been very fortunate to see a string of Brecht productions that were very successful. My feeling is there is some mystical connection that Brecht has to Chicago. He mythologized it in almost all his work. He made it the central American city, as exotic and mysterious for Brecht as Singapore, say, is for us. Yet, in a weird way, I always felt that Brecht nailed the city without ever being here. In his plays there's a certain sense of Chicago's toughness, its sentimental quality, its unsentimental quality, its humor, its irony, that is absolutely correct.

— quoting the Bhagavad Gita upon the explosion of the first atomic bomb

Maybe part of that connection, and I think it's worth exploring, is the nature of the Second City tradition and the performance style of Chicago actors. There are two great acting approaches this country developed in the 1950's. One came from the Actor's Studio in New York, the other from Second City in Chicago. Paul Sills, who created Second City, spent a long time observing Brecht's Berliner Ensemble. The Second City was created as a cabaret. The audience could smoke and drink in a cabaret setting.

### That was Brecht's ideal of a theater.

Yes. And the whole Second City style of training is really that there is no fourth wall—you're improvising and creating with the full awareness of the audience participation in the event. That sense of instant creation of character is right in the Brechtian current. I think one reason for the success of my production of Brecht's *Mother Courage* at Wisdom Bridge was that we had a number of Second City-trained actors in the production, people out of the ensemble, Chicago tradition that is somehow all connected to Brecht. It's really an uncanny sense.

**The first American production of *Galileo* was a collaboration between Brecht and a big film star, Charles Laughton. Our *Galileo* will feature Brian Dennehy, a rising star from the world of film. How did it come about that Brian will be our *Galileo*?**

Among the reasons I'd never done *Galileo* before were, for one, I never had the space to do it, and, secondly, I never knew anyone who should play *Galileo*. I had some people in mind over the years, but nothing ever materialized. I worked with Brian last year at Wisdom

Bridge on *Rat in the Skull*, and getting to know him, I really thought he was a *Galileo*, a man who had a sensuality, a charisma, and the emotional and intellectual range to play the role. And because so much of the play was written in Hollywood with a film star, I felt that any contemporary production of the play had to include as part of its soul the relationship between Brecht and Laughton. I felt that somehow this was part of the play.

The whole story of Brecht in Hollywood is extremely moving and amusing—this immigrant German with almost no English trying to make a living to survive, yet, at the same time, wanting to make it big in Hollywood. He was having discussions with Orson Welles, Elia Kazan. He was meeting John Houseman and Abe Burrows. He wanted to make it, like everyone does. George Tsylin, our set designer for *Galileo*, is an emigré himself, from Russia—he wants to make it in Hollywood. European, communist, you, me—everyone wants to make it in Hollywood. That is about as high as one can attain. So I thought Dennehy would bring life to the Hollywood part of the play.

The first image I had of the play, and it was a dream image, was of *Galileo* with his telescope under his arm wandering down Sunset

Boulevard, and as he stepped on the Hollywood stars printed in the cement, they lit up under his feet.

**This is a big season at the Goodman. Every play is big. What are your reasons for such a large season on the mainstage?**

It's been a long time since the Goodman produced, consistently, a large-scale season on its mainstage. In

past seasons productions like *Candide*, or *Cyrano de Bergerac*, or *Death of a King's Horseman* have been the unusual things. Why do they have to be so unusual? We are a great American theater in a great American city and we should be taking a leadership role in doing plays of a certain size and caliber, plays that audiences rarely get a chance to see. Under normal circumstances, one used to have one *Galileo* or one *Tempest* or one *Sunday in the Park* in a season. What I have done is concentrate and rally the resources of the theater and the board of directors towards doing an ideal season, a season that no other theater in the city could possibly do, a season that starts to reflect the Goodman's status with the Lyric Opera and the Symphony as a producer of masterpieces.

A lot of people may look at the season and say, Well it's a season of masterpieces, but oh my dear, how dull. What has to take place is that we make these plays, each in its own way, rather experimental. The imaginations of the artists who are approaching them need to be exploratory and provocative and interested in examining these classical texts within a very contemporary framework. It takes risk and vision to unlock the secrets of these great plays. ▽

This interview was originally published in *On Stage*, The Goodman Theatre Newsletter, Volume 1, 1986-87. Reprinted with permission of The Goodman Theatre, Robert Falls, Artistic Director.

