

105

Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the University of Stirling

A STUDY OF THEMATIC AND STYLISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF CONFLICT IN
THE PLAYS OF BERTOLT BRECHT, 1918-1929

Ronald Speirs

University of Stirling

October 1974

Summary

This thesis is the first to examine chronologically the earliest published versions of all the full-length plays written by Bertolt Brecht in the years 1918-1929. The evidence of these early unrevised versions and of hitherto unpublished material throws new light on this first period of his career as a dramatist, which is seen as being principally characterised by the lack of any attempt to resolve the conflicts in which these early plays abound. The analysis of these conflicts involves in the first place an examination of the antagonisms between characters and the tensions within the mind of individual characters. This study of motive and interaction draws attention to the co-existence of existential and social sources of conflict in these early dramas, and outlines the changing relative importance of existential and social factors in each of the plays under consideration. Whereas in Baal (1918), Im Dickicht (1922) and Leben Eduards des Zweiten (1924) there is great emphasis on the existential dimension of conflict, Trommeln in der Nacht (1919), Mann ist Mann (1926) and Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny (1929) pay more regard to its social significance. From the dates of these plays alone it is clear that to make such a distinction is to point to differences of stress in individual plays rather than to a clear and straightforward development within the period under consideration. However, allowing that existential and social factors continue to be of equal importance throughout the Twenties, a trend towards paying more attention to the social determinants of behaviour becomes apparent in works written from 1926 onwards.

Brecht's presentation of conflict in these early plays is invariably ambivalent, a fine balance being constantly maintained between the respective merits and negative aspects of different facets of conflict: vital enjoyment of struggle is offset by horror at the suffering caused, the claims of the transient individual clash with the demands of morality, the attractions of self-destruction vie with those of survival, the claims of passion with those of prudence. Formally, this ambivalence is reflected in the frequent mixture of comedy with tragedy, in sudden shifts from one stylistic level to another, and in the use of techniques of presentation, some of which encourage empathy with the characters, while others promote a more distanced attitude to events. The concluding chapter examines briefly the re-emergence of unresolved conflicts in plays written after Brecht's turn to Marxism.

C O N T E N T S

<u>Introduction</u>	i
Chapter 1. <u>Baal</u>	1
Chapter 2. <u>Trommeln in der Nacht</u>	38
Chapter 3. <u>Im Dickicht</u>	93
Chapter 4. <u>Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England</u>	144
Chapter 5. <u>Mann ist Mann</u>	199
Chapter 6. <u>Die Dreigroschenoper</u>	250
Chapter 7. <u>Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny</u>	291
Chapter 8. <u>From "Der Lindberghflug" to "Der böse Baal der asoziale"</u>	351
<u>Bibliography</u>	373

ABBREVIATIONS

Where works by Brecht or other authors are referred to frequently in the thesis the following abbreviations and short titles are used:

B	<u>Baal</u>
BBA	Manuscripts in the keeping of the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv"
BO	John Gay's <u>The Beggar's Opera</u>
D	<u>Im Dickicht</u>
DBB	<u>Der böse Baal der asoziale</u>
DGO	<u>Die Dreigroschenoper</u>
E	<u>Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England</u> (short title: <u>Leben Eduards des Zweiten</u>)
GW	<u>Gesammelte Werke</u> (20 vols)
KM	<u>Songspiel Mahagonny</u> (Das kleine Mahagonny)
L	<u>Der Lindberghflug</u>
LS	<u>lehrstück</u>
M	<u>Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny</u> (short title: <u>Mahagonny</u>)
ME	Christopher Marlowe's <u>Edward the Second</u>
MiM	<u>Mann ist Mann</u>
SzT	<u>Schriften zum Theater</u> (7 vols.)
T	<u>Trommeln in der Nacht</u> (short title: <u>Trommeln</u>)

The spelling and punctuation of manuscript material have been normalised.

Introduction

To date, only one systematic study has been made of Brecht's early plays, namely Schumacher's Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933 (Berlin, 1955). The strong Marxist bias of Schumacher's thesis and its concentration on assessing the adequacy of the plays' "reflection" of social reality result in only scant attention being paid to the ambiguities and ambivalences, the existential problems and the formal tensions in the plays. Other studies which have offered alternative readings of Brecht's early work have not explored systematically the whole corpus of these plays, but have concentrated rather on individual dramas,¹ or have dealt only briefly with them within the context of a larger study.²

The present thesis analyses various aspects of conflict as manifested in the full-length plays which Brecht wrote up till 1929, and, on the basis of this approach, arrives at a reassessment of Brecht's intellectual and artistic development in the 1920's.³ One dimension of conflict is an existential one: his most sensitive characters seek to create some semblance of meaning out of the conflict into which they are precipitated with a world which creates men, and gives them the consciousness of existence, only, apparently, to destroy them ultimately and to torture them in the meantime with the awareness of this inevitable outcome. Frustrated in their hope of finding substantial meaning in life, the strongest of these individuals take recourse to violent struggle, both as a means of venting their pain on others, and as a surrogate for the meaning their lives lack. Another rather different type of character pays as little attention as possible to the darker sides of life, preferring instead to relish all the pleasure he can obtain from life, and

to prolong his enjoyment of pleasure for as long as possible. In the mind of Brecht's first hero, Baal, both attitudes exist side by side. The tension between the two poles of revolt and acquiescence is expressed in a variety of subsidiary conflicts, between passion and prudence, for example, or idealism and cynicism, pathos and humour.

The existential dimension of conflict is inextricably bound up with the other main dimension, namely the social one. The individual who pursues his existential goal of self-realisation clashes with other, often innocent individuals, and the destruction he creates argues against the rightness of his quest. Moral opposition to the excesses of the existential self does not only come from others, but often takes the form of internal conflict between the existential and the social self-understanding of the main characters. In Mann ist Mann and Mahagonny new light is thrown on the social dimension of conflict by the introduction of dramatic irony which reveals to the spectator the socially contingent causes of actions executed by the characters in the belief that they are existentially free.

What marks off the years until 1929 as a distinct first period in Brecht's development is the fact that the conflicts in his plays remain unresolved.⁴ No one attitude, be it moral or immoral, prudent or passionate, cowardly or heroic is presented unambiguously as better than its opposite, although the playwright does have a particular preference for intelligent or cunning over stupid characters. The unresolved clash of different perspectives, which is evident in the presentation of character and action, also affects the stylistic character of the plays. It is significant, for example, that Brecht

never writes plays which are clearly either tragic or comic, but prefers to produce works which, like the "halbe Komödie" Baal, are generically indefinite.⁵ Whichever dramatic idiom Brecht adopts for a given play - his choice of play type includes elements of the Expressionist "Stationendrama" (Baal), melodrama (Trommeln in der Nacht), thriller (Im Dickicht), "Moritat" (Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England), farce (Mann ist Mann), comic opera (Die Dreigroschenoper) and grand opera (Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny) - his use of the form is always ironical or parodic. Brecht's refusal to adopt an unambiguous position on almost any matter in these years is further reflected within individual plays in a characteristic wavering between stylistic devices which both betray and invite emotional involvement with the characters, and others which make identification with the behaviour being shown on stage difficult.

Although this study is chiefly concerned with conflicts as they are expressed in Brecht's plays, brief mention is also made of the tensions and contradictions which are manifested in his theoretical reflections in these years. In his remarks on aesthetic, moral or social questions, the same lack of a clear standpoint as is found in his early plays can frequently be observed. Some of his comments suggest that he was influenced by Nietzsche's philosophy of conflict and by this philosopher's views on the fundamental isolation of the individual (which is particularly acute in the case of great, clear-sighted individuals), whereas other statements show him capable of the quite un-Nietzschean emotions of pity and concern for the socially or physically deprived. His keen sense of

the existential loneliness of each individual coexists with a desire to speak to the ordinary public who normally seek their recreation in beer-halls, circuses or sports stadia. Yet even as late as 1929 he continues to be fascinated by the great individual, despite the fact that he has by now embraced a collectivist theory of society which denies that such individuals are of decisive importance.⁶ This early unwillingness to commit himself to any one position is clearly expressed in the following diary-entry:

Ein Mann mit einer Theorie ist verloren. Er muss mehrere haben, vier, viele! Es muss sie sich in die Taschen stopfen wie Zeitungen, immer die neuesten, es lebt sich gut zwischen ihnen, man haust angenehm zwischen den Theorien. Man muss wissen, dass es viele Theorien gibt, hochzukommen, auch der Baum hat mehrere, aber er befolgt nur eine von ihnen, eine Zeitlang. (GW18, 10)

The difficulties encountered in any attempt to assign Brecht's early work to any particular literary movement, Expressionism, "Dada" or "Neue Sachlichkeit", stem from the fact that he was willing and able to absorb elements of many different literary modes, and hold them together in his writing in a state of constant tension, while yet refusing to identify himself wholly with any single movement.

A major weakness in most of the critical writings devoted to Brecht's early plays is the inadequacy of their textual basis. Usually, the text examined is the version of the play published in Brecht's collected works. Unfortunately, there are, in the majority of cases, important differences between the original version of the play and the text selected or prepared for inclusion in the collected works. These differences mostly arise from the insertion into the text, of passages which give the play a meaning more acceptable to Brecht's later Marxist standpoint, or from the excision of embarrassing earlier passages. Critics who are unaware that the original

has been tampered with in this way may be misled into giving rather contorted interpretations of the plays and of Brecht's intellectual development. In order to give a more accurate account of Brecht's development in the 1920's, the present study bases itself throughout on the first complete published version of the plays. In addition to the fresh evidence gained from examining the plays in their first published form, this thesis also draws on hitherto unpublished material in the possession of the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv."

NOTES

1. Examples of such studies of individual plays are G.E. Bahr, "Im Dickicht der Städte". Ein Beitrag zur Bestimmung von Bertolt Brechts dramatischem Frühstil, Ph.D. Diss. (New York University, 1966), V. Canaris, "Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England" als vormarxistisches Stück Bertolt Brechts (Bonn, 1973), W.A.J. Steer, "Baal: A Key to Brecht's Communism", German Life and Letters 19 (1965-66), pp. 40-51.
2. Examples of this type of study are M. Esslin, Brecht - A Choice of Evils (London, 1959), Gray, Brecht (Edinburgh-London, 1961), M. Spalter, Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore, 1967). Each of these works draws attention to some partial aspect of conflict in Brecht's writing.
3. Brecht's "Einakter" are omitted from the discussion for reasons of economy.
4. Critics have differed in their views on when a major break occurs in Brecht's development. T.H.W. Metscher claims that Brecht's thinking is unambiguously Marxist from 1926 onwards, "Brecht and Marxist Dialectics", Oxford German Studies 6 (1971-72), p. 135, Holthusen sees a period of overlap of Marxist and pre-Marxist ideas beginning with Mann ist Mann, Kritisches Verstehen (München, 1961), p. 23, G. Weales finds in Mahagonny a Marxist interpretation of society, "Brecht / and the Drama of Ideas", in: Ideas in the Drama, ed. Gassner, (New York-London, 1964), p. 141, G. Hartung, by contrast, regards this opera as "das letzte und äusserste Werk Brechts innerhalb der bürgerlichen Ideologie", "Die epische Oper Brechts und Weills", Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Halle-Wittenberg 8, (1958-59), p. 673.
5. Brecht calls Baal a "halbe Komödie" in a letter to Münsterer, 1 May 1918. See Baal. Der böse Baal der Asoziale (Frankfurt a.M. 1968), p. 95.
6. The following statements occur on the same page of the Schriften zum Theater: "Das epische Theater hat als Inaugurator und Fragesteller keineswegs das grosse leidenschaftliche Individuum, sondern die Frage wird immer wieder von der jeweiligen Situation gestellt, und die Individuen sind es, die sie durch ihr typisches Verhalten beantworten" (...) "Menschentypen mögen in vielen Hinsichten gefährlich für andere und sich selbst sein, aber die Kraft ihrer Instinkte und Appetite kann nicht bestritten werden. Es ist natürlich im Grunde gleichgültig, woher die Gestalten grosser Dramen stammen. Es kommt nur darauf an, dass sie leben" (GW 15, 193-194).

CHAPTER ONE

Baal

One of the driving forces behind Brecht's early writing is the need to come to terms with the fundamental existential problems of transience and contingency. In the short story entitled Die Erleuchtung (c. 1921), for example, the hero suddenly becomes aware of the superfluity of his own existence:

Ein Mann in mittleren Jahren ging eines Abends in der Pappelallee spazieren, als er beim Anblick eines grossen Hundes, der entlang eines schwarzen Baches Tauben jagte, merkte, dass er nicht erwünscht sei. Er ging sofort heim. (GW 11, 48)

On his return home he meditates on the subject of his death:

Wenn ich stürbe, sagte sich der Mann, aber aus dem Kreis kommt man nicht heraus. Ich bin ausgeliefert. Die Fussdecke ist rot, auch wenn ich nicht will, auch wenn ich gestorben bin, bleibt sie rot. Die Fussdecke ist stärker als ich. Sie hat sicher keinen Wunsch. Sie kann nicht albern werden (...)
Wenn ich sterbe, kräht kein Hahn danach. Wenn ich leben bleibe, kräht auch kein Hahn. Ich kann tun, was ich mag, es kräht keiner. (GW 11, 49)

Baal is Brecht's first dramatic treatment of this theme of the individual's existential confrontation with an alien world.

The most direct approach to an understanding of Baal's mind is through his poetry. The Ballade von den Abenteurern, the last song Baal sings before his death, contains a protest against the limits of human existence:

Von Sonne mürb, vom Regen ganz zerfressen
geraubten Lorbeer im zerrauften Haar
hat er seine ganze Jugend, nur nicht ihre Träume vergessen
lange das Dach! nie den Himmel, der drüber war.

Oh, ihr, die ihr aus Himmel und Hölle vertrieben!
Ihr Mörder, denen viel Leides geschah!
Warum seid ihr nicht im Schoss eurer Mütter geblieben?
Wo es stille war und man schlief und war da...

Er aber sucht noch in absynthenen Meeren
wenn ihn schon seine Mutter vergisst
grinsend und fluchend und nicht ohne Zähren
immer das Land wo es besser zu leben ist.

Im Tanz durch Höllen und gepeitscht durch Paradiese
trunken von Güssen unerhörten Lichts
träumt er gelegentlich von einer kleinen Wiese
mit blauem Himmel drüber und sonst nichts. (B 84-85)¹

The adventurer of the poem is engaged in a restless search for "das Land, wo es besser zu leben ist". His search is, however, bound to fail, since what he is looking for is a state of existence in which there are no reminders of transience: "träumt er gelegentlich von einer kleinen Wiese/mit blauem Himmel drüber und sonst nichts".

Having on the one hand abandoned the security of unconscious life in the womb and, on the other, having no access to any transcendental world ("aus Himmel und Hölle vertrieben"), the adventurer cherishes the dream of an ideal of existence which is both physical and timeless. Because he knows, however, that his dream cannot be realised, he perversely exposes himself to the fiercest ravages of transient experience, in protest, as it were, against the inherent inadequacy of life.

This angry response to the limits of human existence is only one element in Baal's consciousness. It is held in balance by a desire to enjoy calmly the richness of the world during the time that he has to live. For the Adventurer the permanence of the sky was a goading, painful reminder of his own transience. In the Koral (sic) vom grossen Baal, on the other hand, the "Himmel" is a reassuring symbol, a guarantee that the individual's transitory existence partakes for a while of eternity:

Als im weissen Mutterschosse aufwuchs Baal
war der Himmel schon so gross und still und fahl.
jung und nackt und ungeheuer wundersam
wie ihn Baal dann liebte, als Baal kam.
(...)

In der Sünder schamvollem Gewimmel
lag Baal nackt und wälzte sich voll Ruh:
nur der Himmel, aber immer Himmel
deckte mächtig seine Blösse zu.
(...)

Als im dunkeln Erdenschosse faulte Baal
war der Himmel noch so gross und still und fahl.
jung und nackt und ungeheuer wunderbar
wie ihn Baal einst liebte, als Baal war. (B 7-9)²

Baal is able to savour this taste of eternity by refusing to be
distressed by the fact of his own transitoriness:

Und durch Schnapsbudicke, Dom, Spital
trottet Baal mit Gleichmut und gewöhnt sichs ab. (B 7)

Viewed with this kind of equanimity, transience can even appear to
be a blessing. The death of others, for example, means less com-
petition for the pleasures of "Frau Welt":

Und wenn Baal nur Leichen um sie sah
war die Wollust immer doppelt gross.
Man hat Platz, sagt Baal, es sind nicht viele da.
Man hat Platz, sagt Baal, in dieses Weibes Schoss. (B 8)

More importantly, the transience of experience is to be welcomed as
something which can prevent satiety turning into the feeling of being
overfed. Baal adopts this attitude, in the Koral, both to the
transience of love and to the eventual ending of his own life:

Gibt ein Weib, sagt Baal, euch alles her
lasst es fahren, denn sie hat nicht mehr!
(...)

Unter düstern Sternen in dem Jammertal
grast Baal weite Felder schmatzend ab.
Sind sie leer, dann trottet singend Baal
in den ewigen Wald zum Schlaf hinab.

Und wenn Baal der dunkle Schoss hinunter zieht:
was ist Welt für Baal noch? Baal ist satt.
Soviel Himmel hat Baal unterm Lid
dass er tot noch grad gnug Himmel hat. (B 8-9)

A life of such undisturbed, bovine tranquillity as is conjured up in this poem is, of course, as much a one-sided fantasy of wish-fulfilment as the Ballade von den Abenteurern is one of tortured restiveness. Taken together, however, the two poems fix two of the poles between which Baal's consciousness is tensed.³

In other poems the opposing pulls of the poet's determination to "naively" accept and enjoy life on a purely physical level, on the one hand, and his "sentimental" awareness of the gulf separating the real from the ideal, on the other, interact to produce a cynically humorous treatment of the theme of human transitoriness:

Orge sagte mir: der liebste Ort
auf Erden war ihm immer der Abort.
(...)
Ein Ort der Demut, dort erkennst du scharf:
dass du ein Mensch nur bist, der nichts behalten darf.
(...)
Wo man, indem man lieblich leiblich ruht,
sanft, doch mit Nachdruck etwas für sich tut.

Und doch erkennst du dorten, was du bist:
Ein Bursche, der auf dem Abort - frisst! (B 22)

In the Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen, by contrast, the tension in the poet's mind expresses itself in a tone of voice that is both ironic and elegiac:

Als sie ertrunken war und hinunterschwamm
von dem Bächen in die grösseren Flüsse
sahen der Azur des Himmels sehr wundersam
als ob er die Leiche begütigen müsse
(...)
Als ihr bleicher Leib im Wasser verfaulet war
geschah es, sehr langsam, dass Gott sie allmählich vergass:
erst ihr Gesicht, dann die Hände und ganz zuletzt erst ihr Haar.
Dann ward sie Aas in Flüssen mit vielem Aas. (B 74)

Unfortunately, Baal does not always succeed in maintaining such fine poetic control over the conflict between the objective limits of existence and his subjective need to transcend them. Thus, in

Der Tod im Wald there is an abrupt change of focus from a close-up of a man's last desperate struggle against death to a distant, sentimentalised vision of the glow of the sun striking the crown of the tree under which the man lies buried:

Ja, des armen Lebens Übermass
hielt ihn so, dass er auch noch sein Aas
seinen Leichnam in die Erde presste;
In der frühen Dämmerung fiel er tot ins dunkle Gras.
Voll von Ekel gruben sie ihn, voll von Hass
in des Baumes dunkelstes Geäste.

Und sie ritten stumm aus dem Dickicht.
Spähten um noch einmal aus der Weite
Fanden steil den Baum des Grabes in den Himmel aufgerichtet
und verwunderten sich alle beide:
Der Baum war oben voll Licht.
Und sie bekreuzten ihr junges Gesicht
und sie ritten in Sonne und Heide. (B 79-80)

This lapse into pathos is presented within a context of dramatic irony.⁴ Baal's change of poetic tone is a symptom of weakness or fear elicited by his knowledge that death is rapidly drawing closer.

The ensuing dialogue between Baal and Ekart alludes to this:

Ekart Ja. Ja. So weit ist es jetzt wohl gekommen.

Baal Wenn ich nachts nicht schlafen kann, schaue ich die Sterne an. Das ist geradeso.

Ekart So?

Baal (misstrauisch) Aber das tue ich nicht oft. Sonst schwächt es. (B 80)

Baal, then, is a poet whose poems reveal him to be a reflective mind, constantly aware of his own transience and always seeking for ways to come to terms with this problem. Those commentators who regard him as "nichts weiter als ein animalisches Lebewesen",⁵ passively driven along by his instincts and appetites, fail to do justice to the "sentimentalisch" (in Schiller's sense) quality of his determined pursuit of naiveté. Equally, to assert, as Bentley does, that Baal is a "mythological (i.e. unpsychological) drama"

which "presents the archetypal battle of life and death, Eros and Thanatos",⁶ is an oversimplification which overlooks the fact that Baal's constant preoccupation with the limits of existence, particularly with the finality of death, betrays a distinctly human cast of mind. Bentley himself does not seem entirely happy with his own assertion, for he later qualifies it considerably, thus: "Baal will sooner or later be interpreted wholly in terms of myth and ritual. Such interpretations will be unbalanced - but surely less unbalanced than those that try to make sense of Baal on the lines of what was conventional drama in 1918".⁷ Of course, Baal is larger than life in so many respects, particularly and most importantly in his ability to live with the contradictions in his own nature, that it would be pointless to read the play as a realistic psychological study of an actual person. Baal can perhaps best be described as a symbolic hero, as Existential Man, a figure onto whom Brecht projects both his existential fears and his desire to come to terms with these problems. The wish-fulfilling fantasy of Baal lies in its offering as an answer to the problems of conflict, not a flight into a conflict-free existence, but a dream of conflict enjoyed and contradiction sustained with equanimity.⁸

On first acquaintance, Baal can give the impression of being a loosely-constructed play: the protagonist just seems to drift in and out of a number of apparently unconnected situations where he comes into contact with a number of more or less unrelated characters. This has prompted certain critics to regard the play as formless. L. Shaw, for example, says this about it: "Formally, Baal is an anarchic work, kept from going to pieces only by its passionate momentum and the amazing quality of its imagery - a lyric outburst

basically, but written for the stage and professing to tell the 'ordinary story' of one man's life".⁹ Such criticism is not new. One of the play's earliest reviewers complained that Baal was "ein durchaus knabenhaftes Machwerk (...) eine Anhäufung von Szenen ohne Anfang und Ende, in denen der Dichter seinen Vaganten Baal mit renommtischer Wüstheit alles begehen lässt, was irgendwie einen Bürger entsetzen kann".¹⁰ While it is certainly true that this play does not have anything like the kind of economy and inner necessity of sequence characteristic of classical drama, it does have more order than these critics will admit. Below the varied surface of Baal's experiences - with lovers both male and female, with Nature, with social groups and types - there is a unifying pattern of action. Appropriately enough for a work which has a symbolic figure as its central character, the action which gives the play its unity is also of a symbolic kind.

The play opens with a scene in which Baal blatantly attempts to seduce the wife of his host at a party given in his honour. In part, this behaviour can be explained as an aggressive rejection of the businessman Mech's proposal that he might publish Baal's poetry:

Baal (zu Emilie) Ich wohne Holzstrasse 64. Warum sollst du nicht auf meine Knie? Zittern dir die Schenkel nicht unterm Hemd? (Trinkt.) Warum die Monopole? Gehen Sie zu Bett, Mech! (B14)

Baal ironically challenges Mech's "monopolisation" of his own wife and simultaneously rejects his proposed monopoly over his poetry. But why should he choose to express his rejection of capitalist exploitation in this particular manner? Although Mech probably does not realise it, relations between Baal and himself were dealt a severe blow by a boastful remark Mech passed early in their

conversation:

Mech Das ist ein Aalleichnam. Ich kaufe Zimmthölzer.
Ganze Wälder Zimmthölzer schwimmen für mich
brasilianische Flüsse abwärts. Aber ich gebe auch
Ihre Lyrik heraus. (B 11)

Unfortunately for Mech, trees have a particular significance for Baal. He regards them as symbols of a heroic form of life. This is evident from the opening stanza of Der Tod im Wald:

Und ein Mann starb im ewigen Wald
wo ihn Sturm und Strom umbrauste.
Starb wie ein Tier im Wurzelwerk verkrallt
starrte hoch in die Wipfel, wo über dem Wald
Sturm seit Tagen über alles sauste. (B 78)

The tree is heroic because it reaches up to where it is exposed to the full force of the wind (a symbol of transience), in order to pit its strength against the buffeting of the storm. Thus, by introducing himself as a timber-merchant, Mech immediately becomes in Baal's eyes an agent of death, an impression which he unwittingly reinforces when he offers the poet an "Aalleichnam". Mech repeats his offer to Baal later, in an effort to divert his attention from his wife:

Baal. (knüpft auf. Zu Emilie) Sie haben gute Arme!

Mech Nehmen Sie noch den Aal! Es wäre schad um ihn!
Er schwämme in die Latrinen. (Baal schiebt ihn
zurück.) Nicht? Dann esse ich ihn.

Emilie Trinken Sie, bitte, nicht zu viel, Herr Baal!

Baal. (sieht auf Emilie) Es schwimmen Zimmthölzer für
Sie, Mech? Abgeschlagene Wälder? (Er trinkt
beständig.) (B 13)

Apart from its obvious social significance, Baal's behaviour towards the capitalist Mech and his wife Emilie has symbolic overtones: the scene is a first skirmish between Death and the hero in which Baal's response to the advance of his enemy is to try to wrest a segment of beautiful and pleasurable life out of his hands.

Even from this first symbolic encounter it is apparent that Baal's relation to death is an ambivalent one. On the one hand, death is a repulsive enemy, but, on the other hand, it appears with a figure of beauty as its companion. In other words, a meeting with death brings with it both a threat to the individual and a heightened awareness of and appetite for the beauty of life to which it is wedded. The ambivalent and paradoxical nature of Baal's relationship with death is made explicit in an earlier version of the work, during a conversation between the poet and a prison chaplain:

Baal Ich lebe von Feindschaft. Mich interessiert alles, soweit ich es fressen kann. Töten ist keine Kunst. Aber auffressen! Aus den Hirnschalen meiner Feinde, in denen ein schmackhaftes Hirn einst listig meinen Untergang bedachte, trinke ich mir Mut und Kraft zu. Ihre Bäuche fresse ich auf, und mit ihren Därmen bespanne ich meine Klampfe. Mit ihrem Fett schmiere ich meine Schuhe, dass sie beim Freudentanz nicht drücken und nicht knarren bei der Flucht.