IN BRIEF . . .

The current issue of the Kurt Weill Newsletter (Spring 1987, Vol. 5, No. 1) contains a detailed review of the IBS International Symposium in Hong Kong by MICHAEL MORLEY (Flinders University, Australia)

BRUCE G. SHAPIRO, whose essay on the Lehrstück appears elsewhere in this issue, directed the Brecht/Weill Threepenny Opera in a production at the Fifth Street Theater in Austin, Texas, July 3-August 2, 1986. In reference to his successful production of Fanshen, David Hare's dramatization of William Hinton's landmark book Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village, Bruce writes: "It became something of an international event. William Hinton attended the performance and brought with him Wang Jin-hong, the current Low Bow Village Leader . . . The production sold out the entire run. More importantly, the whole Brechtian approach to the production was extremely well received. We employed a constant and full address to the audience in the performance, and we also had graphs and maps, etc. . . . It was a challenge to lead the actors into their characters not by way of emotive/psychological inroads, but by asking them to explore the ideas in the character's minds."

A "noteworthy" discovery: ARNOLD BLUMER, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, received a copy of ten pages of manuscript music apparently composed by Huldreich Georg Fröh for the first performance of The Good Person of Szechwan at the Zurich Schauspielhaus on February 4, 1943. Included in the material are Fröh's settings of "Das Lied vom Rauch," "Lied des Wasserverkaufers," "Von der Wehrlosigkeit der Götter und Guten," "Das Lied vom Heiligen Nimmerleinstag," and "Lied vom achten Elefanten." Persons interested in the material should contact the Editor of COMMUNICATIONS, who now has the copies. Dr. Blumer also reports on the production Van Arme B.B. at the Universiteitsteater Stellenbosch. "Unfortunately the Suhrkamp Verlag refused to give the rights for the performance so it had to be cancelled. Thereupon I wrote to Barbara Brecht-Schall, who answered, saying that if we could give her the assurance that the audience and cast would be integrated, the performance could take place." Blumer indicates that the program of Brecht poetry, songs, and drama excerpts (based on George Tabori's Brecht on Brecht and directed by Johann van Herden) may now be performed sometime in 1987.

The Chicago Cabaret Ensemble's most recent production is The Eight Hours--An Opera for Poor Players written and directed by WARREN LEMING "in the cabaret style of Brecht's Berlin" at Chicago's CrossCurrents Theater/Labor Arts Cabaret. The production commemorates the 101st anniversary of the Haymarket massacre, which is also the subject of Warren's video-docudrama The Road to Haymarket. The video incorporates narrative, documentary, dramatization, and original music in an account of the Haymarket affair told from the workers' perspective. Warren reports that the show has played to good houses and was recently featured on Studs Terkel's WFMT radio program. (See p. 51 of the last issue of COMMUNICATIONS for a note concerning Warren's video project "Brecht in His Own Words.")

The Goodman Theatre's season premier production of Galileo was only one of several Brecht productions last fall in Chicago. The Bailiwick Repertory Co. performed St. Joan of the Stockyards under the direction of DAVID ZAK, while the Gallery Theatre Co. did Man is Man at the Project 1999 Theater.

Brecht song interpreter DAGMAR KRAUSE was featured in an interview article by Richard Cromelin in the Los Angeles Times, October 31, 1986, in which she commented: "There are some people who . . . look at this music very academically. Then Brecht becomes like a museum piece . . . And I guess some of the Brecht stuff is being viewed on a more nostalgic level . . . That is not really where I'm coming from or why I'm doing it. For me, Brecht has appeal because what he is saying is so very relevant to now, and musically there is so much to be discovered. There's such a power in there."

Reported in the Munich Tageszeitung, July 31, 1986: "Trotz aller Gefahren nach den jüngsten Ereignissen in Nicaragua geschieht Eure Hilfe im Zeichen christlicher Nächstenliebe und internationaler Solidarität." Mit diesen Worten verabschiedete der Vorsitzende der Evangelischen Jugend Münchens 46 von 55 Mitgliedern der ARBEITSBRIGADE BERT BRECHT, die vom Münchner Flughafen zu ihrem mehrwöchigen Einsatz nach Nicaragua aufbrachen."

The Goethe Institute Chicago, in conjunction with the Literarische Gesellschaft Chicago, sponsored a lecture by DR. FRANK GALATI, Associate Artistic Director of the Goodman Theatre and Professor of Performance Studies at Northwestern University, on "Staging Brecht." Galati's presentation on February 16th focused on the problems of adapting Brecht texts to the contemporary American stage and was followed later that week by a video presentation of Mutter Courage (Berliner Ensemble, 1960) and a showing of the video "Bertolt Brecht in Exile" (1977), featuring interviews with Hermann Kesten, Fritz Lang, Herbert Marcuse, and others.

JOHN WILLETT writes from Great Britain (March 18th): "There's an Ui production imminent in the West End . . . Happy End in the Camden Festival--the producer wanted to jettison the Feingold adaptation in favour of the Hauptmann text, but now finds there's not enough rehearsal time (the company had previously worked on Feingold) . . . BBC radio allegedly setting up a Mother Courage."

HEINZ-UWE HAUS presented a lecture entitled "Theatre after Brecht: Contemporary Drama in the GDR" on February 27, 1987 at California State University at Northridge. Prior to that he directed the Milwaukee production of The Good Woman of Sezchwan reported on elsewhere in this issue and participated in a symposium on the Theatrical Practice of Bertolt Brecht held on February 21st at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Fine Arts Theatre. Participants included Warren Leming, Dwight Steward, Leroy Shaw, John Fuegi, Guy Stern, and others; proceedings of the symposium will be published in Gestus, the journal of the Brecht Society of America.

DR. PIA KLEBER, Co-Convenor of the International Conference and Theatre Festival Brecht 30 Years After/30 Ans Après held at the University of Toronto last October reports that plans to publish the proceedings of the Conference will be finalized in the near future.

Theatre Journal, published by The Johns Hopkins University Press, is devoting a forthcoming special issue to Brecht; details may be obtained from the Editor, Sue-Ellen Case, School of Drama, DX-20, Hutchinson Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195 USA.

The 2. Brecht Woche in Augsburg 1986 (February 16-23) included a performance of Die Ausnahme und die Regel by the Landestheater Linz, an evening of

Brecht songs and poetry entitled "Brecht und die Liebe," and lecture-recital of Brecht songs by ROSWITHA TREXLER and FRITZ HENNENBERG (Leipzig, GDR). IBS member HORST JESSE, Chairman of the Brecht Förderkreis Augsburg e.V. reports on a variety of other Brecht events last year in Augsburg: a production of Victor Fenigstein's "Singspiel"-adaptation of Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe in December at the Stadttheater, a lecture by JAN KNOPF (Karlsruhe, FRG) on a certain "Herr Recht" mentioned in Brecht's Augsburg diaries, and an address by Jesse at Brecht's birthplace (Auf dem Rain 7) on August 14th, the 30th anniversary of B.B.'s death.

DWIGHT STEWARD, President of the Brecht Society of America, chaired a panel on "A Theatre for the Age of Science" at the East Central Theatre Conference (ECTC) in New York, February 27-March 1, 1987. The theme for this year's conference was "The State of the Art."

Pacifica Radio, Berkeley, California, broadcast a series of programs on the life and work of Brecht directed by TOBY COLE during the month of November 1986. The series included shows on "Martin Esslin and Eric Bentley," "Brecht the Poet," "Epic Theatre," "Conversations in Exile" (hosted by R. G. DAVIS), "Brecht's Composers," "The Threepenny Opera," "Brecht in the U.S.," "Brecht Before HUAC," "Brecht and Marxism," "Brecht in East Berlin," "Mahagonny," and "The Seven Deadly Sins."