Der Geistliche Es scheint, als ob Ihre Kämpfe alle wie Rückzüge aussehen.

Baal Ich ziehe mich ins feindliche Land zurück. In blühendes Land zurück. Ich habe keine Heimat zu verteidigen. Mein Haus trage ich mit mir. Es sind feste Domänen, die ich auf der Flucht unter meine Füße kriege, und ich lasse sie als mageren Verlust zurück. Ich fliehe vor dem Tod ins Leben.¹¹

Baal seeks in life refuge from death, but the "blühendes Land" of life is also "das feindliche Land" of death. In fact, Baal cannot really flee, because in living he is dying. On the other hand, it is precisely because of the inescapability of death that he is prompted to exhaust as much of life as possible before he has finally to surrender. This paradox inherent in Baal's relation to death pervades every aspect of the action.

The scene with Mech is only the first of a series of scenes in which fallen trees symbolize the struggle which is constantly

going on between Baal and death. On the occasion of a Corpus Christi procession he is angered by the use of young trees to decorate the route. He sees in Christianity and in the attitudes of its founder an irreverence towards living things that is abhorrent to him. In Baal's eyes, these "Baumleichen" are evidence of the morbid fascination with death lying at the heart of a religion which makes "Fronleichnam" one of its central festivals. He sees the same basic hostility towards life in Jesus' celibacy:

- Baal (geht mit grossen Schritten im Halbkreis um den Strolch, der auf einem Stein sitzt und das Gesicht bleich nach oben hält) Wer hat die Baumleichen an die Wände geschlagen?
- Strolch Die bleiche elfenbeinerne Luft um die Baumleichen: Fronleichnam.
- Baal Dazu Glocken, wenn die Pflanzen kaputt gehen!
- Strolch Mich heben die Glocken moralisch.
- Baal Schlagen dich die Bäume nicht nieder?
- Strolch Pah, Baumkadaver! (Trinkt aus einer Schnapsflasche.)
- Baal Frauenleiber sind nicht besser!
- Strolch Was haben Frauenleiber mit Prozessionen zu tun?
- Baal Es sind Schweinereien! Du liebst nicht!
- (...)
- Strolch Weissst du die Geschichte mit ihm und dem toten Hund? Alle sagten: Es ist ein stinkendes Aas! Holt die Polizei! Es ist nicht zum Aushalten! Aber er sagte: er hat schöne weisse Zähne.
- Baal Vielleicht werde ich katholisch.
- Strolch Er wurde es nicht. (Nimmt ihm die Flasche.)
- Baal (läuft wieder empört herum) Aber die Frauenleiber, die er an die Wände schlägt, das tät ich nicht. (B39-40)

In part, Baal's angry outburst at this alleged neglect of womankind is so violent because he knows that he too has recently been guilty of the very "crime" of which he accuses Jesus: in order to write poetry he had been compelled to resist the temptations of the flesh. That this is what is meant by the phrase, "die Leiber an die Wände schlagen" is indicated by the fact that the same words occur in the

scene which shows Baal yielding again to his sexual impulses at the end of his latest period of poetic composition:

Baal (umfasst die Schnapsflasche. In Pausen) Jetzt schmiere ich den vierten Tag das Papier voll mit rotem Sommer: wild, bleich, gefräßsig, und kämpfe mit der Schnapsflasche. Hier passierten Niederlagen, aber die Leiber beginnen an die Wände ins Dunkel, in die Ägyptische Finsternis zurückzuziehen. Ich schlage sie an die Holzwände, nur darf ich keinen Schnaps trinken. (Er schwatzt.) Der weisse Schnaps ist mein Stecken und Stab. Er spiegelt, seit der Schnee von der Gosse tropft, mein Papier und bleibt unberührt. Aber jetzt zittern mir die Hände. Als ob die Leiber noch in ihnen drin wären. (B 34)

Baal's writing was an attempt to give form, and thus permanence, to an experience. But by doing something which appears to promise some small victory over death, salvaging part of life from the flux of time, he finds in retrospect that the self-imposed celibacy demanded by his writing was really a form of hostility towards life, rather than towards death. With a symbolic gesture he now acknowledges the impossibility of separating life from death in order to serve the one and wage war on the other; he consigns his poetry (and, by implication, his soul) to the flow of transience:

Baal (besänftigter) Ich habe Lieder auf dem Papier.
Aber jetzt werden sie auf dem Abort aufgehängt. (B 40)

At the end of this meeting with the "Strolch" Baal's determination not to be destroyed by the conflicts in his consciousness is expressed in another such symbolic gesture of acquiescence in the flow of life and death, namely his departure from the scene of the Corpus Christi procession in order to bathe in the river:

Baal Ich gehe an den Fluss hinunter und wasche mich.
Ich kümmere mich nie um Leichname. (B 41)¹²

In these scenes with Mech and the "Strolch" Baal's encounters

with death in the shape of fallen trees seem to be accidental. In the scene "Bäume am Abend", on the other hand, the confrontation between Baal and death comes about because the hero has deliberately sought out a place where trees are being felled. As a token of this confrontation and as a foreshadowing of Baal's own eventual death in the forest, the centre of the scene is occupied by the corpse of a man who has lately been killed by a falling tree. In a later scene in a poor-house Baal's action of going into the woods is interpreted by a strange and obviously symbolic beggar:

Baal (zum Bettler) Hoffentlich haben Sie auch ein Leiden?

Bettler Ich bin wahnsinnig.

Baal Prost! - Wir kennen uns. Ich bin gesund.

Bettler Ich kannte einen Mann, der meinte auch, er sei gesund. Meinte es. Er stammte aus einem Wald und kam einmal wieder dort hin, denn er musste sich etwas überlegen. Den Wald fand er sehr fremd und nicht mehr verwandt. Viele Tage ging er, ganz hinauf in die Wildnis, denn er wollte sehen wie weit er abhängig war und wieviel noch in ihm war, dass ers aushielte. Aber es war nicht mehr viel. (Trinkt.)

Baal (unruhig) So ein Wind! Und wir müssen heut nacht noch fort, Ekart.

Bettler Ja, der Wind. An einem Abend, um die Dämmerung, als er nicht mehr so allein war, ging er durch die grosse Stille zwischen die Bäume und stellte sich unter einen von ihnen, der sehr gross war. (Trinkt.)

Bolleboll Das war der Affe in ihm.

Bettler Ja, vielleicht der Affe. Er lehnte sich an ihn, ganz nah, fühlte das Leben in ihm, oder meinte es und sagte: Du bist höher als ich und stehst fest und du kennst die Erde bis tief hinunter und sie hält dich. Ich kann laufen und mich besser bewegen, aber ich stehe nicht fest und kann nicht in die Tiefe und nichts hält mich. Auch ist mir die grosse Ruhe über den stillen Wipfeln im unendlichen Himmel unbekannt. (Trinkt.)

Gougou Was sagte der Baum?

Bettler Ja. Der Wind ging. Durch den Baum lief ein Zittern, der Mann fühlte es. Da warf er sich zu Boden, umschlang die wilden und harten Wurzeln und weinte bitterlich. Aber er tat es mit vielen Bäumen.

Ekart Wurde er gesund?

Bettler Nein. Aber er starb leichter.

Maja Das versteh ich nicht.

Bettler Nichts versteht man. Aber manches fühlt man. Geschichten, die man versteht, sind nur schlecht erzählt.

Bolleboll Glaubst ihr an Gott?

Baal (mühsam) Ich glaubte immer an mich. Aber man kann Atheist werden. (B67-68)

The life of the tree differs from man's in so far as it is more deeply rooted in the earth, has a longer life expectancy and participates peacefully, because unconsciously, in eternity ("die grosse Ruhe über den stillen Wipfeln im unendlichen Himmel"). These are, however, merely differences of degree; basically the life of the tree and of man resemble each other in their common exposure to the forces of transience.¹³ The fact that the tree is more firmly rooted, lives longer, and is thus longer exposed to the storms of transience which tear at its crown, simply serves to make it an appropriate symbol of the heroic life. It is precisely because the tree's existence reproduces on a heroic scale the tensions in man's life that Baal goes into the forest to test himself. Here, in the presence of the mighty who are fallen, he has to face squarely the conflict between the shortness of the individual's life and his awareness of eternity. Unlike the man in the beggar's story, Baal shows that he does have sufficient inner strength to bear the emotional tension thus created. Indeed, his experience of the conflict is invigorating, for, by facing up to the inevitability of transience, he finds that he is both made more keenly aware of the fact of his own existence

in the present, and comforted (he insists) by the knowledge that at least the pain of living will disappear in death:

Der Andere Was tust du mit Teddy, Elefant?

Baal (über ihm) Der hat seine Ruhe und wir haben unsere Unruhe. Das ist beides gut. Der Himmel ist schwarz. Die Bäume zittern. Irgendwo blähen sich Wolken. Das ist die Szenerie. Man kann essen. Nach dem Schlaf wacht man auf. Er nicht. Wir. Es ist doppelt gut. (B 53)

Paradoxically, then, death is both an enemy and an ally to Baal since its every "memento mori" is at the same time an exhortation to live. Baal therefore continually seeks such confrontations with death because, in the words of the Choral vom grossen Baal:

Der bleibt ewig jung, wie ers auch treibt,
Der sich jeden Abend selbst entleibt.¹⁴

In Baal the symbol of the tree draws on three areas of association. Apart from its links with the ideas of transience on the one hand and heroism on the other, it has strong sexual connotations. Trees frequently provide a suitably phallic setting for the hero's sexual exploits, as in the scenes, "Mainacht unter Bäumen", "Grünes Laubdickicht", and "Junge Haselsträucher". Baal himself assumes the form of a tree in a dream which adumbrates his seduction of Johanna Reiher:

Johannes Ich habe eine Geliebte, die ist das unschuldigste Weib, das es gibt, aber im Schlaf sah ich sie einmal, wie sie von einem Machandelbaum beschlafen wurde. Das heisst: Auf dem Machandelbaum lag ihr weisser Leib ausgestreckt, und die knorrigen Äste umklammerten ihn. Seitdem kann ich nicht mehr schlafen. (B 15)

By bringing a symbol which has associations with transience into relation with sexual pleasure, Brecht suggests that sex is an ambivalent experience for Baal. As is clear from the opening

scene with Mech and Emilie, Baal turns to sex in order to enjoy life intensely when confronted with death. Yet, that this is not to be understood as an attempt to escape from his awareness of the transitoriness of life, is evident from the fact that he associates a symbol of transience, the wind, with sexual intercourse itself:

Baal Und die Liebe ist (...) wie die Qual, vor der der trunkene Baum knarzend zu singen anhebt, auf dem der wilde Wind reitet. (B17)

What Baal seeks in the sexual act is, in fact, a heightened experience of being alive through an intensification of his awareness of death, a means of transforming the pain of being conscious of transience into a sensuously pleasurable experience of self-abandonment to the natural rhythms of life.

The symbols of the wind and the river also serve to strengthen the theme of the paradoxical nature of Baal's experience of life's evanescence. Johanna's suicide by drowning establishes the sombre aspect of the river-symbolism early in the play. The references in the stage-directions to "Wind" become increasingly frequent as Baal's life draws to a close. Yet both these symbols are also used in contexts which express an intensely physical awareness of being alive:

Johannes Was willst du?

Baal (die Hand auf seiner Schulter) Was musst du auch Gedichte schreiben! Wo das Leben so anständig ist: wenn man auf einem reissenden Strom auf dem Rücken hinschiesst, nackt unter orangefarbenem Himmel und man sieht nichts als wie der Himmel violett wird, dann schwarz wie ein Loch wird... (B 26)

Baal (langsam durch die Felder) Seit der Himmel grüner und schwanger ist, Juliluft, Wind, kein Hemd in den Hosen! (Zu Ekart zurück) Sie wetzen mir die blossen Schenkel. Mein Schädel

ist aufgeblasen vom Wind, in dem Haar der
Achselhöhle hängt mir der Geruch der Felder.
Die Luft zittert wie vom Branntwein besoffen. (B 46)

In this central, recurrent paradox is expressed the fact that Baal, who is constantly trapped in a hopeless situation of conflict, since he brings himself nearer to death more quickly and more surely, the more intensely he lives, is able to turn this conflict to his advantage by extracting from every experience of death a heightened sense of his immediate existence. Thus, as with the tree-imagery, the ambivalence of the wind-symbolism is used to underline the conflicts in the hero's experience of sex as self-abandonment both to vital pleasure and to death:

Baal Und jetzt gehörst du dem Wind, weisse Wolke!
(Rasch zu ihr, reißt die Türe zu, nimmt Sophie
Barger in die Arme). (B 37)

In the same way, the different symbolic connotations of the river lend subtlety to Baal's twice repeated action of going down to the stream to bathe. (B 41, 73) On each occasion this follows a particularly repulsive encounter with death. His immersion in the stream, by virtue of its associational ambiguity, is both a ritual surrender to death and, at the same time, a renewal and purification of his will to live.

In his analysis of the structure of images in Baal, C.R. Lyons argues that a progression can be observed in the course of the play from images of light to images of darkness: "The quality of light or whiteness is associated with the sexually appetizing: the desired object which is obtained and used moves from unviolated whiteness to darkness which itself moves from an ecstasy of darkness to darkness associated with rotting, decaying flesh."¹⁵ In arguing

thus, Lyons underestimates the extent to which ambiguity pervades Brecht's use of imagery throughout the play, and consequently fails to grasp the essence of Baal's experience of life. Whiteness certainly is associated with sexual excitement, but, like sex, it also has associations with death. In the Corpus Christi scene, for example, there are obvious links between death and pallor:

Gekalkte Häuser mit braunen Baumstämmen

(Dunkle Glocken. Baal. Der Strolch, ein bleicher besoffener Mensch.)

(...)

Strolch Die bleiche elfenbeinerne Luft um die Baumleichen: Fronleichnam. (B 39)

Similarly, blackness is associated both with death and with regeneration:

In die schwarzen Flüsse fallen Weiber (...) (B 23),

Baal Das ist der Winterschlaf im schwarzen Schlamm für unsere weissen Leiber. (B 59)

It is precisely the associational ambiguity of these colours which makes them a suitable means of expressing the peculiar nature of Baal's experience of transience.

Baal's need to experience constantly the transitoriness of his life is the impulse that gives unity to the action: all Baal's encounters with other individuals or with Nature form part of a symbolic confrontation between the protagonist and his antagonist, death. It is this underlying symbolic action which links such public scenes as "Nachtcafé zur 'Wolke der Nacht'" and "Dorfschenke. Abend" with scenes of a more intimate kind. In the "Nachtcafé" - scene Baal breaks his contract with the bar-owner ostensibly because he is not given enough "Schnaps", but the backdrop of the scene ("man sieht die blaue Nacht" B 41) suggests that

the deeper reason for this behaviour is his need to be free of any ties with a routine way of life, in order to be able to hold at the centre of his consciousness the conflict between eternity (represented by the sky) and the shortness of his own life. Similarly, the reason for what appears at first to be gratuitously anti-social behaviour in the "Dorfschenke" is his desire to stage a ritual celebration of transient vitality under an evening sky:

Pfarrer Sehen Sie nicht ein, wie kindisch Ihr Plan war?
(Zu Ekart) Was will denn der Mann?

Baal (lehnt sich zurück) In der Dämmerung, am Abend -
Es muss natürlich Abend sein und der Himmel muss
bewölkt sein, wenn die Luft lau ist und etwas
Wind geht, dann kommen die Stiere. Sie trotten
von allen Seiten her, es ist ein starker
Anblick. (B 50)¹⁶

ooo000ooo

Baal is an imaginative exploration of how the world might be experienced from a particular existential perspective. By following out to its logical conclusion how a man might live his life who was preoccupied exclusively with his own existential problems, the play also seeks to evaluate such a way of life. The balance of pro and contra in Brecht's presentation of his hero's career will now be examined.

The intensity with which Baal is able to experience the world is the strongest argument in favour of his way of life. Brecht makes his hero a poet in order to be able to articulate persuasively the keenness of sensation which he imagines to be the consequence of a life lived wholly for the pleasure of each passing moment. The sensuously saturated language of the poet - what one of his victims

calls his "verflucht wundervolles Geschwätz" (B 20) - is a formal correlative of the way he experiences the world. Like the elemental symbols of the wind, the sky and the rivers, strong colours and contrasts - black, white, red - are used to convey the intensity of Baal's emotional response to reality, and at the same time to suggest the background of constant preoccupation with death in the mind which experiences reality in this way. His choice of vocabulary and gesture tends to be as violent as his favoured colours:

Baal (steht auf, streckt sich) Kanallje mit Herz! - Ich bin heut sowieso schon verflucht faul. (Er wirft Papier auf den Tisch, setzt sich davor.) Ich mache einen neuen Adam. (Entwirft grosse Initialen auf dem Papier.) Ich versuche es mit dem inneren Menschen. Ich bin ganz ausgehöhlt, aber ich habe Hunger wie ein Raubtier. Ich habe nur mehr Haut über den Knochen. Kanallje! (Lehnt sich zurück, streckt alle Viere von sich, emphatisch.) Jetzt mache ich den Sommer. Rot. Scharlachen. Gefräßsig. (Er summt wieder, es wird wieder dunkel. Dann spielt die Bettlerorgel.) (B 34)

The main features of Baal's language in this typical passage are a tendency to extreme or violent forms of expression (Kanallje, verflucht, ganz ausgehöhlt, Hunger wie ein Raubtier), the already observed penchant for strong colours (rot, scharlachen), elliptical phrasing for the sake of emphasis, frequent references to bodily states (faul, Hunger, nur mehr Haut auf den Knochen), and an ironic use of clichés relating to spiritual values (den neuen Adam, den inneren Menschen). These elements of language are selected to express the character of Baal's emotional world: his predominant concern for his own physical well-being and his proclivity to violent, animal-like emotions are his way of responding to a world which he experiences as a kind of wild beast, hungry and bloody-hued (Scharlachen. Gefräßsig).

In order to suggest that these powerful emotions of Baal's are responses to the real world, Brecht frequently has him use colours, particularly when referring to the sky, which, although startling in their immediate effect, are clearly drawn from acute observation of the natural world. Examples of this are the following:

Und der Himmel blieb in Lust und Kummer da
auch wenn Baal schlief, selig war und ihn nicht sah:
Nachts er violett und trunken Baal
Baal fröhlich fromm, er aprikosenfahl. (B 7)

Der Himmel (trinkt) ist manchmal auch gelb. Mit
Raubvögeln darinnen. (B 20)

(...) nackt unter orangefarbenem Himmel und man sieht
nichts als wie der Himmel violett wird, dann schwarz
wie ein Loch wird... (B 26)

Seit der Himmel grüner und schwanger ist, Juliluft,
Wind, kein Hemd in den Hosen! (B 46)

To give full weight to the expressive vocabulary into which he concentrates the intensity of Baal's inner world, Brecht tends to use simple sentence structure. Each sentence usually contains just one important word or phrase. The straightforward addition of simple statements gives full and equal weight to each point that is made. The following passage will serve as an illustration of this:

Bettler Das ist das Paradies der Hölle!

Gougou Ja, das ist das Paradies. Es bleibt einem
kein Wunsch unerfüllt. Man hat keinen mehr.
Es wird einem alles abgewöhnt. Auch die Wünsche.
So wird man frei.

Maja Und was kommt am Schluss?

Gougou (grinst) Nichts. Gar nichts. Es kommt kein
Schluss. Nichts dauert ewig.

Bolleboll Amen.

Baal (ist aufgestanden, zu Ekart) Ekart, steh auf!
Wir sind unter Mörder gefallen. (Hält sich an
Ekart, um die Schultern.) Das Gewürm bläht
sich. Die Verwesung kriecht heran. Die Würmer
singen und preisen sich an. (B 70)

Where Brecht fails to use this technique, the effect can be to produce an awkward clash between vocabulary which is intended to be expressive of powerful emotions and the rationality betrayed by the hypotactical structure in which they occur:

Baal Und die Liebe ist, wie wenn man seinen nackten Arm im Teichwasser schwimmen lässt, mit Tang zwischen den Fingern; wie die Qual, vor der der trunkene Baum knarzend zu singen anhebt, auf dem der wilde Wind reitet; wie ein schlürpfendes Ersaufen im Wein an einem heißen Tag, und ihr Leib dringt einem wie sehr kühler Wein in alle Hautfalten, sanft wie Pflanzen im Wind sind die Gelenke, und die Wucht des Anpralls, der nachgegeben wird, ist wie Fliegen gegen Sturm, und ihr Leib wälzt sich wie kühler Kies über dich. Aber die Liebe ist auch wie eine Kokosnuss, die gut ist, solange sie frisch ist, und die man ausspeien muss, wenn der Saft ausgequetscht ist und das Fleisch bleibt über, welches bitter schmeckt. (Wirft die Gitarre weg.) Aber jetzt habe ich die Arie satt. (B17-18)

This last remark, with its abrupt change of tone, is typical of Baal's refusal to commit himself for any length of time to one side of his nature to the exclusion of another: having indulged in pathos, he immediately retreats into cynicism.¹⁷ What is revealed as a co-existence of diametrically opposed attitudes would surely represent a considerable psychological conflict if it occurred within the mind of a real individual. But the significance of the Baal figure lies precisely in the fact that Brecht is able to project into a fictional character endowed with extraordinary equanimity and physical strength, a complex of attitudes and impulses which in reality could only be experienced as a mass of unresolvable conflicts. He can thus indulge, in imagination at least, in the experience of antagonism transformed into relative harmony.

Baal's lyrically heightened language is not the only means by which Brecht attempts to suggest the peculiar vividness with which

reality presents itself to the hero. He also has the people with whom Baal comes into contact express themselves in such a way as to create a richly textured environment for him to respond to. The landlady whom he refers to as "Kanallje mit Herz", for example, speaks to him in an "earthy", comical mixture of metaphor, slang and dialect:

Die Hausfrau Sie lachen wohl noch? Verderben pfundweise arme Mädchens, die Sie in Ihre Höhle schleifen! Pfui Teufel, Sie Bestie! Ich kindige Ihnen. Jetzt aber Beine gekriegt ihr und heim zu Muttern, ich gehe gleich mit!

Die Jüngere (weint stärker.)

Die Ältere Sie kann nichts dafür, Frau.

Die Hausfrau (nimmt beide bei der Hand) Regnet es jetzt? So ein Volk! Na, ihr seid hier auch nicht die einzigen! Der tut dick in Schwänen! Der hat noch ganz andere selig gemacht und die Häute auf den Mist geworfen! (B 33)

This kind of heightening effect is to be found in various guises throughout the play. Baal's exploiters Mech and Mjurk are particularly vulgar and cynical types; the "Strolch" and the inmates of the poorhouse are extremely depraved specimens of humankind; and the "Holzfäller" in whose company Baal spends his dying hours are exceptionally tough, unsympathetic characters.

The resources of the stage are also used to provide Baal with settings which are clearly saturated with his moods. The wind and the sky frequently provide a symbolic backdrop for his various encounters. Trees with their multiple associations are of course a favoured "Kulisse". In one scene Baal is shown composing a poem celebrating summer, the zenith of life in the natural year, against a contrasting background of music from a "Bettlerorgel" which here, as later in the Moritat and the Salomo-Song from the

Dreigroschenoper, expresses the exiguousness of life as it rolls mechanically on. The contrasts in Baal's consciousness are allowed to acquire an almost Baroque grotesqueness and antithetical sharpness in the poor-house scene, where a baby cries in the background as a mixture of cancerous, mad and syphilitic adults carouse and attempt to fornicate in the centre of the stage. (B65-73) The relatively loose, balladesque structure of the play also helps to suggest the richness of Baal's experience of the world, because it picks out only such moments of his life as are imbued with significance for him. In short, Baal is given a heightened, at times melodramatized world to live in, in order to express what Brecht imagines to be the "feel" that life has when experienced by a man who never forgets that he will soon have to die.

Baal's unrestrained pursuit of self-gratification leads him to behave in ways that would normally be condemned as immoral. In a good number of instances, however, there are factors present in the situations which tend to shift attention away from his guilt. His uncouth behaviour at Mech's party, for example, is in part an excusable response to the importunate behaviour of those he meets there. When he "robs" the lumberjacks of the dead Teddy's brandy, or deceives the peasants into bringing their bulls into the village, his actions are little more than harmless pranks. Such guilt as is involved is further lessened by the fact that his treatment of his victims is, in a sense, a form of retribution for offences which they attempted to commit. The lumberjacks can hardly feel moral indignation at his theft of Teddy's Schnaps, because they too had intended to steal it; similarly, the peasants are only deceived because they think they are doing the deceiving.

On the one hand, then, Baal's aggressive exploitation of others is partly justified as a retributory response to his victims' own attempts at exploitation. Further, the radical existential perspective in which Baal's aggressiveness is seen, has the effect, in many scenes, of making ethical condemnation of his behaviour seem harsh and out of place. Yet, on the other hand, there are moments in the action when his behaviour becomes so monstrous that ethical considerations are bound to override even the most sympathetic awareness that his violence towards others has an underlying metaphysical and existential cause in his experience of the world as essentially destructive.¹⁸ In the scene "Ebene. Himmel. Abend.", for example, even Ekart, Baal's close companion in evil, is shocked by the brutality of Baal's determination to rid himself of the now pregnant and unattractive Sophie Barger. In the course of this scene, horror at Baal's cruelty alternates with powerlessness to resist his charms, as the following passage from the end of the scene makes clear:

Ekart Stehst du noch da, du Vieh? Hast du keine Knie?
Bist du im Schnaps erstickt oder in der Lyrik?
Verkommenes Tier! Verkommenes Tier!

Baal Schwachkopf!
(Ekart auf ihn los, sie ringen.)

Sophie Jesus Maria! Es sind Raubtiere!