Issue no. 12 (January 1986) of Teatr Universitario, published in Coimbra, Portugal, features an interview with French Brecht specialist BERNARD DORT conducted by Antonio Augusto Barros, pp. 47-52.

The current issue of Gestus, the journal of the Brecht Society of America, features the papers presented by GUY STERN, CARL WEBER, MARNA KING, JOHN FUEGL, and MARTIN WALSH at the Brecht Symposium held last spring at Bowling Green State University (see COMMUNICATIONS 16/1, p. 64).

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notate

Journal of the Brecht Center of the GDR  
Dr. Rita Klis, Chief Editor

notate, No. 5/1986

Five commentaries under the heading "Radio Theory 1927-1932" are included in Volume 18 of Brecht's collected works. An additional essay, "Recent Drama and Radio," published originally in the magazine Funkstunde (1/1927), is not among these five and is republished for the first time in this issue of notate. In the words of the editors, "the rejection of today's theater has never been expressed in such a radical way . . . nor has confidence in radio's future been expressed so hopefully." Indeed, Brecht's arguments are not without unusual, almost extreme causticity, an interesting result of his exaggerated expectations regarding this new possibility for the dissemination of drama. The 28 year-old playwright maintains that the existing bourgeois theater was useless for his dramatic experiments, concluding that "any other reproduction of our theater works is better for them than the theater." In Brecht's view, radio first had to create a need for itself among its potential mass audience, and represented a "great and fertile opportuni-



ty for our plays." But he was doubtlessly oversimplifying things when he stated that radio (along with other media) could assume the responsibility for art previously assigned to the theater. Indeed, Brecht was in no small way responsible for making the theater a well-adapted place for his plays. Nevertheless, his creativity and energy in utilizing the new medium of radio is still noteworthy. In this connection, a second piece from Funkstunde is also significant: on March 13, 1927, the magazine published Brecht's "Geschichte des Packers Galy Gay," a synopsis of Mann ist Mann, in connection with the radio production of the play on March 18th of that year.

"Discoveries in Sound," by Jürgen Schebera, is the first attempt at a Brecht discography for the period 1928-1932. Two record collectors (one in the GDR, the other in the FRG) provided important information for this documentation in which Schebera was able to identify some thirty-two different recordings, some on long-forgotten labels. All involve music to Brecht's texts by Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler and none are purely spoken recordings. More than half (18) are from the Dreigroschenoper, including both authentic vocal and instrumental versions as well as watered-down dance arrangements and adaptations. Brecht wrote his own commentary for one lengthier production by Ultraphon-Telefunken, and even sang for a Homocord record. The author and the editors would be grateful for any further information or comments on this subject.

Production reports: Berlin director Getrud Elizabeth Zillmer staged the Dreigroschenoper in the Swedish industrial city of Västerås; both the audience and critics were so enthusiastic that a new series of performances (not originally planned) has been scheduled for the autumn. Zillmer describes her intention of creating "ein großer politischer Theaterspaß" as well as the role of the Swedish "Länsteater" (provincial theaters), first founded about twenty years ago in cities without theaters and based on existing amateur ensembles and free groups. "They decide on their repertoires (and often their directors) themselves and relate their programs to social and regional problems."

GDR director Heinz-Uwe Haus is highly critical of a production of Mother Courage and Her Children by Britain's Royal Shakespeare Company. He argues that Howard Davies staged the play "as a monstrous psychodrama, as garrulous as it is disorienting, as bombastic as it is moving. Outward 'actionism' for its own sake conceals the relationships between characters." Haus goes on to conclude: "This performance demonstrates that whenever the parable-like quality of the play is destroyed, the dialectic of the fateful interrelationship between the petit bourgeoisie and fascism gets lost in a spectacle of superficial topicality. Whoever stresses the 'warmth of the character' and seeks an attitude which is 'directed against Brecht's alienation effect' cannot demonstrate the absurdity of Mother Courage's practical reason."

The lecture platform rather than the stage was used by Iraqi theater scholar and journalist Lamice el-Amari to present Brecht--somewhat contrary to expectation. She had planned a trip to the Gulf Region to study the origins of theater in the Arab world and present several lectures on this topic, but wherever she spoke everyone seemed primarily interested in Brecht (one of her special interests). In regard to her presentations and press interviews Dr. el-Amari notes: "Regardless of the general topic with which we began, we always came back to Brecht."

Elsewhere in this issue, Rudolf Vapenik, Czech writer and Brecht translator, reports at length on current discussions about Brecht in his country which were kindled late in 1985 by the appearance of a critical review of a new production of Mother Courage (at the Prague Vinohrady Theater) in the weekly paper Tvorba. Otherwise, the reviews in this issue include a discussion of Jürgen Engelhardt's book Gestus and Verfremdung: Studien zum Musiktheater bei Strawinsky und Brecht/Weill, the impact of Brecht's writing on the work of Berlin artists, a "Brecht-Workbook"--Bertolt Brecht: Epoche, Werk, Wirkung--recently published in the FRG (Munich: Beck, 1985), and the last premier of Berlin's theater season: a single-evening presentation by Ekkehard Schall of Samuel Beckett's Krapp's Last Tape and Brecht's Erziehung der Hirse. In regard to this production, Günther Bellmann discusses the divergent press reactions and recalls Brecht's own plans to counter Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot with filmed scenes of concrete, useful social activity running parallel to the stage production. According to Bellmann, the Schall production (shown under the title Lebensabende at the Theater im Palast), in which the Beckett play is followed by the Brecht piece, lacks the tension implicit in Brecht's simultaneous approach.

notate, No. 6/1986

In the past, notate has frequently published reports from the USA on Brecht's life and work or by representatives of GDR theaters to the USA. It now offers for the first time an article by an American Brecht student, Raymond B. Lee, who discusses the two productions of Arturo Ui staged in April 1986 at Bowling Green State University to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Brecht's death. This was indeed a "unique event in the American theater"--parallel productions of the play, one in German, the other in English. Both versions were directed by Heinz-Uwe Haus from the GDR. The German language production stressed historical aspects, while the English version placed greater emphasis on how fascism might "hypothetically" overwhelm a modern, democratic nation. The director discusses the Bowling Green experiment in an article "On the Utility of Brecht's Methods" (printed previously in part in COMMUNICATIONS, 16/1, pp. 61-64). Apart from its description of the two Ui productions, Raymond Lee's contribution is informative in regard to the historical reception of this play in the USA, where it has been one of the least staged and most criticized of Brecht's works. Among other things, Lee expresses misgivings about some very free translations of Brecht's works (a problem which has worked against Brecht worldwide), in this case one by George Tabori, who allegedly uses "a language of worn-out clichés." As for the claim that the plot of Arturo Ui is out-of-date, Lee refutes this convincingly by mentioning a production in 1968 which achieved "considerable artistic and commercial success," not only in Minneapolis, where it was first produced, but in New York and Los Angeles as well. It was not really so difficult to demonstrate the relevancy of these events to an audience accustomed "to seeing the rise of pushy little figures like Ui up to the rank of statesmen'."

This issue of notate begins with articles on the preparations for the 1987 "Brecht Days" with their theme "Enjoyable Acquaintance with Brecht--the Critical and Lively Utilization of Literature". Both theoretical and practice-oriented seminars on this subject are planned for early February at the Brecht Center of the GDR. In this context notate inquires "How far along is

our educational system with Brecht?" (Wolfgang Conrad); tells of "Working with Brecht" in reference to children, teachers, students, and amateur theatre people (Jörg Mihan); and describes Brecht as a "teacher of productive reading" (Johannes Goldhahn). A short introduction to these and other articles recalls Brecht's respectful view of children, whose right to a voice and an opinion he always accepted and who represented genuine partners to him. A corrective note is also included, mentioning that five drawing exercises by Brecht for his children, mistakenly claimed as a first publication by Jost Hermand in his book Brecht über die bildenden Künste (Frankfurt a.M. 1983), had already been published in Kinderzeichnungen zu Brecht. 34 Tafeln und die Texte (Leipzig, 1969).