Ekart (ringend) Hörst du, was sie sagt, in dem Gehölz
und jetzt wird es schon dunkel? Verkommenes Tier!
Verkommenes Tier!

Baal (an ihn, presst Ekart an sich) Jetzt bist du an
meiner Brust, riechst du mich? Jetzt halte ich
dich, es gibt mehr als Weibernähe! (Hält ein.)
Jetzt sieht man schon Sterne über dem Gesträuch,
Ekart.

Ekart (starrt Baal an, der auf den Himmel sieht)
Ich kann es nicht schlagen.

Baal (den Arm um ihn) Es wird dunkel. Wir müssen
Nachtquartier haben. Im Gehölz gibt es Mulden,

wo kein Wind hingeht. Komm, ich erzähle dir
von den Tieren. (Er zieht ihn fort.)

Sophie (allein im Dunkeln, schreit) Baal! (B 64-65)

Moral revulsion at Baal's behaviour is not only felt by others, but is also present in the protagonist's own mind, although he does his utmost to suppress any scruples he feels, in order not to be hindered by them in his pursuit of an animalistic way of life. In a moment of drunken, jealous anger he murders Ekart for being unfaithful with a girl and thus breaching their homosexual pact of revolt against nature.¹⁹ As soon as he has killed him, however, he is filled with remorse (B 86). Baal is not able truly to escape being caught in the conflicts inherent in the complexity of human nature. He has to experience a conflict between his need for companionship and his "loner" philosophy of regarding others as mere objects to be exploited for his own pleasure, between his cult of animalism and the human burden of consciousness (particularly of transience), between his will to live amorally and his sense of right and wrong. The last speech of the play, spoken by Baal as he crawls out to die beneath the stars, concentrates into a few lines the unreconciled conflicts in his mind:

Baal Eins zwei drei vier fünf sechs. Das hilft nichts.
(Stille)

Mama! Ekart soll weggehen, der Himmel ist auch so verflucht nah da, zum Greifen, es ist alles wieder tropfnass. Schlafen. Eins. Zwei. Drei. Vier. Man erstickt hier ja. Draussen muss es hell sein. Ich will hinaus. (Hebt sich.) Ich werde hinausgehen. Lieber Baal. (Scharf) Ich bin keine Ratte. Es muss draussen hell sein. Lieber Baal. Zur Tür kommt man noch. Knie hat man noch, in der Tür ist es besser. Verflucht! Lieber Baal! (Er kriecht auf allen Vieren zur Schwelle.) Sterne...hm.
(Er kriecht hinaus.) (B 92)

It is Baal's fantastic (in the literal sense) good fortune that the contradictions in his mind do not prevent him from dying with a satisfied grunt.

ooo000ooo

By giving to the hero of his first play the name of a Canaanite god of fertility whose rites represented a challenge to the worship of Jehovah, Brecht was clearly aligning himself with a tradition of anti-Christian polemic which had Nietzsche and Heine as its best known literary champions in nineteenth-century Germany. Like his predecessors, Brecht directed his attack against the asceticism which he associated with the Christian religion. The Corpus Christi scene, where Baal is enraged by the thought of Christ's celibacy, is only the most explicit instance of a polemic which is conducted throughout the play through Baal's pagan worship of strength and untrammelled sexuality. As has been seen already, however, Brecht cannot fully endorse Nietzsche's outright rejection of Christian ethics. Baal expresses not only a paean to his Dionysian hero, but also, perhaps unwillingly, clear moral reservations about the cult of immorality.

If Brecht's adoption of a Nietzschean admiration for the strong individual with powerful instincts does not lead him to reject Christian values altogether, it does allow him to make a stand against the opposite cult of a Schopenhauerian "contemptus mundi", such as was being promulgated by a number of his Expressionist contemporaries.²⁰ The point in the play at which Brecht's attack on Schopenhauerian nihilism is formulated most clearly is the scene

in the "Spitalschenke". Here Gougou sings an aria extolling the prospect of being released from the wheel of desire in oblivion:

Gougou (zu Ekart) Das Schönste ist das Nichts.

Bolleboll Pst! Jetzt kommt Gougou's Arie! Der Madensack singt!

Gougou Es ist wie zitternde Luft an Sommerabenden, Sonne. Aber es zittert nicht. Nichts. Gar nichts. Man hört einfach auf. Wind geht, man friert nimmer. Regen geht, man wird nimmer nass. Witze passieren, man lacht nicht mit. Man verfault, man braucht nicht zu warten. Generalstreik.

Bettler Das ist das Paradies der Hölle!

Gougou Ja, das ist das Paradies. Es bleibt einem kein Wunsch unerfüllt. Man hat keinen mehr. Es wird einem alles abgewöhnt. Auch die Wünsche. So wird man frei. (B 69-70)

Baal recoils in fear and disgust from this longing for annihilation:

Baal Hier werden meine Gedärme demonstriert (...)
Das ist kein Schlammbad. (B 70)

The sight of Gougou praising nothingness makes Baal feel that one of his inmost fears is being paraded in public. Although just as aware as Gougou that life ends in nothingness, he refuses to accept that this prospect is more alluring than life. Like Nietzsche, Brecht believed that life ought to be affirmed, not denied. It is because Baal is aware of the ultimate imperfection of life, the finality of death, that he is spurred on to dedicate himself so wholeheartedly to the task of living intensely.

In 1919, when Brecht was revising his first draft of Baal, Hermann Hesse published Klingsors letzter Sommer, a Novelle which clearly contributed to the same debate between the negation and the affirmation of the will to live, as had prompted Brecht to treat his theme in Baal in the way he did. Klingsor, like Baal, is

an artist whose sense of transience drives him on to enjoy life to the full:

In allen guten, fruchtbaren, glühenden Zeiten seines Lebens, auch in der Jugend schon, hatte er so gelebt, hatte seine Kerze an beiden Enden brennen gehabt, mit einem bald jubelnden, bald schluchzenden Gefühl von rasender Verschwendung, von Verbrennen, mit einer verzweifelten Gier, den Becher ganz zu leeren, und mit einer tiefen, verheimlichten Angst vor dem Ende.²¹

Not only do both men revel in the pleasures of the cup and of the flesh, they also have a similar attitude to artistic creation.

They both indicate symbolically that they want their art to reflect the transience of all existence, Baal, by hanging his poems in the "Abort", Klingsor, by deliberately working in the medium of water-colours which will soon fade away:

Melancholisch klagte der Doktor mit der menschenfreundlichen Stimme: "Es ist ein Jammer, Klingsor, Ihre wunderbaren Aquarelle werden in zehn Jahren alle weiss sein; diese Farben, die Sie bevorzugen, halten alle nicht".

Klingsor: "Ja, und was noch schlimmer ist: Ihre schönen braunen Haare, Doktor, werden in zehn Jahren alle grau sein, und eine kleine Weile später liegen unsere hübschen frohen Knochen irgendwo in einem Loch in der Erde, leider auch Ihre so schönen und gesunden Knochen, Ersilia. Kinder, wir wollen nicht so spät im Leben noch anfangen vernünftig zu werden!"²²

Looking back on his "Novelle" from a distance of almost twenty years,

Hesse regarded it as a typical product of the post-war mood:

Klingsors letzter Sommer und die mit ihm damals im gleichen Band erschiene Erzählung Klein und Wagner sind im selben Sommer, einem für die Welt und für mich ungewöhnlichen und einmaligen Sommer, entstanden. Es war im Jahre 1919. Der vierjährige Krieg war zu Ende, die Welt schien in Scherben geschlagen, Millionen von Soldaten, von Kriegsgefangenen, von Bürgern kehrten aus Jahren des starren uniformierten Gehorchens in eine so ersehnte wie gefürchtete Freiheit zurück. Der Krieg, der grosse Weltregent, war gestorben und begraben; leer wartete eine veränderte und verarmte Welt auf uns entlassene Sklaven. Jeder hatte sich nach dieser Welt und nach freier Bewegung in ihr glühend gesehnt, und jedem

war doch auch bange vor der Entlassung und Freiheit, vor den unvertraut gewordenen Bezirken des Privaten und Eigenen, vor der Verantwortung, die jede Freiheit bedeutet, vor den lang unterdrückten und beinahe zu Feinden gewordenen Regungen, Möglichkeiten und Träumen des eigenen Herzens. Auf viele wirkte die neue Atmosphäre wie ein Rauschgift. Viele hatten im Augenblick der Befreiung zu nichts anderem Lust, als alles in Trümmer zu hauen, wofür sie diese Jahre gekämpft und geblutet hatten. Jeder hatte das Gefühl, etwas verloren und versäumt zu haben, ein Stück Leben, ein Stück vom Ich, ein Stück Entwicklung, Anpassung und Lebenskunst.²³

The similarities between Baal and Klingsors letzter Sommer would suggest that Hesse's remarks are relevant to the understanding of Baal. Although Brecht was a civilian for most of the war, it seems quite probable that he was prompted to write his first play by this same feeling of wanting to make up for lost time which was evidently widespread amongst young men towards the end of the war. Yet, although the immediate historical context was doubtless important, it is also necessary to see Baal in a wider perspective.

Before the war broke on the world, the animal, violent aspects of human nature had already found expression in the dramas of Wedekind, whose influence on the author of Baal is unmistakable.²⁴ Brecht, like Wedekind in his Erdegeist, overemphasizes the untamable beast in man for polemical reasons, in order to protest against the opposite and equally extreme tendency of advanced civilisation to smother the asocial, existential needs of the individual. That Brecht should have incorporated elements of Nietzsche's and Wedekind's critiques of civilisation in Baal, indicates that he was aware of standing in a tradition which extended back into the nineteenth century, a tradition of opposition to the over-rationalization of life in modern society. Clearly, he already viewed the problems of the individual in relation to the social context and

the pressures exerted by this context. Baal ostensibly has a private theme, the existential problem of transience, but the polemical treatment of this theme gives the work public relevance: it is ultimately the socially aware moralist in Brecht who both condemns Baal's worst excesses and holds up his vitality and freedom as values which are threatened in a society so concerned with "rationality" that it can regard men as so much "Menschenmaterial".²⁵

In 1926 Brecht produced a revised version of the play with the title Lebenslauf des Mannes Baal. The overall aim of this adaptation was to give much greater emphasis to the socio-historical significance of Baal's behaviour. To this end, Baal's companion Ekart is now given the function of commenting on the historical situation:

Ekart Es ist mir in diesen Jahren immer klarer geworden, dass eine grosse Zeit im Heraufziehen ist. Die Landschaft verkümmert. Ich habe Photographien gesehen von Bauten auf der Insel Manhattan, die eine grosse Kraft der Rasse anzeigen. Die Menschheit, welche einen Höhepunkt von Unempfindlichkeit erreicht hat, schickt sich an, ihre Glücksepoche aufzurichten. Es kommt alles darauf an, in den betreffenden Jahren, welche in ihrer Zahl beschränkt sein werden, zur Stelle zu sein. In den letzten Wochen nun bemerke ich an mir eine zunehmende Unruhe.²⁶

It is suggested in this version of the play that Baal's race against time is as hectic as it is because it is also a race to consume his share of nature before it is devoured by the rapidly advancing civilisation of the great cities:

Baal Der Wind wird wieder stärker. Er ist das einzige, was man in diesem Land umsonst bekommen kann, aber er berührt nur noch meine Haut. Für mein Ohr kann er nicht mehr stark genug sein. Deine Fuge ist auch nichts geworden.

Ekart Meine Fuge baute sich auf Geräuschen auf, die nicht schlechter sind als die gewöhnlichen. Was ihre Mathematik betrifft, so ist sie mathematischer als der Wind. Die Landschaft wird auch immer mathematischer. Das ist der einzige Ausblick für das menschliche Geschlecht. Das ist jetzt schon ein Blechschuppen, morgen ist dort eine Eisenkonstruktion. Die grossen Städte strecken ihre Gelenke (sie sind austauschbar) über die alte Landschaft. Zwischen diesen langen Gehäusen wird der Wind messbar sein.

Baal Wir sind die letzten, die die ebene Fläche noch sehen. In 49 Jahren kannst du das Wort Wald austreichen. Holz wird man nicht mehr brauchen. Der Mensch wird dann übrigens auch verschwinden. Aber, um im Bereich unserer Lebenszeit zu bleiben: Zu der Zeit, wo deine grossen Städte heraufgekommen sind, wirst du das Delirium haben. Statt der hohen Konstruktionen wirst du Ratten wahrnehmen.

Ekart Das wird zu der Zeit sein, wo du schon ganze Taifune brauchen wirst, um ein leichtes Geräusch wahrzunehmen.

Baal Mensch, ich will noch ohne Haut leben. Ja du bist ein böser Mensch. Wir sind es beide. Leider.²⁷

The opposition to contemporary society which was implicit in the original conception of Baal is here made explicit.

The new version of the play also contains formal innovations which help to state its message more plainly. A "Vorspruch" read by an "Ansager" in a dinner-jacket relates Baal to his historical situation:

In dieser dramatischen Biographie von Bertolt Brecht sehen Sie das Leben des Mannes Baal, wie es sich abgespielt hat im Anfang dieses Jahrhunderts. Sie sehen die Abnormität Baal, wie sie sich zurechtfindet in der Welt des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts.²⁸

Many of the "Bilder" are introduced by captions:

In den Jahren 1907-1910 finden wir Baal und Ekart auf Streifzügen in Süddeutschland.

Baal erliegt in Jahre 1911 seiner natürlichen Bestimmung zum Mörder.

Baal stirbt elend unter Holzfällern im Jahre 1912.²⁹

Brecht's desire to present his hero's fate with historical objectivity also affects the language of the play. The earlier lyricism is now largely replaced by a laconic tone of voice:

Baal Wohin gehst du?

Ekart Ich schätze, nach Südfrankreich. Da ist anscheinend unter anderem ein anderer Typ von Städten. Er unterscheidet sich schon im Grundriss wesentlich durch die Ordnung, die durch ein genügendes Mass von Licht garantiert wird. Kommst du mit?

Baal Ist Geld da?

Ekart Teilweise.

Baal Zum Fahren?

Ekart Zum Gehen.

Baal Wann gehst du?

Ekart Heute. 11.30 verlasse ich dieses Café.

Baal Wieso?

Ekart Ich habe eine Photographie von Marseille. Drei trostlose Ellipsen. Kommst du mit?

Baal Es ist möglich. Ich weiss es noch nicht.³⁰

Ekart's "Verführung" was expressed quite differently in the earlier version:

Ekart (hat sich erhoben, kommt langsam hinter dem Schanktisch hervor zu Baal. Er ist hager und ein mächtiger Bursche) Baal! Lass das! Geh mit mir, Bruder! Zu den Strassen mit hartem Staub: abends wird die Luft violett. Zu den Schnapsschenken voll von Besoffenen: in die schwarzen Flüsse fallen Weiber, die du gefüllt hast (...) Komm mit mir, Bruder! Tanz und Musik und Trinken! Regen bis auf die Haut! Sonne bis auf die Haut! Finsternis und Licht! Weiber und Hunde! Bist du schon so verkommen? (B 23-24)

Notes made by Brecht between 1920, when he completed the first published version of Baal, and 1926, when he made the Lebenslauf-adaptation, indicate that objectivity and historical relevance were values which he considered important well before he gave added stress to them in his adaptation. While working on a new play, Im Dickicht,

in 1921, he made the following observation:

Eines ist im Dickicht: die Stadt. Die ihre Wildheit zurückhat, ihre Dunkelheit und ihre Mysterien. Wie Baal der Gesang der Landschaft ist, der Schwanengesang.³¹

This mention of the "swansong of the landscape", an idea which, as has been seen, was made quite explicit in the 1926 adaptation, indicates that Brecht saw his work as having a socio-historical dimension at least five years previously. However, it cannot be said that Brecht achieved in Baal the objective, distanced presentation of his material which he had come to demand of himself by 1922:

Einen grossen Fehler sonstiger Kunst hoffe ich im Baal und Dickicht vermieden zu haben: ihre Bemühung mitzureissen. Instinktiv lasse ich hier Abstände und Sorge, dass meine Effekte (poetischer und philosophischer Art) auf die Bühne begrenzt bleiben. (GW 15, 62)

It could be argued that the larger-than-life presentation of the hero is ironic, an attempt to provoke emotional distance through the exaggeration of his enormity. Yet, as has been seen, the stylistic qualities of the text are generally such as to foster emotional involvement with the hero and his world rather than the cooler aesthetic response aimed at in the above remark. The development of a stylistic technique which will elicit such an effect begins, as the next chapter will show, in Brecht's second play, Trommeln in der Nacht.

In the following chapters it will be argued that the basic conflicts revealed in Baal remain virtually unchanged, although subjected to considerable variation of expression, in all Brecht's dramas up to and including the opera Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny (1929). It will further be argued that the transition

to Marxist activism in his writing after this point, although involving the suppression of a whole range of unresolvable conflicts which had hitherto preoccupied him, does not represent a complete "volte face" in his development. The decision to become a political-ly committed dramatist, taken as it was in 1929, at a time when the outlook for the working classes in particular looked blacker than it had for a long time, ought not to be dismissed merely as a quasi religious "conversion" prompted above all by the playwright's need to establish order out of his own subjective chaos.³² This may be involved, but it is not the whole of the matter. The new phase in his writing emerges, rather, naturally enough from a strengthening of the moral element which had been present in his work from the beginning. Nor is there such a wide gulf between his early anarchic individualism and his turn to collectivism as is sometimes suggested. Just as his early radical individualism contained an element of social protest against the impoverishment of life in modern society, so his later commitment to collectivism is probably best seen as an expedient to remove at least the unnecessary causes of suffering which the individual is forced to tolerate in addition to his existential burden.

NOTES

1. All references in this form are to the version of Baal published in 1922 by Kiepenheuer in Potsdam.
2. As B. Goldstein remarks, Baal is particularly impressed by the "abiding nature" of the sky, "Bertolt Brecht's Baal: A Crisis in Poetic Existence", in Festschrift für Bernhard Blume (Göttingen, 1967), p. 338. There is, of course, irony in making the emptiness of space a symbol of eternity.
3. Baal's aggressive, combative tendencies are stressed to the exclusion of his capacity for acquiescence by L. Shaw, "The Morality of Combat: Brecht's Search for a Sparring Partner", in Brecht Heute 1 (1971), pp. 80-97. C. Lyons goes to the opposite extreme of making Baal's passivity his fundamental characteristic, "Bertolt Brecht's Baal: The Structure of Images", Modern Drama VIII (1965), pp. 318.
4. In the first version of Baal no such dramatic motivation was given for the hero's sudden changes from wild selfishness to sentimentality, particularly towards his mother. See Baal. Drei Fassungen (Frankfurt a.M., 1966), pp. 56, 67.
5. Thus, W. Jens, Statt einer Literaturgeschichte (Pfullingen, 1967), p. 236. B. Ekman lays great stress on the instinctual, reflexive nature of Baal's behaviour, Gesellschaft und Gewissen (Kopenhagen, 1969), p. 17 et seq.
6. E. Bentley, "Bertolt Brecht's First Play", Kenyon Review 26 (1964), p. 90.
7. *ibid.*, p. 92.
8. W. Steer suppresses the contradictions and conflicts within Baal when he claims that the play is "at bottom a fantasy of security achieved through physical sensation and the protective grace of the natural world." "Baal: A Key to Brecht's Communism", German Life and Letters 19 (1965/66), p. 49.
9. L. Shaw, "The Morality of Combat", p. 83. H. Rischbieter comments similarly: "Ein Lebensgefühl wird lyrisch intensiviert, diese Intensität allein hält die vierundzwanzig Bilder des Stückes zusammen". Bertolt Brecht (Velber, 1966), p. 28.
10. Julius Bab, "Die Lebenden" in: R.F. Arnold, Das Deutsche Drama (München, 1925), p. 813.
11. Baal. Drei Fassungen, p. 54.
12. Baal's repeated symbolic acquiescence in death is not taken account of in G. Weales' interpretation of the action as a quest for identity, "Brecht and the Drama of Ideas", in Ideas in the Drama, ed. Gassner, (New York and London, 1964), p. 125 et seq. The opposite view, that Baal seeks to lose his individuality through self-immersion in "pure physical sensation", is put forward by Steer, "Baal: A Key to Brecht's Communism", p. 44.

13. F. Gaede emphasizes the contrast between the unconscious life of the tree and the conscious life of Baal to the exclusion of the similarity on which Baal's relation to trees also rests, "Bertolt Brecht", in Expressionismus als Literatur, hrsg. W. Rothe (Bern. 1969), p. 597.
14. These lines are quoted from the fuller first version of the Choral given in Baal. Drei Fassungen, p. 59.
15. "Bertolt Brecht's Baal: The Structure of Images", p. 314.
16. The god Baal is traditionally associated with the bull.
17. Possibly the most striking example of Baal's ability to change rapidly from one posture to another occurs during the Corpus Christi scene where, after fulminating against the procession, he goes off with the tramp's "Schnaps", leaving the "Strolch" calling after him, "Sie wollen also nicht eintreten für Ihre Ideale, Herr! Sie wollen sich nicht in die Prozession schmeissen? Sie lieben die Pflanzen und wollen nichts tun für sie?" (B 40)
18. Steer makes the point "that Baal's callousness is but a replica of God's - of a God who is sublimely indifferent to the suffering, or even the identity, of the human individual", "Baal: A Key to Brecht's Communism", p. 45. This theme is discussed above in the chapter dealing with Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe's Edward the Second (p. 151 et seq.)
19. Homosexuality as an expression of revolt against nature, and as an exercise in sado-masochism, is a recurrent theme in Brecht's early plays, which will be dealt with more fully in the chapters on Im Dickicht and Leben Eduards des Zweiten. Baal regards Ekart's repeated attempts at re-establishing heterosexual relations as lapses "in die Zoologie" (B 76).
20. The immediate stimulus to write Baal was Brecht's distaste for H. Johst's Expressionist dramatic biography of the poet Grabbe, entitled Der Einsame (1918). L. Shaw sums up Brecht's opposition to such "Weltschmerz" thus: "above all, it was a reaction to the expressionists' view of the poet as a visionary devotee of the spirit, the poeta dolorosus who suffers and sacrifices for the sake of the ideal, a martyr for mankind", "The Morality of Combat", p. 83. For Schopenhauer's advocacy of ascetic quietism, see Book 4 of Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, "Bei erreichter Selbsterkenntnis, Bejahung und Verneinung des Willens zum Leben". The woman named "Maja" in the poorhouse scene may be a symbolic embodiment of the horrors of the world of illusion, which in Indian philosophy is the realm of "Maya".
21. Klingsors letzter Sommer (Zürich, no date), p. 193.
22. *ibid.*, pp. 209-210.
23. *ibid.*, pp. 275-276.

24. In the first version of the play, Baal repeatedly makes ring-master-like gestures, which echo the prologue to Wedekind's Erdgeist; see Baal. Drei Fassungen, pp. 16, 30, 32. In his necrologue for Wedekind in 1918 Brecht said "Er gehörte mit Tolstoi und Strindberg zu den grossen Erziehern des neuen Europa". (GW 15, 4)
25. Brecht's later description of Baal as being "asozial, aber in einer asozialen Gesellschaft" (GW 17, 947) so emphasizes the social context and implications of Baal's behaviour as to obscure the existential and metaphysical reasons for his conduct.
26. Baal. Drei Fassungen, p. 173.
27. *ibid.*, p. 171. Baal's regret ("leider") at his own evil is an interesting addition which further underlines his inner contradictions.
28. *ibid.*, p. 151.
29. *ibid.*, pp. 171, 173, 179.
30. *ibid.*, p. 158.
31. Baal. Der böse Baal der asoziale (Frankfurt a.M., 1968), p. 156.
32. B. Ekman, for example, goes so far as to assert, "dass die Dichtung für ihn im tiefsten kein Werkzeug ist, das man im Dienste der Gesellschaft gebraucht, wie es in seinen theoretischen Schriften heisst, sondern ein Weg für ihn selbst, um seine Indignation und seinen Hass auf eine Welt, der er niemals verzeihen konnte, dass sie ihm unlösbare Probleme stellte, abzureagieren", "Bert Brecht, vom Baal aus gesehen", Orbis Litterarum 20 (1965), pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER TWO

Trommeln in der Nacht

All Brecht's early plays live dramatically from the tensions and conflicts generated by the collision of a number of different ways of looking at and evaluating life: the claims of individualism clash with those of morality, the hero is drawn on the one hand to self-destruction, on the other towards self-preservation, the characters are as capable of responding to situations with pathos as with cynicism. Yet, while sharing with Baal the central concerns of the author, Trommeln in der Nacht is a rather different type of play. Baal was the first of a number of plays which can be described as "projective" in technique. These plays imply criticism of society by imaginatively "projecting" certain needs and impulses which tend to be outlawed in the real world into a fictional world where they can be given free rein. By indulging anti-social impulses in fantasy the author is implicitly attacking the over-repressive tendencies of contemporary society: he counters imbalance in one direction with an equal but opposite imbalance in the other. Trommeln in der Nacht, on the other hand, is the first in a series of more "analytic" plays.¹ The plays in this group examine critically and explicitly the ways in which society exploits, deprives or suppresses the individual's needs and impulses. The two types of play are complementary, the one providing emotional release from the restrictions of society, the other giving insight into the position of the individual within contemporary society. By using the terms analytic and projective it is not intended to separate the plays into watertight compartments; none of these plays is wholly analytic or projective in fact, for there are elements of both in all of them. The use of one or other of these labels simply

indicates that one or other of the elements is dominant in a particular work.

Trommeln in der Nacht is, then, the analytic counterpart to Baal. If Baal was in part a protest against the deprivations which had to be suffered because of the First World War, Trommeln in der Nacht seeks to analyse the real difficulties encountered by a young soldier, Andreas Kragler, who returns from the war with hopes of making good these four years of his life, "die verloren sind mit Haut und Haar".² The difficulties experienced by Kragler in coming together again with his girl Anna throw light on the social situation which the "Heimkehrer" encountered on their return, and explain why they reacted to this situation as they did.

In 1914 Brecht wrote a short story entitled Der Freiwillige which relates the thoughts of a man who has volunteered to join the army in order to restore the honour of his imprisoned son, and his feelings when the "Vorstände des Liederkranzes", who have not spoken to him since his son went to prison, greet him enthusiastically and even throw him roses:

"Gewehr bei Fuss! Stillgestanden!" gelbt das Kommando.