The large review section of this issue contains Jürgen Schebera's analysis of the book A New Orpheus: Essays on Kurt Weill, as well as commentary on performances at the October 1986 Berliner Festival (Berliner Festtage). The collection of essays on Weill contains a large amount of interesting material. Its editor, Kim H. Kowalke, President of the Kurt Weill Foundation, believes that the book documents a new phase of research on Weill, and our reviewer agrees, citing several reasons: its extensive analysis of newly discovered compositions, especially from his earlier years; the first publication of his extensive correspondence with publishers; a study of the complex Bible dramatization (Der Weg der Verheißung) on which Weill worked with Franz Werfel and Max Reinhardt; and finally, a list of tasks which remain to be accomplished in the area of Weill research.

Two foreign guest performances at the Berlin Festival, Baal by the Teatr Powszechny of Warsaw and Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti by the State Theater of Brno, provide a wealth of material for discussion. The editors of notate recorded "polite applause at best" for the former and, for the latter, a direct polarization of the audience, with one part leaving the theater at the intermission and the rest remaining and applauding the performance enthusiastically. The ensembles and their directors (Piotr Cieslak and Alois Hajda, respectively) also achieved something rare: "a division among the press." Some reviewers found an emphasis on exuberant entertainment extending almost to farce in the Czech Puntila, which, however, was achieved at the cost of social pungency. As for the Polish Baal, reviewers wondered why young women would swarm to this gray-haired, distinguished gentleman, and why the title character was portrayed more as a teacher/educator than as a wild, anti-bourgeois poet.

Jürgen Schebera makes an additional contribution with his appreciative evaluation of Die Heimholung, a guest performance by Hanne Hiob relating to Brecht and Augsburg. The montage of political documents and personal correspondence was very effective; a highpoint of the moving performance was reached in the section where the actress referred to recent events to demonstrate latent Nazism in the FRG.

In its information columns, notate reports on the activities of the Berliner Ensemble and discusses connections between Brecht and Shakespeare dealt with in the latest Shakespeare-Jahrbuch (published in Weimar). In addition, an excerpt from Mit offenem Visier, Volume Two of the memoirs of Alexander Abusch (1902-1982), provides noteworthy commentary on the debate concerning Hanns Eisler's Johann Faustus in the early 1950's and Brecht's role in it.

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Beginning with this first issue of 1987, notate joins in the general commemoration of the 750th anniversary of Berlin; this will, of course, mean an emphasis on topics relating to "Brecht in Berlin." For Brecht, when he was still an almost completely unknown young poet, realized that the only place from which any great impact could be achieved was Berlin. In his political, artistic, and personal development he was closely bound to this city in a wide variety of ways. It was here that he found his colleagues, his publishers, and his theatres. The international success of Threepenny Opera in 1928 was the basis for his essay, written while in exile, on "Experiments for the Theater at Schiffbauerdamm" (today's Berliner Ensemble). In the months ahead, notate will document and comment on Brecht's relationship to Berlin.

The opening article by Therese Hörnigk deals with "Brecht Performances in Berlin as Reflected in the Berlin Press from 1922 to 1933;" with the present issue containing the first part of this study, covering the years 1922-1926. Not only did the young Augsburger Bertolt Brecht become an established Berlin resident in those years; his plays, too, gradually gained recognition. The early award of the prestigious Kleist Prize to the young author also had a stimulating effect. However, Brecht was not deceived in his analysis of contradictions in the capitalist metropolis. A letter of his at the time stated: "The fraudulence of Berlin differs from all the other fraudulence in its shameless grandiloquence." But before Therese Hörnigk reports on Brecht premiers in Berlin, she describes what might be viewed as his first public appearance--as a cabaret artist. In Trude Hesterberg's "Wilde Bühne" he not only played the guitar while singing his own songs while often getting roundly booed by the largely elegant, bourgeois audience), but also made important acquaintances with prominent composers and lyricists. Indeed, it was the stir he created at this cabaret which provided Bertolt Brecht with the publicity he wanted; thereafter, many studios in Berlin were open to him. However, his first attempt failed; when the 24-year-old tried to put on Arnolt Bronnen's expressionist play Vatermord in 1922, the well-known actors involved were unwilling to accept the unconventional style of their inexperienced director. The resulting theater scandal was inevitable.

The first premier of a Brecht play in Berlin--Drums in the Night--took place at the end of 1922 in the Deutsches Theater; Therese Hörnigk's research indicates that the press reacted "with reserved friendliness" and "with a certain metropolitan tolerance," while there were marked differences amongst various prominent theater critics. Soon to follow were In the Jungle of Cities, The Life of Edward II of England, and the Berlin premier of Baal early in 1926, with which the first part of this documentation ends. A characteristic audience reaction to In the Jungle of Cities, quoted in a newspaper review, is worth mentioning here. The critic heard a woman theatergoer say: "I don't understand a word of it, but it's gripping all the same."

After this extensive historical study, the implications of Brecht's works for the contemporary theatre are examined, or, more specifically, for the Berliner Ensemble. Dieter Kranz interviewed its theater director, Manfred Wekwerth, on future plans. The cause of the interview was that the "BE" has long refrained from contributing towards current Brecht interpretations with any new premiers. Prof. Wekwerth: "We made a pause, purposely and con-

sciously, because we wanted to achieve clarity on what Brecht's works can mean in an age characterized by a choice between the destruction of human-kind or getting along together. Marx once referred to the working-class as the grave-diggers of capitalism; today we face the danger that the nuclear threat may become the grave-digger of both capitalism and socialism." Prof. Wekwerth mentioned certain plays especially worth examining for their effectiveness in our day--Schweyk in the Second World War, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, and Fatzer--most of them included in the program of the Berliner Ensemble for the near future. Fatzer will be produced by Wekwerth himself, together with Joachim Tenschert. The Director repeated once again that there is room for many different methods of performance in the Berliner Ensemble, all of which have one thing in common, however--the propagation of reason. "But this must be a reason involving not only the experience of World War Two and the Cold War, but also of coexistence, recent confrontation, the nuclear menace and great scientific reverses which have made us wiser" (including Chernobyl).

In an extensive section devoted to theater criticism, notate turns first to a play which was not written by Brecht. The latest premier of the Berliner Ensemble was Carl Zuckmeyer's The Captain of Köpenick, which tells in a light, satirical way the true story of an "attack" on the city treasury of a Berlin suburb in 1906 by an unemployed worker dressed as a Prussian officer. The production was warmly welcomed by the audience and represents a part of the Berlin anniversary celebrations. With only a few minor differences among theatre critics, it was called a "successful starting point for the many contributions which the theatres of the capital hope and ought to make towards Berlin's 750th anniversary."

Following this, notate takes a look across the borders--to Paris and Giorgio Strehler's Threepenny Opera in the Théâtre Musical, and to Warsaw, where Jerzy Grzegorzewski produced the same play at the Teatr Studio in the Cultural Palace of the Polish capital. The Warsaw production is analyzed quite critically by Jens Knorr; on the whole, however, he found it to be "an avowal of political content in the theater." The Threepenny Opera in Paris was visited by Ernst Schumacher, who discovered "a new interpretation of the plot as well as new forms of interpretation and communication." As in Strehler's earliest productions, the story is transplanted to New York at the turn of the century. The main problems cited by Schumacher are described as follows: "Strehler has decided to move the songs and certain relevant sections which can be viewed as socially significant to the front of the stage and to address them directly to the audience, regardless of the fact that at times the plot thus turns into a kind of scenic background ingredient."

In its regular information section, this issue of notate deals with the response of the Canadian press to the guest performances of the Berliner Ensemble in Toronto, a part of the program connected with the scholarly conference on "Brecht 30 Years After" at The University of Toronto. There is also a short report on a nearly-completed Brecht monument for Berlin by the prominent GDR sculptor Prof. Fritz Cremer.

Finally, we take an entire page to honor an unusual personality of the Berlin theatrical scene--the stage sculptor Eduard Fischer, who recently celebrated his 70th birthday. Ever since his "pluckable" chicken, made for the legendary production of Mother Courage and Her Children in 1949, Fischer has animated many stages of Europe with his original and very functional animal figures and animal costumes.

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