Da greift einer, ehe er den Befehl ausführt, hoch in die Luft und fängt mit verklärtem Gesicht eine fliegende Rose. (GW 11, 12)

Similar patriotic sentiments are expressed in the commemorative poem

Hans Lody which was written in the same year:

Aber du hast dein Leben dafür gelassen
Dass eines Tages in hellem Sonnenschein
Deutsche Lieder brausend über dein Grab hinziehen
Deutsche Fahnen darüber im Sonnengold wehen
Und deutsche Hände darüber Blumen ausstreu'n. (GW 8, 5)

To judge from this, Brecht was evidently infected by the wave of emotional nationalism which swept Europe at the outbreak of war. By the end of the war he had come to distrust such high sentiments, and criticised the fact that men are "bereit, für schwindelhafte Phrasen grossen Klangs alles zu opfern, sie sterben wonnevoll in Schweineverschlügen, wenn sie nur in grosser Oper 'mitwirken' dürfen" (GW 20, 11). This distrust of "Phrasen" and grandiose gestures is the main impetus which drives Trommeln in der Nacht along. Brecht saw in the attitudes of many of his compatriots to the revolution which followed the war evidence that the tendency to emotionalism had not lost its grip over their minds. Thus he came to write this play partly as a satirical analysis of the role of what he called "Romantik" in shaping the course of events after the war. To satirise and "estrangle" the contemporary atmosphere, he constructed the work as a travesty of the traditional ballad tale of the return of a ghostly soldier to claim his bride, the best known example of which is, of course, Bürger's Lenore.³ In the ballad tradition the soldier returns to seek vengeance: in Bürger's version the ghost appears to punish the girl for her loss of faith in God; in Eichendorff's Die Hochzeitsnacht the woman is punished for her unfaithfulness in love. It is this variant of the tale that Brecht chooses to follow when he has Kragler return to find Anna engaged to another man. The moonlit night, the faithless lover, the idea of a ghostly avenger, all these elements are taken over by Brecht from tradition, but his treatment of them is characteristically ironic and grotesque.

The ghost-motif is introduced in the opening lines of the play as a means of characterising the atmosphere in the Balicke household:⁴

Balicke (rasiert sich am Fenster) Jetzt sind es vier Jahre her, dass er vermisst wird. Jetzt kommt er nie wieder. Die Zeiten sind verflucht unsicher. Jeder Mann wiegt Gold. Ich hätte schon vor zwei Jahren meinen Segen gegeben. Eure verfluchte Sentimentalität hat mich damals über die Ohren gehauen. Jetzt ginge ich über Leichen.

Frau Balicke (vor der Wandphotographie Kraglers als Artillerist) Es war ein so guter Mensch. Es war ein so kindlicher Mensch.

Balicke Jetzt ist er verfault.

Frau Balicke Wenn er wiederkommt !

Balicke Aus dem Himmel kommt keiner wieder. (T 9)⁵

Frau Balicke fears Kragler's return because Anna has been courted in his absence by another man. The ambiguity in the word "wiederkommt" - it could simply mean "to return", or, more ominously, "to return from the grave" - introduces the Lenore-motif imperceptibly. As the conversation progresses, it becomes evident that her fear is a product of her guilt at having condoned the new courtship, and that her fearful imaginings are nourished by superstition:

Frau Balicke Und wenn er kommt, der Leichnam, der jetzt fault, wie du sagst, aus dem Himmel oder aus der Hülle? Mein Name ist Kragler - wer sagt ihm dann, dass er eine Leiche ist und die Seine einem Andern im Bett liegt? (T 10)

When Anna is called into the room and evinces the same hesitancy as her mother, her father abuses her for her superstition:

Balicke Ich sage dir, der Kerl ist verfault und vermodert, von dem ist nicht mehr ein Knochen beim andern! Drei Jahre! Und kein Lebenszeichen! Und die ganze Batterie gesprengt! in die Luft! zu Fetzen! vermisst! Na, Kunststück, sagen, wo der hingekommen ist! Das ist nur deine verfluchte Angst vor Gespenstern! Schaff dir einen Mann an und du brauchst Gespenster nachts nicht mehr zu fürchten. (T 12)

Again, whether Anna really is superstitious, is not made unambiguously clear, but she does feel "shivers down the spine" at the

thought of Kragler's return:

Anna Sei mal still! Da fährt ein Zug durch die Nacht!
Hörst du? Ich habe manchmal Angst, er kommt.
Das läuft kalt den Rücken hinunter. (T16)

During these exchanges Balicke seems to have nothing but scorn for the women's fear of ghosts and insists that Kragler is just a "Leichnam", a corpse like any other. Yet, allowing that he does not share the superstitious tendencies of the women, his insistence that there is absolutely no possibility of Kragler returning from the war may still seem rather over-emphatic. The reason for his taking this stance slips out in his opening words to his wife: "Die Zeiten sind verflucht unsicher. Jeder Mann wiegt Gold" (T9). In fact Balicke's insistence on Anna's immediate betrothal is an expression not of confidence but of insecurity: he wants to make sure that Anna marries Murk quickly in case Kragler should return to make it emotionally difficult for Anna to accept Murk, while at the same time possibly being unwilling himself to marry her because of her unfaithfulness during his absence. Thus from the outset Balicke, too, fears the return of Kragler, although at this stage he refuses to think of him as any kind of ghost. In the course of the action, however, he does come to regard Kragler as an avenging "Gespenst", admittedly for quite different reasons from those of the women.

When Murk arrives for the engagement he is "bleich" and "käsigt im Gesicht" (T14). Balicke immediately interprets this as fear of the "Schiessen in der Abendluft" (T14), the audible sign of the revolutionary violence that has broken out in the city. But why should Murk have particular cause to fear the Spartacist uprising?

The reason is evidently his association of the returning soldier Kragler with Spartacus. He fears that Spartacist retribution could affect him directly in the person of Andreas Kragler seeking revenge for the seduction of Anna. When he thinks of Spartacus he thinks of one particular man:

Murk Da steht ein Mann im Fabrikhof, ihr! Was ist das?!

Anna Das ist so schauerlich, du! Ich glaube er schaut rauf!

Balicke Wahrscheinlich der Wächter! Was lachst du, Fritz? Was hast du im Hals? Das Frauenvolk verblasst ja ganz!

Murk Mir kommt grad eine komische Idee, weisst du: Spartakus... (T 19)

When left alone with Anna his fears take the form of suspicion:

Murk War jemand hier? (Auf Anna zu.) War einer hier? Warum wirst du jetzt wie Leinwand? Wer war hier? (T 14)

It emerges that he too thinks of Kragler as a "ghost" who "haunts"

Anna's mind and home:

Anna Niemand! Niemand war hier! Was hast du denn?

Murk Warum dann diese Eile? Macht mir nichts weis! Na mag er! Aber in dieser Budicke mache ich keine Verlobung!

Anna Wer sagt denn was von Verlobung?

Murk Die Alte. Des Herrn Auge machet das Vieh fett! (Geht unruhig herum.) Na ja, und wenn?!

Anna Überhaupt tust du, als wäre meinen Eltern was daran gelegen! Meinen Eltern ist weiss Gott nichts daran gelegen! Nicht was untern Nagel geht!

Murk Wann bist du eigentlich bei der Erstkommunion gewesen?

Anna Ich meine nur, dass du dir etwas leicht tust.

Murk Ah so? Der andere?

Anna Ich habe nichts von dem anderen gesagt.

Murk Aber da hängt er und da ist er und da geht er um! (T 15)

His fear of Spartacus stems from his fear that the "ghost" Kragler

who "haunts" the Balicke household ("da geht er um") might materialize to prevent his marriage to Anna. It is for this reason that he keeps insisting that the engagement party be held in the Picadilly-bar and not in the parental home:

Murk Hier nicht. Hier auf keinen Fall. Ich, ich will Musik haben und Licht! Es ist doch ein feines Lokal! Hier ist so dunkel. (T17)

Murk wants to get away from the dark and threatening Balicke household into the bright lights and safety of a public place (even though this means venturing out into the streets while the Spartacist fighting is going on), because he is afraid that Kragler might appear at Anna's door in the role of an avenging, but very material "ghost".

When Kragler does eventually appear at the end of Act 1, Frau Balicke panics, believing that her worst imaginings have come true. Kragler understands her reaction and tries to ease the situation with humour:

(Im diesem Augenblick tritt ein Mann in kotiger dunkelblauer Artillerieuniform mit kleiner Tabakspfeife in die Tür.)

Der Mann Mein Name ist Kragler.

Frau Balicke (stützt sich mit schwachen Knien auf den Spiegeltisch) Herr Je...

Kragler Na, was schauen Sie denn so überirdisch? Auch Geld für Kränze hinausgeschmissen? Schade drum! Melde gehorsamst: habe mich in Algier als Gespenst etabliert. Aber jetzt hat der Leichnam mörderisch Appetit. Ich könnte Würmer fressen! Aber was haben Sie denn, Mutter Balicke? Blödsinniges Lied! (Stellt das Grammophon ab.)

Frau Balicke (sagt immer noch nichts, starrt ihn nur an.)

Kragler Fallen Sie nur nicht gleich um! Da ist'n Stuhl. Ein Glas Wasser kann beschafft werden. (Summend zum Schrank.) Kenne mich noch leidlich gut aus hier. (Schenkt Wein in ein Glas.) Wein! Nierensteiner! Also für ein Gespenst bin ich doch ziemlich lebhaft! (Bemüht sich um Frau Balicke.)

Balicke (von aussen) Also komm, Alte! Marchons!
Du bist schön, süsser Engel! (Kommt herein,
sieht entgeistert.) Nanu?! (T 25)

Despite his superficially jocular tone here, it becomes clear in the course of the action that Kragler does not regard the idea of his being thought of as a "Gespenst" merely as something laughable; rather, it emerges that he is actually afraid of having become a "ghost", that is of having lost all contact with normality as a result of his long absence in a prisoner of war camp. His repeated use of the word "Gespenst" is not only a response to Frau Balicke's behaviour, but is also an indication of his own fears about himself. Summing up the main events in the first act, then, one may say that the unity of the situation expounded here is constituted by the concern felt by all the characters (including Balicke, although this does not become wholly clear until Act II) that Kragler might return from the war as a "Gespenst".

The action which unfolds from this initial situation is one in which Kragler desperately tries to defend himself against being forced into the role of "Gespenst" which his own existential fears and the quite different fears of the other characters have prepared for him. Hoping that they will not be followed there by Kragler, the Balickes set off for the Picadillybar where they are to join Anna, Murk and Babusch, a friend of the family who is a newspaper reporter by profession. When Kragler does nevertheless appear in the bar, Balicke, who had earlier refused to think of Kragler as a ghost, reacts just as hysterically as his wife and daughter:

(Die Tür ist aufgegangen. Kragler steht drin. Im Wind flackern die Kerzen trüber.)

Balicke Nanu, was zitterst du denn mit dem Glas? Wie deine Mutter, Anna?

Anna (die gegenüber der Tür sitzt, hat Kragler gesehen. Sie ist zusammengesunken, sieht ihn starr an.)

Frau Balicke Jesus, Maria, was klappst du denn so zusammen, Kind?

Murk Was ist das für ein Wind?

Kragler (heiser) Anna!

Anna (schreit leis auf. Jetzt schauen alle um, springen auf. Tumult. Gleichzeitig.)

Balicke Teufel! (Giesst Wein in die Gurgel.) Das Gespenst, Mutter!

Frau Balicke Jesus! Kra...

Murk Hinausschmeissen! Hinausschmeissen! (T 32)

How has this apparent change in Balicke's attitude come about? Undoubtedly, the vast quantities of wine and Schnaps he has been drinking, together with the eerie effect created by Kragler's entry (a rush of wind and guttering candles being of course part of the traditional trappings of a ghost's appearance) fire his imagination at this point, but the seeds of this change were sown already in Act I. His comments during the meal indicate that he is apprehensive about the situation in the city:

Balicke (hebt sein Glas) Das Wohl des Brautpaars!
(Anstossend) Die Zeiten sind unsicher. Der Krieg zu Ende. Das Schweinefleisch ist zu fett, Amalie! Die Demobilisation schwemmt Unordnung, Gier, viehische Entmenschung in die Casen friedlicher Arbeit.

Murk An Geschosskörben, prost! prost, Anna!

Balicke Unsichere Existenzen mehren sich, dunkle Ehrenmänner. Die Regierung bekämpft zu lau die Aasgeier des Umsturzes. (Entfaltet ein Zeitungsblatt.) Die aufgepeitschten Massen sind ohne Ideale. Das Schlimmste aber, ich kann es hier sagen, die Frontsoldaten, verwilderte, verlotterte, der Arbeit entwöhnte Abenteurer, denen nichts mehr heilig ist. (T 20)

Here already Balicke's fears about the returning soldiery are expressed in the hysterical cliches of the clearly right-wing newspapers he turns to for support. This fear is intensified, although

he does not want to admit it, when Murk expresses his apprehensions that Spartacus might take advantage of the situation:

Murk Mir kommt grad eine komische Idee, weisst du: Spartakus...

Balicke Unsinn, gibt's bei uns gar nicht! (Wendet sich aber doch ab, unangenehm berührt.) (T 19)

The next push in the same direction comes when the journalist Babusch joins the party:

Babusch (trottelt herein) Kinder, ihr seid gut verschanzi vor dem roten Hexensabbat! Spartakus mobilisiert. Die Verhandlungen sind abgebrochen. In 24 Stunden Artilleriefueher ueber Berlin! (T 20)

Babusch is one of the men responsible for bringing the lurid slogans into circulation which, as has been seen already, strengthen the tendency to hysteria in otherwise quite cynical men like Balicke.⁶ In this connection one of the expressions he uses is particularly interesting, namely his mention of the "roten Hexensabbat", a phrase which is clearly closely related to the "Gespenst des Kommunismus", the bogey haunting the minds of Europe's ruling classes which Marx and Engels promised to replace with the reality of the "Manifest der Partei selbst".⁷ Although the phrase "Gespenst des Kommunismus" is never actually used in the play, it is clearly just this notion that is in Balicke's mind when he too comes to refer to Kragler as a "Gespenst". In his eyes the returning soldier represents a threat both to his own personal happiness and, closely related to this, to the existing social order:

Balicke (schwillt auf, weit weg) Sind Sie besoffen? Habenichts! Anarchist! Frontsoldat! Sie Seerueber! Sie Zibebengespenst! Wo haben Sie Ihr Bettlaken? (T 33)⁸

Murk also alludes to this same notion of the "spectre of Communism" when supporters of Spartacus are heard passing outside the café:

(Dann langsam anwachsend Stampfschritt draussen.
Johlen. Pfeifen. Singen. Trommeln. Das Stampfen
und Johlen dauert an)

(---)

Balicke (setzt sich schwer) Spartakus! Ihre Freunde,
Herr Andreas Kragler! Ihre dunklen Kumpane!
Ihre Genossen, die in den Zeitungsvierteln
brüllen und in die Cafés pfeifen. Nach Mord
und Brand riechen. (...)

Murk Mach die Gardine zu! Gespenster! (T 47)

Kragler determinedly ignores the mixture of fear and anger evinced by Balicke. His only concern is to speak with Anna. This becomes possible when Babusch ushers the others out to leave him alone with her for a while. During their conversation he is very conscious of the difficulty of communicating with her:

Kragler Ich kann nimmer gut reden mit dir. Ich habe
eine Negersprache im Hals.

Anna Ja.

Kragler Gib mir deine Hand. Meinst du, ich bin ein
Gespenst? Komm her zu mir, gib mir deine Hand.
Willst du nicht herkommen?

Anna Willst du sie?

Kragler Gib sie mir. Jetzt bin ich kein Gespenst mehr. (T 36)

For Kragler the word "Gespenst" means something quite different from what Balicke and Murk understand by it. For him it signifies loss of selfhood as a result of his terrible war experiences:

Kragler Anna! Anna! Was tue ich? Schwindelnd über
dem Meer voll Leichen: Mich ersäuft es nicht.
Rollend in den dunklen Viehwägen südlich: Mir
kann nichts geschehen. Brennend im feurigen
Ofen: Ich selbst brenne heisser. Einer wird
irr in der Sonne: Ich bin's nicht. Zwei fallen
ins Wasserloch: Ich schlafe weiter. Ich
schiess Neger. Ich fresse Gras. Ich bin ein
Gespenst. (T 47)

Because Kragler and his adversaries have quite different perspectives on the situation, the action in Act II mainly consists of "Aneinandervorbeireden", the irony of which lies in the fact that both parties use the same word "Gespenst" to express their quite different fears. While Murk and Balicke, filled with a mixture of fear and anger, shower insults on Kragler, Kragler, worried only about his relationship with Anna, ignores them in his desperate attempt to communicate with her. It is fortunate for Murk and Balicke that Kragler is not the "Anarchist" or "Seeräuber" they take him to be, for if he were, their quite irrational, hysterical persistence in throwing insults at him would seem to be just the thing to provoke him into the very violence they fear. Towards the end of the act, Kragler seems to be gaining control of the situation. But then comes a severe blow to his slowly returning self-confidence: Anna, guilty about being pregnant by Murk, refuses to go away with him. Kragler is so taken aback by this that Balicke, his hysteria giving way once more to cynicism, is able to have him thrown out of the café.

The action in these first two acts follows quite closely the main lines of the traditional tale it travesties. Traditionally the soldier returns as a ghost, but is taken for a real person; in Trommeln in der Nacht Kragler is a real person who on no account wants to be treated as a ghost, but who finds to his distress that others keep trying to force him into just such a role. Traditionally the ghost carries off his willing bride without any difficulty; in Trommeln Kragler has first to plead with Anna to go away with him, and, when she refuses to go, it is he who is physically carried off. It is typical of the rather loose construction of the play that this

central motif, which ironically binds together Kragler's existential perspective with the social perspective of the others, does not reappear until the end of the fourth act.

Early reviewers of Trommeln in der Nacht noted a marked loss of impetus in the action in the third and fourth acts.⁹ Brecht himself tacitly admitted the weakness of Act III when he remarked in his "Glosse für die Bühne", "Der dritte Akt kann, wenn er nicht fliegend und musikalisch wirkt und das Tempo beschwingt, ausgelassen werden" (T8). This act only advances the action in so far as it shows that Anna has decided to abandon Murk and follow Kragler. Structurally, the act is a variation on the main theme of the work, namely the conflict between romanticism on the one hand and sobriety or cynicism on the other. Here romanticism is embodied in the attitudes of Anna and Manke, the "expressionist" waiter from the Picadillybar who has taken the fate of the lovers to heart.¹⁰ The opposite attitude is taken by Murk and Babusch. Despite this thematic link, however, the act gives the impression of being superfluous. The conflict between romanticism and rationality here lacks the interest and intensity it had in the second act, where Kragler was subjected to the opposing pulls of both tendencies, and his whole future happiness depended on the outcome of the conflict.

The fourth act brings some improvement in this respect, in as much as Kragler is here put back at the centre of the action and attention is directed once more to the struggle going on in him between his characteristic tendency to view things calmly, a trait symbolised by his pipe-smoking, and the temptations of romanticism, which in his case takes the form of indulging in grandiose self-pity. In "Glubbs Schnapsdestille" Kragler drinks heavily and

recounts his experiences in Africa. As he does so, he alternates between periods of calm and periods of excited, bitter self-pity. His audience is a mixture of characters who respond to his "Geschichte" with evident emotional involvement and others who are more ironic:

Kragler (Er setzt sich, er redet immer schwerer und langsamer, trinkt viel, jetzt macht er eine Pause und sagt ruhig) Ihr müsst nicht denken, ich sei voll Gier gewesen und so und hätte gedacht, sie ist früh nach den Kasernen gegangen und hat sonst nichts getan. Ich hatte mir einen Plan ausgedacht, sie sollte sich an mich wieder gewöhnen, denn ich war ein Gespenst geworden. Das ist so. (Er trinkt. Man hört den Wind. Der besoffene Mensch schzt vor Interesse.)

Kragler (ruhig) Sie war nicht zu Hause, als ich kam.

Glubb Nein, das war sie nicht. Wirklich nicht.

Bulltrotter Na und?

Der besoffene Mensch War sie weg? Wo war sie?

Kragler Der Schnaps, der war gesoffen, und die Neger, die sind gestorben, und der Regenschirm, der ist zugeklappt, und die Fliege, die Fliege, die ist weggeflogen. (Sieht vor sich hin.) Ich habe ihn verteidigt. Er hat den Schnaps geschickt für die Stiere und den Regenschirm, und die Fliege hat er leben lassen, dass wir's nicht satt kriegten. (Zeigt mit dem Finger, als sähe er ihn.) Und jetzt läuft er in der Sonne, der andere. Und jetzt liegt er im Bett, und ihr zieht den Hut ab, wenn er kommt und er zieht euch die Hüte ab, und meine Frau liegt in seinem Bett. (T 71 - 72)

The tension in Kragler between calmness and excited self-pity results in a tone of bitter irony in his descriptions of his sufferings:

Kragler Ich habe die Fliege! Ich muss nur Schnaps haben, dann ertrinkt sie darin! Kann man das Militär abschaffen oder den lieben Gott? Kann man es abschaffen, dass es Leiden gibt und die Qualen, die die Menschen den Teufel gelehrt haben? Man kann es nicht abschaffen, aber man kann trinken und schlafen auch auf den Steinen. Denen, die schlafen, das merkt euch, müssen alle Dinge zum Besten dienen, das steht im Katechismus, das müsst ihr glauben! Darum trinkt und macht

die Türe zu und lasst den Wind nicht herein,
den es auch friert, sondern tut das Holz
vor. Lasst die Gespenster nicht herein.
Es friert sie.

Glubb Ach, Bruder Artillerist, dir ist ein kleines
Unrecht geschehen.

Kragler Hast du Unrecht gesagt, Bruder roter Herr?
Was für ein Wort das ist! Unrecht! Macht
euchs bequem auf dem Stern, es ist kalt hier
und etwas finster, roter Herr, und keine Zeit
für das Unrecht, die Welt ist zu alt für die
bessere Zeit und Schnaps ist billiger und der
Himmel ist vermietet, meine Lieben. (T 74-75)

Like Heine's, Kragler's self-pity is not lessened by being expressed in an ironic manner; indeed, the opposite is the case. The romantic element in his attitude to his situation comes out even more strongly at the end of the act. Glubb, the revolutionary publican, has succeeded in playing down the importance of Kragler's individual "Geschichte" so as to divert the sympathy of the assembled company to the cause of the revolution. When Kragler decides to join them, however, he does so with the same mixture of irony and pathos he has shown throughout the act. His decision to join in the revolution is little more than a nihilistic romantic gesture, an opportunity for a suicide in the grand manner:

Kragler Pfeift es schon wieder? (Duckt sich.) Ist es
Spass? Auf die Barrikaden mit dem Gespenst!
(Steht fest, zieht tief Luft ein.) Schlussmachen
ist besser als Schnaps. Es ist kein Spass.
Verschwinden ist besser als schlafen. (T 78)

Only in one phrase ("Oben in der Frühe") does he show any positive commitment to the fighting, and even this is quickly followed by a succession of remarks and symbolic gestures which stress the nihilistic element in his decision to join:

Kragler (auf dem Stuhl, hantiert an der Lampe, einem
vorsintflutiglichen Fossil.) Jetzt pfeift es
wieder, meine Lieben. Oben in der Frühe oder

wie ersäufte Katzen auf dem Asphalt.

Die Anderen (schreien) Oben in der Fröh, Andree!

Kragler (löscht die Lampe aus) Oder wie ersäufte Katzen!

Manke Vorwärts, Auguste!

Der besoffene Mensch (deutet mit dem Finger auf Marie)
Eine Kanaille engelsgut schwamm mit ihm durch die Tränenflut.

Kragler (lässt sich herabgleiten) Ich bin ein Leichnam, den könnt ihr haben! (Bös.) Her mit euch, an die Brust mit euch, in die Zeitungen mit uns. (T 79)

The reappearance of the ghost motif ("Auf die Barrikaden mit dem Gespenst") at this point is important, for it makes clear the personal, existential nature of Kragler's reasons for participating in the fighting. It also underlines the fact that romantic pathos, albeit of the self-ironic, obliquely expressed variety has gained the upper hand in the hero's mind by the end of the act.

Act V brings Kragler's reunion with Anna and his parting from the revolutionaries. Even before his meeting with Anna Kragler has already lost interest in the romantic-heroic gesture which he saw himself making in joining the revolution, and is inclined instead to take the more direct course of simply hanging himself: "Ich bin heiser. Das Afrika wächst mir zum Halse heraus. Ich hänge mich auf" (T 81). On seeing Anna, however, his first impulse is to fall back on the notion of going along with the revolutionaries, possibly because the sight of her makes him feel the need to give his otherwise wasted life a semblance of meaning:

Glubb Kannst du dich nicht morgen aufhängen und jetzt mit in die Zeitung gehen?

Kragler (stiert auf Anna hin) Ja. (T 81)

Yet Anna is really more important to him than the revolution. When he hears that she is pregnant, the shock almost makes him take

refuge in another romantic gesture, namely that of committing a crime of passion:

Kragler Mein Hals ist hin von dem Geschrei, aber mein
Messer ist noch ganz, du! (T 87)

Anna's love of melodrama leads her in turn to exaggerate the extent to which her feelings toward Kragler have changed, in order to provoke him into just such a theatrical act of revenge:

Anna Und ich habe dich ganz und gar vergessen,
trotz der Photographie, mit Haut und Haar.

Kragler Halt das Maul!

Anna Vergessen! Vergessen!

Kragler Und ich liebe dich. Soll ich dich mit dem
Messer holen?

Anna Ja, hol mich. Ja, mit dem Messer! (T 92)

Both are jerked out of this mood of romantic hysteria when the other revolutionaries attempt to murder Anna simply in order to destroy Kragler's reason for not going on with the revolution. In the ensuing turmoil the deeper feelings of the couple force their way through the clutter of clichés which have obscured or distorted these feelings up till now:

Auguste Ja, holt ihm das Mensch weg!

Manke Eine Hand in den Hals!

Auguste Unters Wasser, das Schiebensch!

Anna Andree!

Kragler Hände weg. (...) Anna! (T92-93)

Having won back Anna, Kragler has no further interest in the revolution, which he now scorns as a pointless romanticisation of reality:

Kragler Fast erstickt seid ihr in euren Tränen über mich
und ich habe nur mein Hemd gewaschen mit euren
Tränen! Mein Fleisch soll im Rinnstein verwesen,
dass eure Idee in den Himmel kommt? Seid ihr
besoffen?

Anna Andree! Es macht nichts!

Kragler (sieht ihr nicht ins Gesicht, trollt sich herum, langt sich an den Hals.) Ich hab's bis zum Hals. (Er lacht ärgerlich.) Es ist gewöhnliches Theater. Es sind Bretter und ein Papiermond und dahinter die Fleischbank, die allein ist leibhaftig. (Er läuft wieder herum, die Arme hängend bis zum Boden und so fischt er die Trommel aus der Schnapskneipe.) Sie haben ihre Trommel liegen lassen. (Er haut drauf.) Der halbverfaulte Liebhaber oder die Macht der Liebe, das Blutbad im Zeitungsviertel oder Rechtfertigung eines Mannes durch sich selbst, der Pfahl im Fleisch oder der Tiger im Morgengrauen. (T 93-94)

The phrase "der halbverfaulte Liebhaber", which is the final echo of the central ghost-motif indicates that Kragler's disillusioned rejection both of revolution and of any lofty notion of love is the culmination of Brecht's travesty of the romantic tale of the ghostly soldier who returns to avenge his betrayal.

Kragler's break with the romantic tendencies which have led him and some of his companions into joining the revolution is not made without some difficulty. Although he now mocks the revolution and adopts a defiantly cynical pose, he clearly feels considerable contempt for his own willingness to compromise with the imperfections of reality:

Kragler Der Dudelsack pfeift, die armen Leute sterben im Zeitungsviertel, die Häuser fallen auf sie, der Morgen graut, sie liegen wie erschufte Katzen auf dem Asphalt, ich bin ein Schwein und das Schwein geht heim. (Er zieht den Atem ein.) Ich ziehe ein frisches Hemd an, meine Haut habe ich noch, meinen Rock ziehe ich aus, meine Stiefel fette ich ein. (Lacht bössartig.) Das Geschrei ist alles vorbei, morgen früh, aber ich liege im Bett morgen früh und vervielfältige mich, dass ich nicht aussterbe. (Trommel.) Glotzt nicht so romantisch! Ihr Wucherer! (Trommel.) Ihr Halsabschneider! (Aus vollem Halse lachend, fast erstickend.) Ihr blutdürstigen Feiglinge, ihr! (Sein Gelächter bleibt stecken im Hals, er kann nicht mehr, er tirkelt (sic!) herum, schmeisst die Trommel nach dem Mond, der ein Lampion war, und die Trommel und der Mond fallen in den Fluss,

der kein Wasser hat. Aber der Mann geht zu der Frau und geht heim.) Besoffenheit und Kinderei. Jetzt kommt das Bett, das grosse, weisse breite Bett, komm! (T 95)

The words "ich bin ein Schwein und das Schwein geht heim" are crucially important for the meaning of the play. In calling himself a "Schwein" Kragler is echoing the words of Auguste who threw this insult at him when he flatly refused to go any further with the others (T 91). The fact that this is a quotation of something said by another character is important, for it makes Kragler's statement double-edged, both a confirmation of Auguste's opinion and a rejection of it. Kragler certainly sees factors in the situation which Auguste and the others cannot or will not recognise, in particular, the fact that the revolutionaries are in a quite hopeless military position. This is made clear when two passers-by mention that the army is bringing in artillery:

Der Eine Jetzt sind sie in den Zeitungen!

Der Andere Und schon fährt die Artillerie auf.

Der Eine Jetzt wird alles anders.

Der Andere Es geht viel zu langsam, es sind viel zu wenig.

Der Eine Viele sind unterwegs.

Der Andere Viel zu spät. (T 84-85)

In historical reality it was the army's use of artillery which was the deciding factor in the battle for the "Zeitungsviertel".¹¹ To stress the importance of the artillery, Brecht alludes to it again later in the scene when an "aufgeputzte Frauenperson" with unconscious irony asks, with reference to Kragler, "Ist das der Artillerist, auf den die aus der Friedrichstadt warten?" (T 90).¹² After his reunion with Anna, Kragler has simply no desire to die an utterly fruitless death on the barricades:

Kragler Schmeisst Steine auf mich, hier stehe ich:
ich kann das Hemd ausziehen für euch, aber
den Hals hinhalten ans Messer, das will ich
nicht. (T 88)

The others pay absolutely no heed to his warning that to go further
will mean certain death; indeed they seem to welcome this:

Kragler (zu Glubb) Mensch! Du läufst an die Wand und
rauchst dabei! Ich sehe dich an der Wand vor
der Dämmerung, seht ihr denn nicht wie grau und
glasig er dort steht an der Wand? Riecht ihr
nichts an ihm? Was soll aus euch werden, geht
heim!

Auguste (lacht)

Glubb Ach, sie werden kleine Wunden bekommen im Hals
oder auf der Brust, alles ordentlich, sie bekom-
men Zettel mit Nummern auf die Brust geheftet,
wenn sie steif sind, nicht wie erschufte Katzen,
eher wie solche, denen ein kleines Unrecht
geschehen ist.

Kragler Hör auf.

Glubb Ein wenig bettelhäftig, nicht?

Kragler Mensch, sie schiessen dich schwarz in deine Brust!
Was wird mit deiner Brust sein?

Glubb (sieht ihn kühl an) Da werden die Ratten wohnen.
(T 89-90)

The hopelessness of the situation allows no choice to commonsense
but to act as a so-called "swine" and to refuse to join the struggle
of the "arme Leute". This is part of what is implied when Kragler
repeats Auguste's verdict with, as it were, imaginary quotation
marks around the word "Schwein". That he should incorporate her
verdict, however, into a direct statement ("Ich bin ein Schwein")
also implies that he substantially accepts her judgement: he knows
that even if something could be gained for the "arme Leute" by his
death, he would be unwilling to sacrifice his future with Anna for
their sake. That he would have a bad conscience about this, he
freely admits. Yet, his self-accusation also contains a confession

that he has a bad conscience about something else. When Kragler joined the revolution he did so mainly for nihilistic-romantic reasons. Now that he has regained Anna, he has lost his original cause for despair. When he defends himself against Auguste he is arguing that he is a "swine" only in the eyes of someone who takes a romantic, melodramatic view of life. On the other hand, because Kragler knows that he is himself sympathetic to this kind of emotionalism, he is again simultaneously acknowledging the rightness of Auguste's verdict on him. What he means when he says, "Ich bin ein Schwein und das Schwein geht heim" is made even more complicated by the fact that he had already used this word about himself when describing to Anna how he had endured great suffering and humiliation in the hope of being reunited with her:

Kragler Und dich wollte ich sehen! Jetzt läge ich wo ich hingehöre, hätte Wind im Schädel, hätte Staub im Munde und wüsste nichts. Aber das wollte ich noch sehen. Ich tats nicht billiger. Ich habe Treber gefressen. Die waren bitter. Ich bin aus dem Lehmloch gekrochen auf allen Vieren. Das war witzig! Ich Schwein! (T 83)

Here again, the word has a double value. On the one hand, it expresses Kragler's insight into life as a mere biological process, which he has gained from existing for so long on the border of death in the prisoner of war camp. On the other hand, it expresses a mixture of distinctly human anger and self-disgust at having been willing to continue existing under such inhuman conditions for what has since proved to be an insubstantial dream, and one which was possibly only sexual in origin anyway. In short, Kragler's self-designation as a "Schwein" is far from being a simple condemnation or a simple defence of his decision to part company with the other revolutionaries.

Kragler's complex, contradictory view of the revolution and of his own role in it, evidently reflects Brecht's own mixture of attitudes. He gives particular authority to Kragler's attitude by an unusual piece of stage business. After his angry speech addressed directly to the audience, Kragler knocks down the red lantern which has hitherto symbolised his supposed revolutionary significance, and thus dismisses the revolution literally as "gewöhnliches Theater" (T 94). In this moment Kragler is given increased stage reality in comparison with all that surrounds him: the literal artificiality of the moon symbolises the unreality of the expectations and attitudes it has symbolised. As a further sign of approval of Kragler's attitude, the playwright has the lovers walk off into a rosy dawn: "Ein kleines Fähnchen, Fröhrot im morgengrauen rauchigen Himmel" (T 95), thus suggesting that in the greyness of their present disillusioned acceptance of an imperfect world there is hope for a better future.¹³ By ending the play in this sentimental manner, Brecht betrays the fact that he is not wholly free of the very tendency to colour subjectively the reality which he has attacked in the course of the work. After railing against the romanticism of the revolutionaries he goes to the opposite extreme of romanticising the everyday reality against which they were in revolt. A relatively minor inconsistency in the transition from Act IV to Act V provides more evidence of the divisions in the author's mind. In Act IV it is quite clearly Glubb who first goads Kragler and the others into joining the revolution:

Glubb (zu Kragler, der viel ruhiger ist) Trink nur!
Einige draussen trommeln ja schon und jetzt
schiessen sie sogar. Man hört es ganz gut!
Wenn man nur etwas Maul hält. Sie schiessen
schon für dich. Ja, Himmel und Hölle machen
Revolution, Mensch, und du sollst nicht einmal

Kragler's complex, contradictory view of the revolution and of his own role in it, evidently reflects Brecht's own mixture of attitudes. He gives particular authority to Kragler's attitude by an unusual piece of stage business. After his angry speech addressed directly to the audience, Kragler knocks down the red lantern which has hitherto symbolised his supposed revolutionary significance, and thus dismisses the revolution literally as "gewöhnliches Theater" (T 94). In this moment Kragler is given increased stage reality in comparison with all that surrounds him: the literal artificiality of the moon symbolises the unreality of the expectations and attitudes it has symbolised. As a further sign of approval of Kragler's attitude, the playwright has the lovers walk off into a rosy dawn: "Ein kleines Fähnchen, Frührot im morgengrauen rauchigen Himmel" (T 95), thus suggesting that in the greyness of their present disillusioned acceptance of an imperfect world there is hope for a better future.¹³ By ending the play in this sentimental manner, Brecht betrays the fact that he is not wholly free of the very tendency to colour subjectively the reality which he has attacked in the course of the work. After railing against the romanticism of the revolutionaries he goes to the opposite extreme of romanticising the everyday reality against which they were in revolt. A relatively minor inconsistency in the transition from Act IV to Act V provides more evidence of the divisions in the author's mind. In Act IV it is quite clearly Glubb who first goads Kragler and the others into joining the revolution:

Glubb (zu Kragler, der viel ruhiger ist) Trink nur!
Einige draussen trommeln ja schon und jetzt
schiessen sie sogar. Man hört es ganz gut!
Wenn man nur etwas Maul hält. Sie schiessen
schon für dich. Ja, Himmel und Hölle machen
Revolution, Mensch, und du sollst nicht einmal

Schnaps trinken. Dir ist ein kleines Unrecht geschehen. Sage ja und schlucke es. Halte dich ruhig, wenn sie dir die Haut abzieh'n, sonst geht sie entzwei, es ist deine einzige. (Stellt ein Glas nach hinten, ruhig.) An die Maschinengewehre mit euch!

Einige In die Zeitungen! (T 76-77)

But in Act V it is Kragler who is accused of persuading the others to follow him:

Glubb Einige von uns hätten gern noch einige Whiskys getrunken, aber du warst dagegen. Einige wären gern einmal in einem Bett gelegen, aber du hattest kein Bett und so wurde es auch nichts aus dem Virginienrauchen. Das ist schade. (T 87)

By allowing Glubb to distort the true facts like this, Brecht makes Kragler appear to have at least an obligation of honour towards his revolutionary companions. In this way he counterbalances Kragler's quite sound arguments for not going further with them, with an allegation of shabby disloyalty. He thus betrays the division of loyalties in his own mind between the claims of common sense on the one hand, and an attachment to certain romantic values on the other.

In his review of the play's first production H. Ihering criticised Brecht for making certain cuts in the last act which made the part of Kragler difficult to play well:

Den gefährlichen Schluss: der Kriegsgefangene wendet sich von der Revolution ab und seiner abgefallenen Braut zu, konnte er noch nicht tragen. Vielleicht lag das aber auch an unglücklichen, von Brecht selbst veranlassten Strichen und an einem hier etwas verwischten Arrangement.¹⁴

In the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" there is a text of the play which contains a number of important lines which do not appear in the first printed version. It seems quite probable that these "extra" lines are the ones referred to by Ihering.¹⁵ The effect of these

lines is to simplify slightly the last act by giving Kragler stronger arguments to defend his refusal to go on with the revolution. In the first place, Brecht makes Kragler's decision more morally respectable by giving him the defence that Anna needs his help as much as anyone else:

Kragler Jeder weiss, wieviel Elende verrecken und hilft, wenn er die Hände frei hat. Aber ich bin selber am Abschnappen und muss alles zusammenhalten. Mein Weib hat ein Kind.¹⁶

To enhance the realism of the hero's attitude, Glubb is here made to appear more of a blind idealist:

Glubb Gott hat dir deine Frau hingeworfen, halb zerfleischt und mit fremder Fracht im Leib, dass du über sie wegtrittst, und du kommst nicht hinüber? Ich sage dir: Hundert Frauen tun dir nichts, wenn du rein bist. Sie sind weniger als eine Idee, sie führen nur irre. Mir haben sie meinen Schnaps in die Gosse laufen lassen, das hat mich wirre gemacht im Kopf und es genügt auch. Wenn sie mir hundert Schnapsfabriken schenken, wo es doch zwei ganz kleine Fässer waren, ich spie ihnen ins Gesicht für den Schnaps, der hinunterfloss und nicht wiederkommt. Ich reisse ihre Därme aus für den Schnaps. Ich verbrenne ihre Häuser für den Schnaps, der hinunterlief. Ich sage dir, Andree, es kommt auf die Idee an.

Kragler (verbissen und zornig) Nein, das kommt es nicht!¹⁷

To draw attention to the naiveté of Glubb's idealism, Brecht also has him leave the stage, in this version of the play, singing the closing lines of the hymn "Ein feste Burg".¹⁸ Kragler, on the other hand, is presented as a man of some political intelligence, aware of the extent to which the revolutionaries' minds have been manipulated by the newspapers they read.¹⁹ There are a number of remarks to this effect which are not included in the first edition of the work. In the following quotations the relevant omissions from the later printed text have been underlined:

- a) Kragler Fast erstickt, fast erstickt seid ihr zuerst in euren Tränen über meine Geschichte und jetzt wollt ihr mich partout in die Zeitungen schleifen und erschossen sehen! Nur weil ihr eure Schädel vollgepfropft mit Zeitungen habt und Romanen, weil ihr noch die Oper im Blut habt!²⁰
- b) Kragler Wie die Kinder laufen sie zu ihren Begräbnissen! Krampf! Ich habe es bis daher (langt sich an den Hals). Wie sie laufen, Klösse, Engel, den Wind im Hintern und die Papierbänder hängen ihnen noch aus den Mäulern! (...) Das Geschrei und der rote Mond, den sie aufgehängt haben über die Zeitungen: Das ist alles Volksbetrug! (lacht schallend) Das ist alles vorbei morgen früh aber ich liege im Bett morgen früh und vervielfältige mich, dass ich nicht aussterbe. Bin ich ein Bariton? (...) Wollt ihr ihnen helfen? Reisst ihnen die Phrasen aus dem Hals!²¹

These differences only shift the balance in favour of Kragler, but do not eliminate the overall ambivalence of the work. Yet it is significant that Brecht chose to have the more ambivalent of the two versions printed.

ooo000ooo

Almost inevitably, a play dealing with actual historical events invites a comparison of the fictional rendering of events with the real historical situation. While admitting that Brecht had recorded certain important features of the 1918 revolution, E. Schumacher criticises the dramatist's "inability" to penetrate to the essence of the historical situation:

Der junge Brecht hielt als scharfer Beobachter die am massenhaftesten auftretende und die eindrucksvollste Erscheinung der deutschen Revolution fest: das "Heimgehen" der Soldaten und den ersten wirklichen Zusammenprall von Revolution und Konterrevolution, der seinen Höhepunkt in den Kämpfen um das Berliner Zeitungsviertel hatte. Brecht war damit naiver Realist auf der Grundlage des weltanschaulichen Materialismus, aber noch kein dialektischer und historischer Materialist. Sein Materialismus hob ihn weit über alle expressionistische "O-Mensch" - Dramatik hinaus, ja liess ihn sogar Typisches der objektiven gesellschaftlichen

Entwicklung treffen, aber andererseits an der Oberfläche der Erscheinungen beharren. Brecht vermochte noch nicht, den Kern der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung blosszulegen und zu gestalten, nämlich die Auseinandersetzung der bewussten revolutionären Kräfte mit ihren Gegnern und mit sich selber.²²

It is only possible to endorse Schumacher's judgement if one shares his belief that the activities of the most radical left-wing groups - Spartacus and the "revolutionären Obleute" - represented the "Kern der gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung". The evidence and conclusions of a number of historians of the period suggest that such a view is not defensible. Interestingly enough, O.K. Flechtheim also writes of the "Kern" of the situation, but understands this quite differently from Schumacher:

Welche Rolle hatte nun der Spartakusbund und die Bremer Linken, die Vorläufer der späteren KPD, im Prozess der deutschen Revolution gespielt? Zur Beantwortung dieser Frage ist zunächst die Feststellung zu machen, dass es bei der Novemberrevolution im wesentlichen um eine spontane Massenbewegung gehandelt hat. Innenpolitisch war die Bewegung seit den Oktoberreformen in erster Linie gegen die Monarchie, den Kaiser und die 20 Bundesfürsten gerichtet, aussenpolitisch gegen die Fortführung des Krieges. Da die Massen weitergehende Zielvorstellungen nicht hatten, hätte normalerweise die Führung in der Hand der SPD liegen müssen. Dies war aber nicht der Fall, da die SPD sogar längst nicht mehr eine radikal bürgerlich-revolutionäre Partei war, vielmehr seit dem Oktober 1918 eine konservative Regierungspartei. Die Massen unterschieden sich also nicht so sehr in der politischen Zielsetzung von der SPD und den anderen Koalitionsparteien als vielmehr in der Taktik. Seit 1917 hatten sie nämlich gelernt, zur direkten Aktion gegen die Obrigkeiten Zuflucht zu nehmen. (...)

Bei dieser Sachlage konnte sich zwar die SPD immer wieder als Verbindungsglied zwischen der revolutionären Masse und der Militärdiktatur einschalten und ausserstfalls auch die USPD als die Partei der radikalbürgerlichen Revolution vorübergehenden und stellenweisen Einfluss gewinnen. Die radikale Linke hingegen war von vornherein verurteilt, die Rolle des fünften Rades am Wagen der bürgerlichen Revolution zu spielen.²³

So schien die revolutionäre Massenbewegung in Berlin stark und breit genug, im Augenblick des Zusammenbruchs des alten Regimes neben Scheidemann Liebkecht in die Höhe zu

tragen und zu ihrem Sprecher zu machen. Sobald aber der revolutionäre Rausch verklungen war und der republikanische Alltag wieder in seine Rechte einzutreten begann, zeigte es sich nur zu klar, dass die sozialistische-diktatorische Zielsetzung von Liebknecht und Spartakus durchaus nicht den Vorstellungen und Wunschbildern der breiten Massen der Arbeiter, geschweige denn der Soldaten, Bauern und Kleinbürger, entsprach. Der weitere historische Verlauf hat den Beweis erbracht, dass trotz allem sozialistischen Schein die Novemberrevolution eine bürgerliche Revolution gewesen ist, deren Antriebskräfte so schwach waren, dass nicht einmal eine radikale Demokratisierung der politisch-sozialen Realität gelingen sollte - geschweige denn eine sozialistische Umgestaltung der Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Andererseits hatte die radikale Linke während des Krieges, insbesondere aber seit der Oktoberrevolution, immer mehr ihre radikal-demokratischen Intentionen zugunsten von radikal-sozialistischen Zielsetzungen abgestreift, d.h. also sich in einem Tempo und in einer Richtung entwickelt, die sie zur Erfüllung radikal-demokratischer Funktionen denkbar ungeeignet gemacht hatte. In einer Revolution aber, die selbst auf ihrem Höhepunkt ausserstenfalls ganz gemässigt sozialistische Ideale hatte, konnte eine bereits weitgehend "bolschewisierte" Gruppe keine Rolle spielen - jedenfalls keine führende und bestimmende! ²⁴

E. Kolb also argues that Spartacus was a minority group whose objectives were not shared by the mass of the war-weary population:

Nach vier Kriegsjahren war das Verlangen nach innerer Ruhe übermächtig; die Spartakusgruppe, die eine Steigerung der Unruhe anstrebte, musste bei diesen ruhebedürftigen Massen auf erbitterte Feindschaft und Ablehnung stossen. ²⁵

A. Rosenberg stresses the lack of revolutionary enthusiasm amongst the soldiers in particular:

Ein Teil der Soldaten wollte sich im fünften Kriegsjahr, nach all dem Hungern und Leiden, nicht mehr für eine Sache opfern, die sowieso völlig und rettungslos verloren schien. Aber darum wurde die Masse der Frontsoldaten noch lange nicht zu bewussten Revolutionären. Auflehnungen gegen die Offiziere kamen nur vereinzelt vor, und nach der Revolution haben sich die Fronttruppen aufs schärfste gegen das gewandt, was man damals als "Spartakismus" bezeichnete. ²⁶

It would seem, then, that Brecht, by concentrating on the attitudes of the common man rather than on the internal problems of the radical left, had in fact grasped quite correctly what was the "nucleus" of historical situation.

It is understandable that Brecht, as a dramatist, should have been more interested in the attitudes underlying, shaping and being shaped by the events than in giving a close and accurate record of the events themselves. Although the action purports to take place in the course of a night in November 1918 (T7), the events forming the background of the action, namely the battles in the newspaper district of Berlin, did not take place historically until January 1919. On the other hand, Brecht does seem to have been justified to some extent in characterising the attitudes of bourgeois and revolutionaries alike as hysterical. One historian of the period, H. Müller-Franken, makes this comment on the emotionalism of the writing in Die Rote Fahne, the organ of the Spartacists:

Wer durch die Brille der Roten Fahne sah, bemerkte in Deutschland nichts als Gegenrevolution. Aufgabe der Roten Fahne schien es zu sein, diese Gegenrevolution mit einem grösstmöglichen Aufwand von Worten zu vernichten. In Wirklichkeit wurden die antirevolutionären Tendenzen durch diese tägliche blutrünstige Propaganda nur genährt.²⁷

Otto Braun also argues that the propaganda of the radical left only served to create a widespread fear of Bolshevism, a fear which was immediately nourished by the propaganda of certain radical right-wing groups:

Diese Kreise hatten ihr Treiben, das auf die rücksichtslose Wahrnehmung ihrer wirtschaftlichen Interessen und auf den Sturz der demokratischen Republik gerichtet war, in schlauer Berechnung als "Schutz gegen den Bolschewismus" getarnt. Zugeben muss ich, dass ihnen dieser Trick durch die alles über den russischen Leisten schlagende, unsinnige Propagierung einer Weltrevolution und durch das revolutionäre Bramarbasieren der von Moskau inspirierten Kommunisten sehr erleichtert wurde.²⁸

The hysterical quality of the propaganda issuing from both right and left can be easily illustrated. In Ludwig Renn's novel Nachkrieg, a returning soldier comes across a poster in the street:

Ich ging durch die feuchtkalte Nacht nach Hause.
Wenige Laternen brannten, weil es zuwenig Kohlen gab.
An einer Litfasssäule klebte ein grosses neues Plakat
in blutigen Farben. Ein Mensch mit bleckenden Zähnen
erstach einen andern von hinten. Darunter stand:

Das ist das Gesicht des Bolschewismus!
Mord! Raub! Entrechtung! Zügellosigkeit!

Klein stand in der rechten unteren Ecke: Antibolsche-
wistische Liga.²⁹

The following sample of Liebknecht's rhetoric, published in the
Rote Fahne immediately after the defeat of the revolutionaries in
the newspaper district, will serve to illustrate the kind of
emotionalism on the left wing which is satirized in Trommeln in der
Nacht:

Die Besiegten der blutigen Januarwochen, sie haben
ruhmvoll bestanden; sie haben um Grosses gestritten, um
edelste Ziele der leidenden Menschheit, um geistige und
materielle Erlösung der darbenden Massen; sie haben um
Heiliges Blut vergossen, das so geheiligt wurde. Und aus
jedem Tropfen dieses Blutes, dieser Drachensaat für die
Siege von heute, werden den Gefallenen Rächer entstehen,
aus jeder zerfetzten Fiber neue Kämpfer der hohen Sache,
die ewig ist und unvergänglich wie das Firmament.³⁰

During the revolutionary period, then, hysteria evidently
affected people of quite different political persuasions. Brecht
incorporates this observation into the structure of Trommeln by
exposing Kragler first to the emotionalism of the bourgeois in
Acts I and II, and then to that of the revolutionaries in Acts IV and
V. H. Kaufmann, who fails to examine closely Kragler's relations
with each of these groups, criticises the "Zerfall des Stückes in
zwei Teile".³¹ In maintaining that the action of the play, "sich um
zwei Konflikte gruppiert, die entgegengesetzter gesellschaftlicher
Natur sind", Kaufmann overlooks the similarities of behaviour to be
found amongst both groups with whom Kragler comes into collision.³²

It is this similarity that gives the action its unity: Kragler has to defend himself against the contagious hysteria of both bourgeois and revolutionaries. Kaufmann argues that Kragler's clash with Murk and the Balickes is symbolic of the wider political conflict between revolution and reaction going on in the background; in his view, "Kragler ist Spartakus" in the first two acts.³³ While there is some truth in this, it is surely to oversimplify matters wholly to identify Kragler's struggle with that of the revolution. As the course of the action makes clear, it is quite possible for Kragler to win back his bride, which is what concerns him most without it being necessary for him first to demolish bourgeois society in order to do so. Kaufmann's interpretation of the ghost-motif is also too simple. In his view, Kragler is a personification of the "Gespenst des Kommunismus".³⁴ What he does not, or will not, recognise is that the play quite consciously travesties the traditional version of the ghost-tale with the aim of ironising such clichéd notions as "the spectre of Communism". There is also an inconsistency in Kaufmann's argument: at one point he states that Brecht was able to develop the full revolutionary significance of the ghost tale in a way that his predecessors (including Heine) had been prevented from doing by their inadequate political awareness,³⁵ but at a later point he argues that "der Dichter weiss ebensowenig wie sein Held, dass die 'Braut', von der Kragler in seinem Elend geträumt hat, nur die personifizierte neue Zeit ist, die es zu erobern gilt".³⁶

In the opinion of E. Schumacher, Trommeln is an expression of the author's disillusionment and anger at the failure of the German working classes to conduct a successful revolution in 1918-1919:

Trommeln in der Nacht ist eine Dramatisierung einer der wesentlichen gesellschaftlichen Erscheinungen der

Revolutionszeit eben des Verhaltens der heimkehrenden Soldaten in ihrer Mehrheit, ein Ausdruck eines naiven Realismus, der nicht frei ist von Ressentiments gegenüber den proletarisch-revolutionären Kräften, die versagt haben.³⁷

Again, this is a rather onesided view of the play, for it ignores Brecht's obvious sympathy for Kragler's alleged "Verrat". Without adducing any evidence Schumacher asserts, as if it were an established fact, that Brecht was bitterly disappointed with the revolution. The following remarks freely mix fact with conjecture:

Der junge Brecht war von dieser Unentschlossenheit der Führer der Revolution, der Unklarheit der Massen, der Wankelmütigkeit und dem spontanen Reagieren selbst in den Reihen der Revolutionäre, von der Kurzsichtigkeit, Gleichgültigkeit und Spiesserhaftigkeit der Mehrheit der heimkehrenden Soldaten und der systematischen Aushöhlung und Verkehrung der Revolution durch die Mehrheitssozialdemokratie und die bürgerliche Reaktion aufs stärkste beeindruckt. Er hatte seit 1917 als junger Soldat der USPD angehangen, nachdem er als Sanitäter die Militärmaschine in den Lazaretten und in den Kasernen des Ersatzheeres hatte funktionieren sehen. Er wurde Mitglied des Soldatenrates in Augsburg und erhoffte wie kaum ein anderer von der "anderen Seite", den Millionen Arbeitern in Zivil und Uniform, dass sie die Revolution zu ihrer Sache machen und sie nicht nur mit Klauen und Zähnen verteidigen, sondern im sozialistischen Sinne zu Ende führen würden.³⁸

Brecht's own statements about his early political attitudes are not consistent. When addressing a Soviet audience in 1955, Brecht does give the impression that he was enthusiastic about the revolution:

Ich war 19 Jahre alt, als ich von Ihrer grossen Revolution hörte, 20, als ich den Widerschein des grossen Feuers in meiner Heimat erblickte. Ich war Sanitätssoldat in einem Augsburger Lazarett. Die Kasernen und sogar die Lazarette leerten sich, die alte Stadt füllte sich plötzlich mit neuen Menschen, in grossen Zügen aus den Vorstädten kommend, von einer Lebendigkeit, welche die Strassen der Reichen, der Ämter und Kaufleute nicht kannten. Einige Tage lang sprachen Arbeiterfrauen in den schnell improvisierten Räten und wuschen jungen Arbeitern in Soldatenkitteln die Köpfe, und die Fabriken hörten die Befehle der Arbeiter.

Einige Tage, aber was für Tage! Überall Kämpfer, aber zugleich friedliche Leute, aufbauende Leute! (GW 20, 343-344)³⁹

A quite different impression, however, is given by some remarks made nearer the events, in 1928:

In jener Zeit war ich Soldatenrat in einem Augsburger Lazarett, und zwar wurde ich das nur auf dringendes Zureden einiger Freunde, die behaupteten, ein Interesse daran zu haben. (Wie sich dann herausstellte, konnte ich jedoch den Staat nicht so verändern, wie es für sie gut gewesen wäre.) Wir alle litten unter einem Mangel an politischen Überzeugungen und ich speziell noch dazu an meinem alten Mangel an Begeisterungsfähigkeit. Ich bekam einen Haufen Arbeit aufgehalst. Der Plan der Obersten Heeresleitung, mich ins Feld zu bringen, war schon ein halbes Jahr vorher gescheitert. Ich hatte es, durch Glück begünstigt, verstanden, meine militärische Ausbildung zu verhindern, nach einem halben Jahr beherrschte ich noch nicht einmal das Grüssen und war selbst für die damals schon gelockerten militärischen Verhältnisse zu schlapp. Ich verfügte dann aber sehr bald über meine Entlassung. Kurz: ich unterschied mich kaum von der überwältigenden Mehrheit der übrigen Soldaten, die selbstverständlich von dem Krieg genug hatten, aber nicht imstande waren, politisch zu denken. Ich denke also nicht besonders gern daran. (GW 20,25)

Which of these retrospective accounts is the more accurate is impossible to say. To judge from the evidence of Trommeln, the truth is probably a mixture of both, admittedly contradictory, attitudes. It is entirely typical of the young Brecht that he should hold simultaneously two such mutually opposed views of the revolution.

Another Marxist critic, K. Kändler, interprets the play as an example of "inverted Expressionism".⁴⁰ Without offering any evidence from the text, he simply denies that there is any socio-historical concreteness in the play's presentation of reality.⁴¹ A number of details suggest that there are some important gaps in Kändler's knowledge both of Brecht's other writings and of the details of Trommeln itself. He argues, for example, that Brecht was too young in 1914 to share in the enthusiasm for the war which was widespread at its outbreak.⁴² As has been seen, Brecht's earliest poems and stories indicate that this was not the case. In stating that "die

Tendenz des Stücks läuft auf die Behauptung hinaus, dass das Individuum nicht revolutionär sei! Kändler takes no account of the fact that a number of individuals are shown to commit themselves to the revolution.⁴³

ooo000ooo

Trommeln in der Nacht is a polemical work, and its "open", rhetorical form is designed to drive home the playwright's polemic in as effective a manner as possible. Probably the most obvious expression of the play's formal openness are the "Plakate" which Brecht advised producers to hang up in the auditorium, bearing such mottos as "Jeder Mann ist der Beste in seiner Haut" and "Glottzt nicht so romantisch" (T 8). These slogans present in a suitably rude, aggressive manner the anti-romantic element in the play's "message". The polemic against emotionalism which is articulated both here and in the action also shapes, to a considerable extent, the style of dramatic presentation. The parody of a romantic melodrama in the play is one formal expression of this bias against sentimentality. Equally important is the use of techniques of staging and language which are anti-illusory in effect. There is, for example, a combined attack on sentiment and illusion (both theatrical and political) in Kragler's assault on the red lamp which serves as a moon, and which stands for the two romantic aspects of his "Geschichte", the melodramatic love story which Frau Balicke and Anna have tried to impose on the facts, and the equally melodramatic notions of the avenging proletarian harboured by bourgeois and revolutionaries alike.

The author's aim of eliciting an intellectually aware, rather than a purely emotional response from the audience can be seen to underlie a number of the play's formal and stylistic features. As has been pointed out already, the plot of the play, as a parody of a traditional tale, "estranges" both the original story and the new context in which the old tale is set. The travesty, inviting as it does comparison of the original with its present reworking, demands an ironic response from the audience. The procedure of using a known story or situation as the point of departure for a new approach to a theme is repeated on a smaller scale when Glubb sings the Ballade vom toten Soldaten at the beginning of Act IV, since this ballad provides another variation on the central theme of the soldier who rises, or rather is raised, from the dead.⁴⁴ Another form of "Verfremdung" occurs when the action is brought to a sudden halt at the end of Act II while the romantic waiter Manke gives a garbled and unconsciously self-parodying, melodramatic account of events so far to someone standing offstage. The intention here is to openly mock the sentimental attitude to love-stories which Brecht believes to be the likely reaction of his audience.

Such devices as the "Plakate", the knocking down of the moon, Kragler's direct address to the audience, create an effect of deliberate theatricality. The crassness of Brecht's satire evidently contrives to create the same effect. All the "higher values" of the bourgeois for example are exposed in their function as ideological sublimations of crude material interests. Balicke talks of God while thinking of money:

Balicke Dieser Murk ist ein feiner Bursche, für den
können wir Gott auf den Knien danken.

Frau Balicke Geld verdient er ja. (T 10)

During the "Fressen" to celebrate the engagement of Anna to Murk, and the future business prosperity which it is hoped will flow from this, the gramophone in the background plays, Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe (T 18). Similarly, while Balicke is showing Murk the new factory extension, the gramophone plays Deutschland, Deutschland über alles (T 19). Balicke is indifferent to whether he trades in life or in death, as long as he can make a profit:

Balicke Und das mit dem Geschäft, Fritz, mit den Geschosskörben, das ist jetzt bald faule Sache. Höchstens noch ein paar Wochen Bürgerkrieg, dann Schluss! Ich habe vor, ohne Spass, das Beste: Kinderwägen. Die Fabrik ist in jeder Beziehung in der Höhe. (T 19)

The crassness of the satirical content is matched by the deliberately crude directness of its presentation. The characters are made to formulate their attitudes clearly, with scant regard being paid to individual nuance or even to immediate verisimilitude:

Balicke Der Krieg hat mich auf den berühmten grünen Zweig gebracht! Es lag ja auf der Strasse, warum's nicht nehmen, wäre zu irrsinnig. Nähm's eben ein anderer. Der Sau Ende ist der Wurst Anfang! Richtig betrachtet, war der Krieg ein Glück für uns! Wir haben das unsere in Sicherheit, rund, voll, behaglich. Wir können in aller Ruhe Kinderwägen machen. Ohne Hast! Einverstanden? (T 19)

Balicke's speech is syntactically as uncomplicated as possible, a succession of apodictic simple statements which occasionally are almost proverbial in their succinctness and clarity of formulation. Although not handled with the virtuosity the later Brecht was capable of, speeches like this one contain the germs of his mature linguistic techniques: the sententiousness, the use of colloquialisms to give a thin veneer of realism to an otherwise thoroughly stylised form of speech, the use of home-made or remade proverbs, the shocking matter-of-factness with which war is spoken of as a

blessing.⁴⁵ Balicke's "richtig betrachtet, war der Krieg ein Glück für uns" was to be developed some thirty years later into the Feldwebel's "alienated" speech in praise of war at the beginning of Mutter Courage (GW 4, 1351).

Simplification for the sake of polemical clarity is also evident in Frau Balicke's all too obviously clichéd responses to Kragler's situation: "Lerne leiden, ohne zu klagen" (T 26), "Und der Kaiser hat gesagt: Stark sein im Schmerz" (T 40). It is to be found, too, in the gestures used to make manifest the basic attitudes of the characters in each scene. To take just a few examples, Balicke's fear is conveyed theatrically by having him sweat copiously, Kragler's tendency to take things calmly by his gesture of taking his pipe out of his pocket and lighting it, the rise and fall of emotions in the (crassly symbolic) "Café Vaterland" by the characters alternately standing up and sitting down.⁴⁶

Gesture was of central importance in Brecht's theatrical theory and practice. When he came to expound his ideas on the subject he coined two basic terms, namely "der Gestus" and "gestische Sprache". Although not absolutely consistent in his usage, Brecht usually distinguished "Gestus" from "Geste", the former being reserved for denoting a socially significant complex of behaviour, while the latter term was used for the individual gestures which together produced one such complex whole:

Unter einem Gestus sei verstanden ein Komplex von Gesten, Mimik und für gewöhnlich Aussagen, welchen ein oder mehrere Menschen an einen oder mehrere Menschen richten. (GW 15, 409)

In later years Brecht particularly emphasised the need for a "Gestus" to represent in concentrated, symbolic form one or more of the basic

social relationships in which men stood to one another in a particular historical epoch:

Mit sozialem Gestus ist der mimische und gestische Ausdruck der gesellschaftlichen Beziehungen gemeint, in denen die Menschen einer bestimmten Epoche zueinander stehen. (GW 15, 346)

This type of symbolic "Gestus" is to be found already in Trommeln. As examples one can quote the gestures of fear or nervousness (sweating profusely, looking out of the window, drawing the curtains, urinating) which in this play grotesquely symbolize the dominant attitudes of the bourgeois in the revolutionary post-war situation, or Kragler's pipe-smoking and eventual half-guilty, half-cynical "Heimgehen", which are evidently representative of the attitudes of the returning soldiers to the revolutionary situation, or the "kleiner Tumult" in the "Café Vaterland" when Kragler intrudes on the engagement party, a "Gestus" symbolic of the confused social relations in the demobilisation period. H. Ihering was quick to notice the importance of "gestus" in Brecht's dramatic technique, as his early review of Trommeln shows: "Brecht sieht den Menschen. Aber immer in seiner Wirkung auf den anderen Menschen. Niemals bei ihm steht eine Gestalt isoliert."⁴⁷

In the two plays Brecht wrote immediately after Trommeln, Im Dickicht and Leben Eduards des Zweiten, it becomes clear that the socially critical application of his technique of "Gestus" was not so important to Brecht in these years as later. In these plays he does show men "as they affect one another", but the interactions which interest him here are private transactions between individuals which cannot be regarded as representative of the normal relationships obtaining between social groups or types in a given historical

period. These plays do not focus primarily on the social determinants and consequences of behaviour (although social consequences are indicated en passant in Leben Eduards des Zweiten), but rather on the development of a relationship between exceptional individuals who are pursuing quite private aims. Nevertheless, the concept of "Gestus", in its basic meaning of human interaction, can usefully be applied to these works. Originally and essentially "Gestus" is an idea of theatrical importance, an attempt to return to a proper emphasis on the need for visual boldness and human interplay in the theatre; as such, it was a reaction to the pathetic-declamatory style of much Expressionist drama and to the habitual isolation of the characters, particularly the protagonist, in that type of theatre.

J. Willett has gone so far as to dismiss Brecht's term "Gestus" as simply an old, rather banal idea in a new guise, "a mock-scientific term for what Mr. Auden calls 'those aspects which individuals reveal to each other through their deeds, their works and their looks'."⁴⁸ There is clearly some truth in this, but what Willett fails to make clear is the element of quite conscious theatricality in Brecht's conception of how to present these "aspects". This stress on theatrical effectiveness is apparent in the following remarks:

Das Theater verlangt die Betonung des Gestischen. (GW 18, 79)

Über Gestik wird weiter unten gehandelt, jedoch ist hier zu sagen, dass alles Gefühlsmässige nach aussen gebracht werden muss, das heisst, es ist zur Geste zu entwickeln. Der Schauspieler muss einen sinnfälligen, äusseren Ausdruck für die Emotionen seiner Person finden, womöglich eine Handlung, die jene inneren Vorgänge in ihm verrät. Die betreffende Emotion muss heraustreten, sich emanzipieren, damit sie gross behandelt werden kann. Besondere Eleganz, Kraft und Anmut der Geste ergibt den V-Effekt. (GW 15, 345)

This quality of conscious theatricality is to be achieved through the actor's undisguised virtuosity - what Brecht called "Artistik" -

in presenting a "Gestus". The actor is required to make, as it were, two gestures simultaneously, one directed to the character opposite him on stage, the other to the audience, the former a gesture of "doing" within the context of a fiction, the latter a gesture of "showing", outwith that context:

Die Voraussetzung für die Hervorbringung des V-Effekts ist, dass der Schauspieler das, was er zu zeigen hat, mit dem deutlichen Gestus des Zeigens versieht. (GW 15, 341)

The gesture of artistic "showing" is particularly clear if a part is sung:

Den allgemeinen Gestus des Zeigens, der immer den besonderen gezeigten begleitet, betonen die musikalischen Adressen an das Publikum in den Liedern. (GW 16, 697)

This gesture of showing is intended to shift the awareness that the play really only is a play, which is always at the back of the spectator's mind, no matter how illusionistic the performance, to the forefront of his mind, in order to promote that ironic, intellectual response to the play which Brecht regarded as the proper attitude to adopt in the theatre:

Es ist heute wichtiger, dass die Dekoration dem Zuschauer sagt, dass er im Theater ist, als dass er etwa in Aulis ist. Das Theater muss als Theater jene faszinierende Realität bekommen, (die) der Sportpalast hat, in dem geboxt wird. (GW 15, 79)

The idea of "gestische Sprache" was a natural extension of Brecht's interest in "Gestus":

Gestisch ist eine Sprache, wenn sie auf dem Gestus beruht, bestimmte Haltungen des Sprechenden anzeigt, die dieser andern Menschen gegenüber einnimmt. (GW 15, 482)49

Some examples will show how Brecht put his theory into practice in Trommeln. Near the end of the third act the "Walkürenritt" comes to a halt, and the following dialogue takes place:

- Murk Deine Wäsche, die hast du beisammen. Und die Möbel sind schon in den Zimmern.
- Manke Die Wäsche ist gefaltet, aber die Braut kommt nicht.
- Anna Meine Wäsche ist gekauft, ich habe sie in den Schrank gelegt, Stück für Stück, aber jetzt brauche ich sie nicht. Das Zimmer ist gemietet und die Vorhänge sind schon oben und die Tapeten fehlen nicht. Aber der ist gekommen, der vier Jahre gewartet hat.
- Murk Der kein frisches Hemd auf dem Leib hat...
- Manke Und seine Haut ist wie die vom Krokodil!
- Murk Den du nicht erkannt hast, so sah er aus.
- Manke Aber die Lilie hatte sie noch, als er kam.
- Anna Es ist der gekommen, der keinen Schuh hat und nur einen Rock und darin sind die Motten. (T 60)

The characters' melodramatic posing is conveyed "gestically" here by stylising their language through the use of parallelism and archaisms, so as to give it a tone of Biblical pathos which is singularly inappropriate to the subject-matter, the situation, and the inebriated condition of the speakers. Many speech registers are used, and often manipulated, to produce the desired gestic stylisation. G. Semmer summarises the various types of stylisation thus: "Neben der Stilisierung durch krasse Realismen, falsches und fremdgemachtes Deutsch steht die durch Volkslied und Bibelton und durch primitive Sprachform (Reihung, Wiederholung, Assoziation)."⁵⁰ As H. Rischbieter rightly remarks, such stylisation is a deictic device, "Das Grelle, Primitive, Übertriebene wird dick aufgestrichen, man meint die zeigende Hand des Autors zu sehen".⁵¹

Brecht's directions for the staging and acting of Trommeln are sparse, but they do indicate that in these areas too he had already begun to develop his ideas of epic theatre. Like the language and characterisation, the scenery was stylised so as to keep the illusion of reality down to the desired level:

Die Bühne ist klein und besteht aus Holz und Pappendeckel. Die Kartons sind dünn und unvollständig bemalt. Tür, Fenster und Wand, das sieht alles provisorisch aus. 52

In the "Glosse für die Bühne" the scene-painting is described as "kindlich": "Hinter den etwa zwei Meter hohen Pappschirmen, die Zimmerwände darstellten, war die grosse Stadt in kindlicher Weise aufgemalt" (T 8). The word "kindlich" was also used of the style of acting: "Die Menschen aber müssen sehr leibhaftig und das Spiel muss kindlich sein."⁵³ The word "kindlich" later came to be replaced in Brecht's terminology by the word "naiv", but his insistence on simplicity of presentation remained unchanged; equally, his demand for plasticity ("Leibhaftigkeit") remains centrally important in his theory of epic acting:

Ist die restlose Verwandlung aufgegeben, bringt der Schauspieler seinen Text nicht wie eine Improvisation, sondern wie ein Zitat. Dabei ist es klar, dass er in dieses Zitat alle Untertöne, die volle menschliche, konkrete Plastik der Äusserung zu geben hat; wie auch die Geste, die er vorzeigt und die nunmehr eine Kopie darstellt, die volle Leiblichkeit einer menschlichen Geste haben muss. (GW 15, 344)

Although the anti-sentimental and anti-illusionistic devices examined so far are important in determining the general character of the play, it is equally important to recognise the presence of stylistic features which are quite different in effect. If Brecht's dislike of the bourgeois led him to make caricatures out of them, his sympathy for Kragler results in such passages of pure, unironised pathos as this:

Kragler Wer bezahlt hier! Wer lässt es spielen hier?
Es spielt doch immer! Ich habe die Fliege! Ich
muss nur Schnaps haben, dann ertrinkt sie darin!
Kann man das Militär abschaffen oder den lieben
Gott? Kann man es abschaffen, dass es Leiden
gibt und die Qualen, die die Menschen den Teufel
gelehrt haben? Man kann es nicht abschaffen,
aber man kann trinken. (T 74)

In speeches such as this, the declamatory Expressionist in Brecht, which at the time was warring with the ironical, "sachlicher" anti-Expressionist in him, momentarily gains the upper hand. Direct, sympathetic involvement with his characters can also be seen in Anna's account of her feelings during Kragler's absence, where Brecht's tone becomes unashamedly lyrical:

Anna Du warst lang bei mir in der ersten Zeit, da war deine Stimme noch frisch. Wenn ich im Gang ging, streifte ich an dich und auf der Wiese hast du mich hinter den Ahorn gerufen. Wiewohl sie schrieben, man hätte dich durchs Gesicht geschossen und eingegraben nach zwei Tagen. Aber einmal änderte es sich doch. Wenn ich im Gang ging, war er leer und der Ahorn schwieg still. Wenn ich mich aufrichtete vom Wäschetrog, sah ich noch dein Gesicht, aber als ich sie auf die Wiese legte, sah ich es nicht mehr, und wusste alle die lange Zeit nicht, wie du aussiehst. (T 35)

The tension between this level of expression and the parody of biblical language which is employed in Act III to mock Anna's self-indulgence in high romance reflects stylistically the same kind of conflict in Brecht's mind between differing attitudes to emotionalism, as has been seen already in the analysis of the action.

Brecht was not always his own best commentator. However, as an author's views are often regarded as those of a "specially privileged" interpreter, his comments on his works need to be examined. As far as possible, Brecht's comments on Trommeln will be discussed in chronological order. About 1926, he wrote that he composed the work "um Geld zu machen", and added, "es ist danach, hat aber kein Geld gemacht" (GW 15, 69).⁵⁴ The implication of this statement is that the play is not worth taking seriously. But the thematic continuity of Trommeln with Baal and subsequent plays indicates the opposite, namely that Brecht's central preoccupations at the time are indeed reflected in the work. Towards the end of 1928, Brecht made another

oversimplifying, negative comment on this play: "Was übrigens die Entwicklung der Dramatik betrifft: die ersten Arbeiten der jüngeren Dramatik - Vatermord, Trommeln in der Nacht - bedeuten zunächst eine Reaktion" (GW 15, 155). On the other hand, Brecht cited, some years later, the Berlin production of Trommeln as one of the first examples of epic theatre (GW 15, 348).

Also at the end of 1928, Brecht came together with the director Piscator and the sociologist Sternberg to consider the possibility of a new production of Trommeln. The object of the exercise was to examine the play from the standpoint of its usefulness as an instrument of revolutionary political education, and to discover what changes, if any, needed to be made in order to make the text yield a clear political message. Brecht argued that "eine totale Umarbeitung wäre nötig", if the aim of the production were to be to condemn Kragler's behaviour. He maintained that a more productive approach would be to criticise the German revolution, "an der Hand seines Schicksals" (SzT2, 272).⁵⁵

The plan that emerged from these discussions was to leave the "Typ Kragler" and the main events in Act V (his refusal to go on with the revolution) unchanged, but to alter the third and fourth acts so as to bring out more clearly the political background and implications of his eventual decision. Kragler was to be presented as the "Millionentyp", an "Ebertmann, dem tatsächlich das private Leben höher steht" (SzT2, 276), and his refusal to fight as the "Generalabrechnung des Arbeiters gegen die Demagogen" (SzT2, 291). While leaving Kragler's reason for leaving the revolution unchanged, the adaptation was to make it clearer why the "Kraglers" came to the conclusion that the revolution was merely romantic "Krampf":

Der Mann Leichnam auf Urlaub. Er wird mitgeschleift von der Frau. Klagt Gott und die Welt an. Ungeheuerliches Verbrechen. Geht ohne Plan. Geht überhaupt nicht. Tod etwas ganz anderes. Geht jetzt heim. Da Revolution nicht vorbereitet, die Leute nur brüllen wollen, das geht nicht. Da eben die 32 erschossen. Zu Ernst die Sache zum Spassen. Geht heim. (SzT2, 291)

Another comment made by Brecht during these discussions repeats this criticism of the revolution, namely that it was badly prepared and organised:

Das ausgehen lassen, dass der letzte Akt so, dass die führerlosen Anhänger der Luxemburg ihn nicht mehr halten können. Kragler so darstellen, dass er vierten und dritten Tag zusehends links steht, aber gerade dann werden Liebknecht und Luxemburg abgewürgt, da sieht er plötzlich den Krampf. Niemand mehr da, der dirigiert. Mit Schläue entfernt durch die Köpfe. (SzT2, 288)

The overall effect of this adaptation would have been to condemn the German revolution as "unclassical": "Die russische Revolution klassisch, die deutsche nicht. (...) Luxemburg reiner Typ der Romantiker, um 1840 auch so" (SzT2, 276-277). Sternberg's comment was that, even if this view of the events of 1918 were presented in such a way as to teach a positive political lesson, the play would be, "Politisch schwer möglich, würde aussehen, als wenn die Revolution kein Ziel hätte" (SzT2, 291). What Sternberg meant by this is not clear; possibly it was hoped to perform the revised play, under left-wing auspices, to trade unionists or party members, and Sternberg doubted whether such an interpretation of the revolution would be acceptable to the leadership of the left.

In an undated essay entitled "Meine Arbeiten für das Theater" Brecht takes a similar line to the one taken in his discussions with Sternberg and Piscator, but gives it a significantly different emphasis. Whereas he had referred to Kragler as an "Arbeiter"

during the earlier discussions, he now describes him as a "Kleinbürger" (GW 17, 959). Now, instead of seeking to explain Kragler's "Heimgehen" in terms of the unclarity of the political situation and the lack of thorough revolutionary organisation, Brecht tries to explain away his apparent endorsement of the hero's decision in terms of his own opposition to the abstract idealism of his Expressionist contemporaries. His involvement in this literary polemic, he argues, resulted in his failing to make clear his contempt for Kragler and his "vorhandenen, viel ernsteren Respekt vor jenen, deren Kampf der Kleinbürger zu Erpressungen bei seiner eigenen oder der ihn an der Ausbeutung für gewöhnlich beteiligenden Klasse missbrauchte und nach gelungener Ausnutzung verriet, vor den proletarischen Revolutionären" (GW 17, 959). This is a typical piece of Brechtian sleight-of-hand. On the level of generalisation, it may be true that the revolutionary situation of 1918 was exploited by the "Kleinbürger" in order to extort concessions from the ruling classes, but in the particular case of Trommeln Brecht's statement is misleading, since the play does not show Kragler as exploiting the revolution to win back Anna. It is also inaccurate to state that the play unreservedly "feiert" Kragler's behaviour. This essay concludes with some interesting remarks about the lessons the play had to offer to a revolutionary audience:

Gleichwohl konnte man an diesem Stück sehr gut sehen, woran die deutsche Revolution verlorenging: nicht nur an einem Verrat der Führer, sondern auch an der Interessenverschiedenheit der revoltierenden Volksmassen (der Verrat setzte erst da ein, wo diese Interessenverschiedenheit weggelogen wurde, damit jene Massen, deren Interessen überhaupt nicht befriedigt werden sollten, mitkämpften). Und die eigentliche grosse Lehre für die proletarische Politik hätte darin bestehen müssen, dass man die Kragler belehrt hätte, dass diese Interessenverschiedenheit eine sehr kurzlebige, seichte und unwichtige war: ihre Erpressung hielt nicht sehr lange vor. Dass die proletarische Politik diese realistische Auffassung nicht hatte, ist einer der Haupt-

gründe dafür, dass die Kraglers zehn Jahre später ihre Revolution ohne und gegen das Proletariat machten. (GW 17, 960)

There is a further hint that Brecht had wanted to use a revised form of the play as an instrument of left-wing political education, but was frustrated in his hopes, possibly by those responsible for shaping "die proletarische Politik", in a projected, but never used "Vorwort zu Trommeln in der Nacht":

Die wirklichen Revolutionäre konnten eine Zeitlang das Stück bedauern, indem sie den Kragler für einen Proletarier hielten und sie Grund hatten, sich für solche Proletarier als Helden zu bedanken. Sie konnten auch dagegen sein, weil sie den Kragler für einen Bourgeois hielten und sich für solch einen Helden bedanken. Denn es bestand kein Zweifel, dass dies ein Held war. Aber sie können heute nicht mehr leugnen, dass es ein eminent politisches Stück ist, ein Anschauungsmaterial wie nicht leicht eines. Sie hatten hier vor sich jenen fatalen Typus des Sozialdemokraten, und sie hatten ihn in seiner heldischen Form. Er war schwer zu erkennen als Bourgeois, auf der Bühne und im Leben. Die Revolution, gar nicht leugbar, war verloren. Dieser Typ hatte sie gemacht. Das Wichtigste, was es gab, war, diesen Typ erkennen zu lernen. Er hatte sie gemacht, und hier war er. Hier in einer alltäglichen romantischen Liebesgeschichte ohne besondere Tiefe war dieser Sozialdemokrat, dieser falsche Proletarier, dieser fatale Revolutionär, der die Revolution sabotierte, den Lenin heftiger bekämpfte als die offenen Bourgeois und der selbst ihm so schwer zu erfassen war, dass es vor der russischen Revolution kaum gelungen war, ihn den Massen kenntlich zu machen, um sie zu warnen. Dies war also dieser Kragler, dieser Revolutionär, den das Mitleid wieder zu Besitztum brachte, der jammerte und krakeelte und heimging, als er hatte, was ihm gefehlt hatte. Nun, den Proletariern wurde das Stück nicht gezeigt. (GW 17, 967)

This last remark in particular seems to indicate that Brecht had at one time thought that the play ought to be shown to a proletarian audience.

Brecht's last remarks on Trommeln were made in his essay "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke" with which he prefaced the first volume of his collected plays in 1954. The essay opens promisingly with the candid admission that this is "das zweischlächtigste"

(GW 17, 945) of his early plays. However, he then goes on to repeat the argument that it was his polemic against the Expressionist "Oh-Mensch-Dramatik" which led him to write a play about revolution ending with "die schädligste aller möglichen Varianten" (GW 17, 945). On re-reading the play, he felt so dissatisfied with it that he was tempted to suppress it. But, believing that suppression would be insufficient, since "Falsches muss korrigiert werden", he decided to have it re-published with a number of changes designed to strengthen "die Gegenseite":

Ich gab dem Schankwirt Glubb einen Neffen, einen jungen Arbeiter, der in den Novembertagen als Revolutionär gefallen ist. In diesem Arbeiter, freilich nur skizzenhaft sichtbar, jedoch durch die Skrupel des Schankwirts immerhin sich verdichtend, gewann der Soldat Kragler eine Art Gegenpart. (GW 17, 947)

As a comparison of the revised version with the original will show, Brecht also made other, equally important changes which are not mentioned here. Apart from this, the essay is not without a certain amount of irony. In defence of his erstwhile "relative Billigung" of Kragler's behaviour Brecht argues that rational self-interest is something a proletarian can sympathise with much more readily than any involvement in revolution for romantic reasons. What he omits to say, however, is that he originally depicted Kragler's revolutionary companions, in part, as having a romantic attitude to the revolution, and that the element of disapproval in his presentation of Kragler's final decision was, amongst other things, coloured by evident authorial sympathy for the claims of romanticism.

The changes made in the revised version of the play have the general effect of obscuring the similarity of attitude, amongst both bourgeois and revolutionaries, on which the unity of the action originally depended. A number of lines have been cut from the end

of Act IV where Kragler makes up his mind to join in the fighting. The simple question, "Pfeift es wieder?" (GW 1, 114) is all that is left of the important speech which ran:

Kragler Pfeift es schon wieder? (Duckt sich.) Ist es Spass? Auf die Barrikaden mit dem Gespenst!
(Steht fest, zieht tief Luft ein.) Schlussmachen ist besser als Schnaps. Es ist kein Spass.
Verschwinden ist besser als schlafen. (T 78)

Similarly, the short, but significant speech "Ich bin ein Leichnam, den könnt ihr haben! (Bös) Her mit euch, an die Brust mit euch, in die Zeitungen mit uns!" (T 79), is reduced to the bald utterance, "In die Zeitungen mit uns" (GW 1, 114). In this way, the romantic element in Kragler's decision is toned down; the omission of the ghost-motifs in particular obscure his existential reasons for exposing himself to danger.

A number of omissions in Act IV have the effect of making the revolutionaries appear less hysterical. Whereas previously, for example, Bulltrotter became very excited when he heard guns roll by outside, and shouted "Aufruhr! Streik! Revolution!", he now merely comments, "Das ist das Maikäferregiment" (GW 1, 109). The act is considerably shortened by cutting down Kragler's account of his sufferings in Africa, and by playing down the interest the others show for his "Geschichte". Similarly, in Act V, the dialogue between Kragler and Anna is reduced in order to give less attention to Andreas' personal troubles. Also omitted here are the passages in which the "aufgeputzte Frauenperson" brings news of the presence of the government artillery in the "Zeitungs Viertel", and the speech in which Glubb betrays a reckless unconcern for the real hopelessness of the situation. In short, the revision aims at putting the revolution in a more favourable light at the cost of the coherence of the play

as a whole.

Baal, it has been seen, derived its dramatic life chiefly from a set of tensions between a number of conflicting attitudes to life. The main conflict lay between the egocentric existential perspective of the individual on the one hand, and a socio-centric, moral perspective on the other. This tension expressed itself continuously throughout, in the presentation of Baal's lust for life as being both intensely satisfying for him and dangerous to others. A further area of conflict was created by the clash of his ultimately self-destructive desire to live only for the moment with his instinct for self-preservation. This tension between attitudes was expressed through the alternation of scenes of exuberant "rasende Extase" with darker scenes of physical exhaustion and degradation. A subsidiary conflict lay in the contrast between Baal's lyrical outbursts on the one hand and his bouts of cynicism on the other.

The same conflicts re-appear in Trommeln in der Nacht. The perspective of moral outrage is apparent in the satirical depiction of the bourgeois and in the mention of the "arme Leute" who are dying in the background. The appeal of self-destructive intensity of living is evident in Kragler's suicidal decision to join the fighting for the sake of making a heroic gesture; on the other hand, it is ultimately the instinct for self-preservation which persuades him to go away quietly with Anna. The conflict between pathos and sober unsentimentality is developed more fully than in Baal, so much so, in fact, that it gives thematic coherence to the work.

Because of its satirical bias, Trommeln in der Nacht is less pervasively ambivalent than Baal. In Acts I, II, III, the romanti-

cism of the Balickes is not coupled with any heightened pleasure in existence as it was in the case of Baal, but is presented rather as mere hysterical stupidity; as H. Rischbieter has remarked, "Die Schärfe, mit der das Spiessermilieu gezeichnet ist, hat auch was Steriles."⁵⁶ The fourth act with its mounting tension between Kragler's inclination to make some violent romantic gesture and his instinct for self-preservation brings some improvement in this respect, while the complex of conflicting pulls on Kragler's mind in Act V make it the most interesting of the whole play. Yet, despite its dramatic weaknesses, Trommeln is remarkable for the boldness of its attempt to reconsider the positions taken up in Baal. The satirical depiction of the romanticism of the Balickes as merely hysterical suggests that Brecht may have had quite considerable doubts about the worth of Baal's "ecstasies" (is it pure coincidence that "Balicke" is a diminutive of "Baal"?). Similarly, Baal's ruthless pursuit of his own happiness loses all its daemonic appeal when reduced in stature and presented as the philosophy of a "Streber" like Murk.

To conclude, Trommeln in der Nacht is different from Baal in a number of respects, but similar in a number of others. Whereas Baal was a projective work which presented reality as it appeared to a single, romantic, larger-than-life individual, Trommeln is an analytic, satirical play concerned to depict a segment of German society at a particular point in its history. On the other hand Trommeln does share a certain number of preoccupations with Baal, since both plays are concerned with conflicts between the rival claims of self-preservation and self-destruction, rationality and romanticism, the self and society. These unresolved conflicts give

both works a degree of ambivalence which remains characteristic of Brecht's writing for years to come.

NOTES

1. "Analytic" as used here has nothing to do with the term "analytisches Drama", which denotes a play type in which the action takes the form of an exploration of the initial situation, which leads back in time to its historical roots, and which is contrasted with the "synthetisches Drama" where a number of different threads of action are woven together to create a series of new dramatic situations.
2. This quotation is taken from an unprinted version of the play in the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" which is discussed later in this chapter (p 60 et seq.). The BBA reference number for this quotation is 1569/115.
3. In his analysis of "Brecht's Trommeln in der Nacht als literarische Satire", Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht 61 (1969), p. 241, G. Stern surprisingly gives no account of this important aspect of Brecht's use of traditional motifs.
4. The motif would have been introduced even earlier, had Brecht used one of the subtitles he had once considered for the play, namely "das sterbende Gespenst" (BBA 438/30).
5. All references in this form are to the version of Trommeln in der Nacht which was first published by the Drei Masken Verlag, (München, 1923).
6. Babusch is a curious character. He first appears as an ironic provocateur of bourgeois fears, while yet clearly a close friend of the Balicke family. During the confrontation in Act II he constantly pleads for calm, first on behalf of the Balickes, and then on behalf of Kragler. From Act III onwards he becomes the ironic ally of Anna and Kragler. There may be some self-irony in Brecht's portrayal of this man of the pen as basically self-interested and financially dependent on the bourgeoisie, but ironic and good-hearted, although personally unable to make good the harm which he and his professional colleagues have done by their sensational reporting.
7. K. Marx and F. Engels, Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei, (Stuttgart, 1969), p. 23.
8. The "Zibebe" mentioned here is the red lantern representing the moon which glows automatically whenever Kragler appears on stage.
9. This criticism is made in the reviews of Hermann Sinsheimer, Julius Bab, Siegfried Jacobsohn, Emil Faktor and Alfred Kerr, all of which are reprinted in Günther Rühle, Theater für die Republik (Frankfurt a.M., 1967), pp. 401-408.
10. Brecht later laid stress on his opposition to the Expressionist "Oh-Mensch-Dramatik" as a factor which influenced his writing of this play (GW 17, 945).

11. See Hermann Müller-Franken, Die November Revolution (Berlin, 1928), pp. 267-268.
12. The "Friedrichstadt" contained a considerable number of barracks. The ironic implication is that the woman sees Kragler as properly belonging to the government forces.
13. Alfred Kerr commented ironically on Brecht's attempts at disguising the sentimentality of the play; "Der parodistische Mond (das ist: vertuschte Sentimentalität; damit die Zuschauer nicht die Parodie machen)", in: G. Rühle, Theater für die Republik, p. 408.
14. H. Ihering, "Der Dramatiker Bert Brecht", Von Reinhardt bis Brecht vol 1 (Berlin, 1958), p. 275.
15. In this version of the play which was used for the performance in the Deutsches Theater, Berlin on December 1922, the name of the whore is "Carmen", whereas in the printed version it is "Auguste". Hermann Sinsheimer's review of the premiere in Munich mentions the name "Carmen" (see Rühle, Theater für die Republik, p. 402). It seems possible, therefore, that the BBA manuscript version is the original, which was cut for the first production in Munich, restored for the Berlin production, and then slightly altered (Auguste substituted for Carmen) for the first edition.
16. BBA 1569/128.
17. BBA 1569/123-124.
18. BBA 1569/135.
19. It is clear from this speech that the role of the newspapers in contributing to post-war confusion was to be a recurrent theme in the work. Kragler significantly mentions the newspapers and works of fiction in one breath. The newspapers are evidently being made to share the blame with all forms of romantic writing (such as the ghost-ballads parodied in the play) for encouraging people to respond in an emotionally prejudiced way to real situations.
20. BBA 1569/134 The phrase "die Oper im Blut haben" is yet another of the motifs held together by the notion of emotionalism. It links up "Carmen", the name originally given to the whore from Glubb's "Destille", with Kragler's angry question, "Bin ich ein Bariton?", and with the title of "Walkürenritt" which is given to Act 3.
21. BBA 1569/135-137.
22. E. Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 49.
23. O. Flechtheim, Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik, (Frankfurt a.M., 1969), p. 114.
24. *ibid.*, p. 116.

25. E. Kolb, Die Arbeiterräte in der deutschen Innenpolitik 1918-1919 (Düsseldorf, 1962), p. 139.
26. Arthur Rosenberg, Entstehung der Deutschen Republik 1871-1918 (Berlin, 1928), quoted in Historisches Lesebuch 3, 1914-1933 (Frankfurt a.M., 1968), p. 144.
27. H. Müller Franken, Die November Revolution (Berlin, 1928), p. 123.
28. O. Braun, Von Weimar zu Hitler (New York, 1940), p. 54.
29. L. Renn, Nachkrieg (Leipzig, no date), p. 113.
30. Quoted in Historisches Lesebuch 3, 1914-1933, p. 151. The parallel between Liebknecht's use of biblical language and Glubb's singing of "Ein feste Burg" is noteworthy.
31. H. Kaufmann, "Drama der Revolution und des Individualismus. Brechts Drama Trommeln in der Nacht", Weimarer Beiträge 7 (1961), p. 318.
32. *ibid.*, p. 317.
33. *ibid.*, p. 317.
34. H. Kaufmann, Krisen und Wandlungen der deutschen Literatur von Wedekind bis Feuchtwanger (Berlin, 1966), p. 389.
35. H. Kaufmann, "Brechts Drama Trommeln in der Nacht", p. 323.
36. *ibid.*, p. 324.
37. E. Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 63.
38. *ibid.*, p. 48. Brecht was in fact not enlisted until October 1918. See K. Völker, Brecht-Chronik (Munich, 1971), p. 12.
39. There is an ironic contrast between Brecht's pathos in this reminiscence of "neuen Menschen", and his statement that Trommeln in der Nacht expressed his early rejection of the Expressionist "Oh-Mensch - Dramatik" (GW 17, 945).
40. K. Kändler, Drama und Klassenkampf (Berlin, 1970), p. 343.
41. *ibid.*, p. 153.
42. *ibid.*, p. 343.
43. *ibid.*, p. 343. The view that Trommeln is primarily a rejection of idealism is also taken by H. Lüthy, "Vom armen Bert Brecht", Der Monat 44 (Berlin, 1952), p. 121, M. Esslin, Brecht: A choice of Evils (London, 1959), p. 247, L. Laboulle, Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht, Ph.D. (Leicester, 1961), p. 7, and D. Bathrick, "'Anschauungsmaterial' for Marx: Brecht returns to Trommeln in der Nacht", Brecht Heute, 2 (1972), p. 136 et seq.

44. The text of the ballad is appended to the play (T 96-99).
45. For detailed studies of Brecht's use of language as a didactic instrument, see in particular G. Debiel, Das Prinzip der Verfremdung in der Sprachgestaltung Bertolt Brechts, Ph.D. Diss. (Bonn, 1960), R. Grimm, Bertolt Brecht. Die Struktur seines Werkes (Nürnberg, 1961).
46. The use of gesture in this play is also discussed by G. Semmer in his essay on Trommeln in der Nacht published in the Nachrichtenbrief Nr. 63 (November, 1968) of the Arbeitskreis Bertolt Brecht.
47. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht vol. 1, p. 274.
48. J. Willett, The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht (London, 1967), p. 186.
49. L. Feuchtwanger reports that from their earliest acquaintance Brecht always chose words which would convey the desired gesture as perfectly as possible. See L. Feuchtwanger, "Bertolt Brecht", in: Sinn und Form (1957) (Zweites Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht), pp. 106-107.
50. Gerd Semmer, "Trommeln in der Nacht", p. 90.
51. H. Rischbieter, Bertolt Brecht, p. 42.
52. BBA 1569/05.
53. BBA 1569/05.
54. On the point of the play's financial success, Brecht later contradicted this statement. See GW 17, 963.
55. Schriften zum Theater, 2 (Frankfurt a.M., 1963), p. 272. This record of the discussion was not included in the later Gesammelte Werke, because it is not certain that it represents a reliable account of the proceedings. Allowing that they are synoptic, the notes do, however, provide a useful indication of what Brecht's ideas - if not his actual words - were on this subject.
56. H. Rischbieter, Bertolt Brecht, p. 38.

CHAPTER THREE

Im Dickicht

Brecht's third major play, Im Dickicht,¹ marks a return from the relatively realistic depiction of contemporary events in Trommeln in der Nacht to the more freely fantastic vein of writing in which, as the author of Baal, he had begun his career. As in Baal and many other Expressionist works, fantasy is used here by the playwright as a source of symbolic figures and actions which give shape and expression to aspects of the mind which normally remain hidden in everyday life. Its setting, "in einem unwirklichen, kalten Chicago" (DI34), is an inner landscape, the world of urban civilisation as seen from the perspective of the existential self. Its action, a wild struggle between a Malayan timber merchant named Shlink and the much younger book-seller George Garga is a vehicle for exploring imaginatively the nature of the existential self and its relations with other selves. It has been said by some critics that the action is incomprehensible. M. Spalter, for example, states that "arbitrariness of scenic continuity is matched by incomprehensibility of action";² M. Kesting claims, "Die Fabel ist verworren und undurchsichtig";³ and R. Gray declares that "In the Cities' Jungle is chaotic and incomprehensible".⁴ The following examination of the conflicts in the play can therefore best begin by demonstrating that Shlink's fight with Garga, although admittedly strange and idiosyncratic, does in fact have a coherent meaning.

The struggle between Shlink and Garga opens thus:

Garga Das ist ein Kriminalroman, kein gutes Buch.
Das da ist ein besseres Buch, eine Reisebeschreibung.

Moti Sie tun einfach sagen: das ist ein schlechtes Buch?

Shlink Ich möchte Ihnen diese Ansicht abkaufen, wenn es Ihnen beliebt. Sind zwei Pfund zu wenig dafür?

Garga Ich schenke sie Ihnen. (D13)

The ensuing dialogue gradually adds meaning to this strange opening exchange. Shlink's offer of money in exchange for Garga's opinion of a book (which book is not important) is a symbolic gesture of challenge, nicely calculated on the basis of what Shlink has been able to discover about the young man's character, to draw out Garga's aggressions by prodding him on a sensitive spot. He has found out that Garga is the sole but unwilling breadwinner of a poor family which has recently moved "from the plains" into the big city. Although he is prepared to work in a dingy lending library to support his family, he secretly dreams of escaping like his hero Gauguin to a life of freedom in the South Seas.⁵ As a compromise between his familial obligations and his personal desires, he spends three weeks in every month at work and the fourth in the company of his mistress, Jane Montpassier, drinking heavily and nourishing his dreams of Tahiti with information gleaned from the "Konversationslexikon" (D16). This monthly indulgence in bohemianism is an attempt to preserve for himself an area in which he can be free of his ties with the everyday world. Shlink's offer of money is an attack on Garga's belief that it is possible to retain at least one's inward freedom in the face of the outside world's encroachments on the self.

As he gradually increases the amount of his offer, Shlink points out the various ways in which Garga could use the money: he could help his family with it, or spend it in the pursuit of his private pleasures - on Jane, for example, or on "Cooks Reisebeschreibungen" (D13) or even on a ticket to Tahiti. What Shlink is implying is that in all aspects of his life Garga is dependent on money: he needs it to support his family on the one hand, or to indulge in "private"

bohemianism on the other. Thus, Shlink argues, since Garga's inner "freedom" is really spurious and illusory, because of its dependence on the everyday world, he might as well admit the fact and openly accept money in exchange for part of this "private" self, namely one of his literary opinions - just as the authors have had to do whose books Garga sells. Underlying this suggestion in turn is the even more menacing insinuation that it is possible for one man to gain access and control over another man's freedom of choice: fully to buy Garga's opinion of a book must also mean "buying" his ability and freedom to make choices, for, once "sold", Garga could never again change his opinion of the book. What Shlink has already been able to discover about Garga's private life and dreams is in itself a demonstration that his inner world can be invaded; in the ensuing conflict the Malayan's governing strategy is to anger his chosen opponent by taking possession of his inner world, depriving him of his freedom of choice by anticipating and fulfilling - even before he has expressed it - his every wish.⁶

Garga's initial response to Shlink's attack is to assume an air of ironic detachment. However, as Shlink increases pressure on him by degrading him in front of his employer and having Jane brought in drunk on the arm of a pimp, Garga decides that he must demonstrate that he is spiritually free by breaking all ties with his previous way of life:

Shlink Ich bitte Sie, betrachten Sie die Verhältnisse dieses Planeten und verkaufen Sie.

Maynes Sie sind ein Narr und ein Waschlappen, ein phlegmatischer Kuli! Sie lassen sich bezahlen. Bedenken Sie doch...

Moti Ihre unschuldigen gramgebeugten Eltern.

Der Wurm Ihre Schwester!

Der Pavian Ihre Geliebte, das Biest hier.

Garga Nein! Nein! Nein!

Shlink Tahiti!

Garga Ich lehne es ab. Das ist die Freiheit. Ich sehe die Vision über den papiernen Zeitaltern. Hier meinen Rock! (Er zieht ihn aus.) Vierteilt ihn. Ich singe schon: "Über euren verseiften Teichen das himmlische Standrecht". (D 21)⁷

He then counters Shlink's offer with an ironic reversal of that offer:

Garga Hier meine Stiefel. (Er wirft sie auf den Ladentisch). Rauchen Sie Ihre kleine, schwarze Zigarre, Herr? Der Geifer könnte Ihnen aus der Kinnlade rinnen! Hier, mein Taschentuch! Ja, ich versteigere diese Frau. Ich werfe euch diese Papiere um die Ohren. Ich bitte um Virginiens Tabakfelder und um ein Billett nach den Inseln! Ich bitte (er trinkt), ich bitte um meine Freiheit! (Er läuft in Hemd und Hose hinaus). (D 22)

Whereas Shlink had offered money in exchange for something unsaleable, namely Garga's spiritual freedom, Garga now offers to sell all those things which he considers can be sold - including Jane! - but his price is something which Shlink cannot give him, namely his freedom. Thus, as far as Garga is concerned, this encounter has resulted in an absurd impasse, with each man demanding of the other something which the other cannot give. As he leaves the lending-library declaiming some of Rimbaud's poetry, he clearly believes that he has demonstrated the obvious, namely that he does have the spiritual freedom he has always cherished. However, he soon discovers that things are not as simple as that.

Garga's departure from his place of work is not the unambiguous assertion of his independence he believes it to be in the heat of the moment. This is an action which, although he had often contemplated it, he had never actually carried out until Shlink forced his attentions on him. His departure might therefore be regarded, not as an

act of free-will, but as an action which he had been coerced into by his attacker. The real lack of freedom in his decision to leave for Tahiti manifests itself in his inability to carry out his plan of going there, and in his "choosing" instead to retaliate against Shlink's attack.⁸ Garga explicitly acknowledges this loss of freedom in conversation with his sister Marie who is present in Shlink's office when he comes to deliver his counter attack:

Marie Sie sagten, sie hätten dich fortgejagt. (Stille)

Garga Ich sage dir, packe deine Sachen zusammen und pack dich nach Hause.

Marie Was willst du denn? Ist es unrecht von mir, hier zu sein?

Garga (Geht herum) Ich weiss nicht, was sie mit mir vorhaben. Sie haben mich harpuniert. Sie zogen mich an sich. Es scheint Stricke zu geben. Ich werde mich an Sie halten, Herr. Aber lassen Sie andere aus dem Spiel. (D 24-25)

This sense of having lost his freedom is confirmed by his discovery that, contrary to his expectations, Shlink has been expecting him to come to the office.⁹ In coming to fight with Shlink, Garga is both facing up to the loss of freedom involved in his emotional bond (of hatred) with his enemy and taking steps to regain his independence:

Garga (Zu Shlink) Ich verstehe nichts, Sir, bin dumm wie ein Neger, bin mit einer weissen Fahne gekommen, jetzt entfalte ich sie zur Attacke. (D 29)

His aim is now to regain the freedom he has surrendered ("mit einer weissen Fahne") in taking on the fight, by defeating his enemy, since only a decisive victory will set him free of the painful emotional fetters which now bind him to his attacker. What Garga has not yet realized is that such a practical recovery of emotional freedom can be no proof of the absolute freedom of his will, since any action taken in relation to Shlink is evidence of some kind of need to take action.

Garga's first onslaught is the most obvious one to make on a man who appears to hold money to be the sole value in life: he sets out to destroy Shlink financially. But when he draws a revolver and demands that Shlink hand over his timber business he meets, not the resistance he had expected and hoped for, but a readiness on Shlink's part to give up his property:

Garga Ich werde mit Ihnen reinen Tisch machen. (Den Revolver in der Hand.)

Shlink Ich empfangе Ihre Anordnungen!

Garga Ihr Holzhandel setzt Sie instand, mir die Hunde auf den Hals zu jagen. Gleiche Waffen!

Shlink Mein Holzhandel ist zuwenig für Ihre Haut.

Garga Sie haben Prärrie gemacht. Ich verlange freies Feld.

Shlink Sie nehmen den Kampf auf?

Garga Aug um Aug, Zahn um Zahn.

Shlink Mein Haus ist das Ihrige. Dieses Haus gehört Ihnen. (D 26)

As Erich Engel, with whom Brecht collaborated closely on the first production of the play, noted at the time: "Garga, der Widerstand erwartet hatte, wird entwaffnet durch das Entgegenkommen" (D 120). Garga is disappointed and disarmed by Shlink's acquiescence in every humiliating demand made on him because, unless Shlink resists his attacks, he has nothing to overcome and no opportunity to emerge from the fight with the knowledge that he has crushed his opponent. At the end of the encounter he pretends that Shlink's "cowardice" has given him moral victory and justifies his regarding the fight as over, but his sister Marie points out that this is really only cowardice on his part, an attempt to disguise his fears that he may not be able to defeat such an opponent:

Garga Sie haben mir den Spass verdorben, Ihre Roheit ist unvergleichlich. Ich behalte mir einiges von dem Papier. Ich stopfe mir in die Tasche, was ich mir gebe. Ich bleibe nicht hier, denn das ist die Pointe, Mister Shlink aus Yokohama. Ich gehe nach Tahiti.

Ich danke für die Karte. Kommen Sie, Wurm!
Schiffsbillette!

Marie Das ist feig, George. Als der Geistliche ging,
hast du geschickt, ich habe es wohl gesehen.
Wie du verzweifelt bist! Wie bist du unterlegen!

Garga Ich bin hierhergekommen, abgeschält bis auf mein
Gebein. Ich zittere von dem Schnaps zweier Wochen.
Ich spucke ihn ihm ins Gesicht, viele Male; er
schluckt es. Ich verachte ihn. Es ist aus.

Marie Pfui! (D 32-33)

By the end of this encounter Garga is thoroughly at a loss to understand Shlink's behaviour. The audience is in a slightly better position to understand Shlink, having heard his opening monologue in which he reveals something of his motives for fighting:¹⁰

Shlink (am Tischchen sitzend) Glatt bin ich, rund, satt.
Alles ist so geringe Mühe, alles bekommt mir. Wie
leicht ich verdaue!
(Stille)
Zehn Jahre war es leicht, so hinzuleben. Bequem,
sesshaft, jede Reibung war zu überwinden. Jetzt
gewöhne ich mich an die Leichtigkeit und alles ist
mir zum Überdruss. (D 24)

Equipped with this clue that Shlink's motive for fighting is boredom, it is left to the spectator's "Vergnügen am Rätselraten" (GW 15, 55) to understand why he conducts the fight in the way he does. Much later, almost at the end of the play, more explanation is given for Shlink's behaviour:

Shlink Das Leben ist ein Spass. Wie es spüren. Man
müsste den Geschmack des Todes auf die Zunge bringen,
die Essenz! Man fällt ab wie ein reifer Apfel, ohne
dass man es merkt. (D 94)

For him the fight is a "letzte Sensation" (D137), a struggle fought for the pleasure of fighting, an effort to enjoy every last minute of living - including the moment of death - as intensely as possible. Since he is interested in the experience of the fight itself, his aim must be to continue the struggle to the very point of death. By his

tactics of passivity and impassivity he seeks to keep up his opponent's interest in the fight and to taunt Garga with his inability to find some way of wounding him. Thus he hopes eventually to provoke Garga into killing him, like a "Skarabäus, gemietet, mich hinunterzuschaffen" (D100). In short, Shlink, who regards himself as "eine einmalige Sache" (D88), is determined to die his own death.

If Garga were able to carry out the threat, which he makes at the end of their second encounter, to sail away to Tahiti with Shlink's money, he would win the fight outright, on an emotional level at least, for such an action would demonstrate that he is unfettered either by his ties to his past way of life or to his enemy, and would also frustrate Shlink's masochistic ambitions. However, when he tries to put this plan into operation, it becomes clear that he lacks such complete emotional freedom, for he feels that he cannot simply desert his mother. Caught between his desire for freedom and his attachment to his mother, he at first attempts the compromise solution of asking her to go away with him. Such a solution would not really meet the problem, of course, for if he has to admit his lack of emotional independence in relation to his mother, merely to break free of his ties to Shlink would not be a complete assertion of freedom. When she refuses to go away with him, he has to face up to the need for a total "Opferung der Familie" (D33) if he is to realise his plan. Ironically, when he then decides to abandon his family completely, he merely worsens his situation, for this allows Shlink, who knows that Garga would really like to have his family provided for, to take over his position as breadwinner. This move of Shlink's is a good one for a number of reasons: because he has done no more than carry out one of Garga's - admittedly unexpressed - wishes, he has again demonstrated

that he can penetrate into the young man's most private thoughts and anticipate the movements of his will; also, his presence in the family will add to Garga's feelings of hatred towards him, making him jealous of Shlink for having usurped his place in the home and angry at the thought of being obliged to his enemy for the provision of his family; finally, he has burdened himself masochistically with the physical strain of labouring in the "Kohlenlagern" to support the family and with the emotional strain of giving up his beloved "Einsamkeit" (D50) in order to live in close contact with others.¹¹

Shlink's success in binding Garga emotionally to himself is confirmed when Garga, instead of leaving for the South Seas, comes to visit his enemy in the coalfields in order to resume the fight. Although willing to fight, Garga confesses that he is unable to find a way of getting to grips with his opponent:

Garga Ihr Leib ist eingeölt. Meine Hand greift sich ab nach einer rauhen Stelle. (D41)

Shlink's reply is tauntingly evasive:

Shlink Ich kann Ihnen keinen Fingerzeig geben, meine faulen Flecken sind mir nicht bekannt. Ich habe mich in Ihre Hände gegeben. (D41)

However, because Garga sees no way of making an attack, Shlink is forced to take the initiative in restarting the fight, and this initiative does suggest to Garga where Shlink's weak spot might be. The Malayan's "attack" takes the form of offering to marry Garga's sister Marie. In so doing he is acting on the same principle as before, that of fulfilling one of Garga's unexpressed wishes (in this instance to have his sister cared for), but in such a way as to provoke only anger in the younger man. Ostensibly Shlink is simply removing another obstacle to Garga's departure for Tahiti:

Shlink Sie gewinnen nichts als die Freiheit. Sie schnaufen auf. Das Eiland bleibt hinter Ihnen mit seinen Tieren und ihrer Krätze. Frische Winde nehmen Sie auf. Die Eiterbeule läuft in die Rupfen aus. Ihr Billet nach Tahiti ist gesichert. (D 44)

But, of course, the real effect of such a move is to create rather than remove an obstacle.¹² In the first place, as Shlink is perfectly aware, Garga loves his sister and would not be happy to see her married to a man he hates. Moreover, the very fact that it is Shlink who is offering to clear the path to Tahiti makes such a course of action impossible for Garga to follow. Not only is it emotionally impossible for him to be indebted to his enemy, but there is also the problem that to go away now would mean acting according to decisions made by Shlink in his usurped position as arbiter of Garga's actions. If Garga wants to prove his independence, the one thing he may not do now is go to Tahiti. Erich Engel sums up his dilemma neatly: "Tahiti nützt Garga nur als Eroberung, nicht als Flucht. Shlink vernichtet ihm Tahiti, indem er ihm den Weg weist. Da verbaut er ihn ihm" (D 122). Yet the "round" does not go altogether in Shlink's favour, for in his eagerness to prevent Garga going to Tahiti by ostensibly helping him to leave, he has shown signs of fear which Garga has been quick to notice:

Shlink Sie schliessen den Kampf ab, ich helfe Ihnen aufs Schiff. Ihre Dankbarkeit habe ich Ihnen ausgezogen wie einen Milchzahn. Greifen Sie zu!

Garga Oh, ich erblicke die glühenden Horizonte, mit wilden Tieren besetzt, nicht. Ich erblicke in diesem Augenblick Ihre Angst. Sie finden das Seil, das mir hingestreckt ist, Sie tun die Hand hin, Sie sagen, es ist von Ihnen, Sie seifen es mir ein, es ist eine Schlinge geworden. Ich aber lebe wie in Milch. Alles fließt in mich. Aus der Luft, aus dem Boden, es ist mein Land, um die Schultern und im Rücken. Wird ein Fisch ertrinken? Ich liege und sehe die Schlote und bedauere Sie: mit gebleckten Zähnen. Und denke, wie es jetzt mit George Garga ist?! Was geschieht mit ihm? Sein Feind verzweifelt. Er schießt Gedanken in sein Hirn, und jener denkt mit

dem Magen weiter. Vielleicht täuschen Sie
sich! Vielleicht täusche ich mich! Aber ich
überlasse Sie Ihrem Zweifel bei der Kohlenarbeit.
Mahlzeit! (Ab) (D44)

Thus, while Shlink's gambit has certainly hurt Garga by forcing him into denying his desire to escape to Tahiti, it has also shown him that he can wound Shlink in return if he adopts a policy of passivity towards him.

The shift in the balance of power created by Garga's discovery of Shlink's "faule Stelle", namely his masochistic interest in the fight, manifests itself in the fact that the flow of the action is reversed, Shlink now having to bring the fight to Garga rather than the other way round. The Malayan is forced by Garga's inactivity to visit him in the squalid bar where he spends his days drinking away the money he once said he would use to sail to Tahiti. Shlink exposes more of his flank when he shows anger at this behaviour:

Shlink Sie sind betrunken... Das Billet nach Tahiti haben Sie in Schnaps aufgeweicht. Sie sind vielleicht lebensunfähig. (D51)

To provoke Garga into action Shlink repeats his threat of proposing to Marie. Rather than abandon his policy of passivity Garga agrees to this "sacrifice" (D52) of his sister. Fortunately for him he is spared the pain of seeing Marie fall into Shlink's hands, because she refuses to be "bought" like this and prefers to seek refuge with her former suitor Mankyboddle. Garga then takes his strategy of avoiding combat a stage further by marrying Jane, returning with her to his parents' home and resuming work in Maynes' lending-library. He is even prepared to tolerate Shlink's financial interference in his private affairs rather than give his enemy the pleasure of having his intrusions resisted:

Shlink Ich habe hier die Papiere für einige Baumwollfelder in den Südstaaten
(...)

Garga (steckt die Papiere ein nach langem Zögern) Ich sollte Ihnen die Wische ins Gesicht schlagen, und ich habe solche Lust, vielleicht tue ich das, aber das befriedigt Sie ja, da bin ich lieber abgestumpft und nehme sie an. (D 63-64)

Now that Garga has abandoned his defence of absolute freedom, Shlink finds it necessary to forsake temporarily¹³ his principle of using "die Güte als Mittel des Bösen" (D 134) in order to force Garga to give up his tactic of passivity. When Jane misuses the share-papers he gave to Garga, Shlink threatens to have Garga put in prison.

This almost has the effect of provoking Garga into the kind of violent action which Shlink has been aiming to stimulate all along. But Garga just manages to resist this temptation (D 77), realising that physical violence would only satisfy Shlink, whereas Garga's absence for years in prison will cause the older man suffering and frustration.

When Garga returns from prison, he finds his family broken up: Marie has become a prostitute, Jane an alcoholic, and his mother has disappeared. Only his father, for whom Garga has no affection, remains. Having lost his family and his spiritual freedom because of his determination to injure Shlink, he now finds that the only thing left to live for is the fight itself and the promise of revenge it holds out:

Garga Aber es ist kalt hier. Kein Brot in der Küche. Der Branntweindunst in den Vorhängen! Der Rupfen ist zernagt, es wird kalt hier, bald schneit es in die Tapeten, und der Schnaps ist in die Gosse geflossen. Meine Mutter läuft schnuppernd über die kalten Felder. Ich sitze in Knochen da. Ich rede nicht von meiner Mutter, sie ist eine Hündin. Ich selbst bin wie ein Hund, bis auf dies: Noch ist Rache in meinen Hals gestopft, ich habe Hass zwischen den Fingern, ich kann Sie nicht erwürgen. Ich weiss nicht, wo Sie Ihr Gesicht haben. (D 89-90)

However, after a further three weeks of single combat "im Dickicht", Garga has to admit that he cannot even have the satisfaction of forcing his opponent to concede defeat. Their natures are so different, he concludes, that their respective strengths simply cannot be measured:

Garga Ich bin hart wie Bernstein, man findet mitunter Tierleichen in ihm, der durchsichtig ist. Aber das ist alles hart. Ich bin sehr ruhig. In dem Wald ist die Antwort. Eine Eiche ist nicht stärker als ein Iltis. (Ab) (D93)

Although this insight into the incomparability of their respective strengths is an important step in Garga's development, it is not in itself sufficient to set him free from the attachment to Shlink in which his enmity involves him. It helps him to decide that Shlink must simply be "erledigt" (D98), by handing him over to the lynchmob which is out looking for him. But because he still feels the need for a last trial of strength, he rejoins Shlink and tells him of the approach of the lynchers in the hope that Shlink's fear of death will make him give up the struggle. However, Shlink has already anticipated this move and has even had a horse made ready for the escape of the one whose will breaks first. Shlink then deals the final blow to Garga's remaining illusions of independence by stating that he has known all along that Garga would survive him and has even "hired" him specifically with this end in mind:

Garga Man hängt uns in Bälde!

Shlink Das könnte Ihnen passen! Dass Sie so wichtig sind! Und Sie sind doch nur der Skarabäus, gemietet, mich hinunterzuschaffen, mir etwas Ekel oder Moder in das Maul zu stopfen, dass ich den Geschmack des Todes auf die Zunge bringe.

Garga (steht, greift sich an den Hals) Die Entscheidung ist also vorbestimmt? Das trifft. (D100)

Garga does in fact escape after conceding defeat in terms which are a direct answer to Shlink's original challenge: "Ich verkaufe, Shlink. (Ab)" (D101). Thus, Garga has had to accept an apparently thoroughgoing defeat at the hands of his enemy, for he has sacrificed his family and mistress to no purpose and has had all illusions of independence or strength of character destroyed. Yet, paradoxically, his acceptance of defeat is also a form of victory, because by giving up the struggle with Shlink he regains his emotional independence of his enemy - it now no longer matters to him whether he wins or loses - he is now free to go his way. Of course, he has not acquired the absolute freedom which he had once dreamed of, but something much simpler and pragmatically demonstrable, through merely going away to leave Shlink to die. He has not managed to prove himself absolutely independent of his enemy but has learned rather, that to be concerned about such problems leads only to unfreedom. What is important, he now recognises, is simply to be alive and enjoy living: "Es ist nicht wichtig, vor Gott der Stärkere zu sein, sondern der Lebendige" (D100). In short, what Garga has gained from the struggle is the awareness that, as far as individual happiness is concerned, it is better to look to relative rather than absolute notions of value.

Shlink showed considerable intellectual ability in his construction of the combative situation. In choosing as his stance that of an ostensible benefactor and so forcing Garga into defending his freedom against such interference, he put Garga into a position where he was bound to end the fight as a loser: if he resisted Shlink's "kindnesses" he would hurt himself in real terms (as when he goes to prison rather than accept Shlink's offer to "arrange" things for him), but if he accepted Shlink's avuncular anticipation of his wishes he

would be sacrificing his cherished freedom. By choosing to ride away on the horse which Shlink has provided, Garga is doing the only sensible thing as far as his material happiness is concerned. If he refused the horse he would not necessarily have demonstrated his independence anyway, as such an action could be interpreted as emotional dependence on Shlink; if he stayed and forced Shlink to leave he would have gained some kind of spiritual victory by showing his opponent to be less brave than he, but such a victory would quickly be followed by his own death at the hands of the lynchers. By leaving he gains in two ways: firstly, in giving up the fight for freedom as hopeless (since by fighting he is compromising his freedom anyway), he gains the satisfaction, by depriving him of the opportunity to pursue his sado-masochistic ambitions to the last, of at least "stamping his opponent into the ground", but paradoxically, he also regains for all practical purposes his real freedom of movement. For Shlink to have won his fight he would have had to keep Garga involved in the struggle with him until the lynchers came to kill them both, for he would thus have succeeded in completely filling his last years of life with the struggle with Garga. Garga's departure means only nominal victory for Shlink, because he has ostensibly succeeded at last in "buying" Garga's freedom of will. But as far as Shlink's real ambitions are concerned, it means defeat. In having Jane murdered and so revealing to Garga how desperately he wants to occupy all Garga's attentions, and also providing the horse for escape, Shlink has made a serious "Rechenfehler" (D102). Instead of angering Garga and making him more determined to keep his spiritual independence, these actions have the opposite effect of persuading Garga simply to give up the struggle.

The conclusion of the fight is, then, completely paradoxical: the "loser" in the terms of the fight is the winner in real terms, in that he comes away with his life and his freedom (practically speaking), whilst his enemy, the ostensible winner, is condemned both to actual spiritual defeat and physical destruction. The true nature of Shlink's superficial "victory" is revealed in the imagery in his last speech before his suicide:

Shlink In Sicherheit bringen! (Er reißt sein Halstuch weg.) Die Fässer stinken schon. Gute, fette, selbstgeangelte Fische! Gut gedörrt, in Kisten vernagelt. Eingesalzen! In die Teiche gesetzt zuvor, eingekauft, überzählt, fettgefüttert! Todstüchtige, selbstmörderische Fische, die die Angel schlucken wie Hostien. Pfui Teufel! Jetzt schnell! (Er geht zum Tisch, setzt sich. Trinkt aus einem Fläschchen.) (D 102)

The "fish"¹⁴ referred to are Garga, who has just accepted defeat, and Marie, who ostensibly adds to Shlink's victory over Garga (by coming back to offer him her love) - "Aber es häuft sich. Fische, die einem ins Maul schwimmen" (D 101) - but who actually worsens his defeat - "Scheusal! Welch eine Bestie in Ihnen" (D 102) - by not allowing him to be alone with his defeat at the moment of death. Although Shlink foresaw himself dying with "Ekel oder Moder (im) Maul", he had not planned things to end like this.

ooo000ooo

Closely interwoven with the action which unfolds between Shlink and Garga is the fate of Garga's sister Marie, whose relationship with Shlink is so designed as to provide an ironic contrast to that of her brother. The function of this parallel is to qualify the validity of the cynical conclusions which Garga learns to draw from

his encounter with the Malayan. Whereas he slowly learns that the art of self-preservation involves cherishing relative rather than absolute values, her fate emphasises what is lost in human terms when a sensitive individual's need for an absolute value is frustrated.

The pattern of contrast between brother and sister begins when they meet in Shlink's office. Whereas Garga had refused to sell part of himself to Shlink, Marie has gladly accepted his offer of work as a washerwoman because this will help provide for the family. This point of difference is a sign of a deeper contrast in their natures: Garga's main value is his independence, but Marie cherishes the values of allegiance and security. Whereas Garga's values lead him into hatred for Shlink, Marie's admiration for what she sees as Shlink's virtues of kindness, patience, diligence, leads her to love him. Her subsequent experiences at Shlink's hands are an exact inversion of Garga's: while he is drawn against his will into a close relationship with his enemy, she, who deeply wants to enter into a love relationship with Shlink, is forced by his treatment of her into repeated assertions of her independence.¹⁵ This first happens in the scene "Im Rupfen" when Shlink offers to marry Marie simply in order to gain an advantage in his fight with Garga. Rather than be bought and sold in this way she turns to an unloved suitor by the name of Mankyboddle. She continues to love Shlink, however, and eventually abandons her loveless relationship with Mankyboddle. When she later meets Shlink again she allows him to seduce her, realises immediately that this is for him again only a tactic in his struggle with Garga, and again unwillingly asserts her independence by leaving Shlink after demanding payment from him for her "services". After this she becomes a prostitute, but this of course only increases her misery

and underscores the tragic waste of a love denied fulfilment:

Marie (auf dem Podest, sie lässt einen Geldschein in den Bottich flattern) Als ich die Scheine in den Händen hielt, sah ich Gottes Auge auf mir ruhen. Ich sagte: ich habe alles für ihn getan. Gott wandte sich weg, es war, als ob Tabakfelder rauschten. Was für eine bittere Armut ist mir alles, alles geworden! Ein Schein! Ein zweiter! Wie zerfalle ich! Es bleibt hängen in den Winden. Wie gebe ich meine Reinheit weg! Jetzt ist das Geld fort. Es ist mir nicht leichter. (D 79-80)

There is no denying that passages such as this one employ a fairly crude rhetoric of sentimentality, but this is arguably necessary as a corrective to the opposing rhetoric of cynicism and selfishness which operates through the behaviour of Shlink and Garga. After one last desperate attempt to win Shlink's love, which is frustrated by his suicide, she resigns herself, in a travesty of the conventional happy ending of comedy, to a loveless marriage with Mankyboddle. In this concluding scene brother and sister are brought together in a last illustration of the double face of lost idealism: the cheerless monotony of Marie's future with Mankyboddle effectively counterbalances Garga's anticipation of the pleasures of the simple life - "Ich ziehe in den Süden, ich kultiviere Land" (D 104). Here, as throughout the play, the contrast between brother and sister is a pointer to the tensions within a single experience, tensions which are clearly expressed in the rapidly shifting moods of Garga's last speech:

Garga Man muss seinen Feind in den Boden stampfen, man kann ihn nicht besiegen. Jetzt frische Wolken her, Ostwind! Wir fahren in einer Schale an den Südküsten hinauf, das ist gefährlich. Auf den Wind warten wir noch. (Er setzt sich an das Tischchen) Es war die beste Zeit. Das Chaos ist aufgebraucht, es entliess mich ungesegnet. Vielleicht tröstet mich die Arbeit. Est ist zweifellos sehr spät. Ich fühle mich vereinsamt.

Die Stimme Moti Guis (von der Strasse herauf) Ostwind!
Garga (bleibt sitzen, grinst) (D 105)¹⁶

ooo000ooo

A study of the behaviour of the three main characters indicates that, far from being chaotic or incomprehensible, the play does have a coherent theme, namely the question of the place and nature of values in life. Just how tight the thematic control in this work is, becomes apparent if one also examines the presentation of the minor characters. As will be seen, their function is to contribute to the balance of tensions between idealism and cynicism, between the need for spiritual values and scorn for them, which underlies the main action of the play.

Towards the end of Garga's second confrontation with Shlink he invites a group of Salvationists into Shlink's office and offers to donate the building to the Salvation Army if the young officer in charge will accept the humiliation of allowing Shlink to spit in his face. Garga's intentions are, on the one hand, to force Shlink into resisting such a challenge, and on the other, to show that he is just as tough as Shlink, by passing on to another innocent the kind of treatment he had received from Shlink when the latter "spuckt mir eines Vormittags einen kleinen Kirschstein ins Auge" (D 23). After some initial hesitation the young man accepts this personal humiliation as his "Mission" (D 32). When he next appears, much later in the play, he tries to commit suicide with the revolver which Garga, anticipating the effects of such humiliation on the young man, gave him at their first meeting. The scene of his suicide attempt is a cheap "Likörbude" where he sits reading aloud "aus der Likörkarte,

mit harter Stimme, jedes Wort auskostend" (D 81), while an orchestra plays Ave Maria in the background. This soulless setting anticipates the scene in Mahagonny where a "Pokerdrinksalon", otherwise referred to as "des lieben Gottes billiger Salon" (GW 2,547) is regarded by its clients as Hell-on-earth. The young Salvationist's collapse from idealism into despair, via humiliation, is clearly intended as a parallel to Garga's experiences. Equally, his suicide attempt, which occurs just after Garga has been deserted by Jane, translates into action Garga's own thoughts of killing himself as a final act of commitment to his ideals:

Garga Du hast nur eins, dich hinzuhängen, das Dogma ist das feinste Parfüm, wie viel duftender ist es als das Geschick, bestimmt durch die hergewehten Notdürftigkeiten. Wie entseelt liegt dagegen der Verlauf ins Blaue. Damit bleibt von dir noch ein kleiner Branntweindunst in deinen Kleidern, den du mit dir herumträgst. Es ist dein letztes Arom. (D 84)

The failure of the suicide attempt is a sardonic commentary on the pointlessness of such idealistic gestures. It shows that what the will decides is not entirely in the hands of the will to execute, because an idea, when converted into action, is subject to the interference of contingent factors. Put concretely, the clergyman fails to aim straight:

Der Geistliche (murmelt) "La montagne est passée; nous irons mieux!"

Garga (über ihm) Er meint, es ist sein letztes Wort, und es ist nicht von ihm, er wird es aushalten.

Der erste Mann Wahrhaftig! So'n Pech! Er hat es im Dunkeln gemacht, hätte es im Hellen machen sollen. (Leert ein Glas.) (D 86)

This incident is related by the theme of suicide to the earlier scene where Mankyboddle, having been deserted by Marie, contemplates, but decides against, shooting himself:

Mankyboddle (Er zieht einen Revolver aus der Tasche.)
Das ist die kälteste Antwort! Streunst im
Dickicht herum nach 'nem Weib, altes Schwein!
Auf die Viere mit dir! Verflucht, das ist ein
Selbstmördergestrüpp! Da pass auf, Pätchen!
Wohin soll das Weib gehen, wenn es erledigt ist
mit Haut und Haar im Gestrüpp, voll Wasser, soll
sie 'ne Witwe sein von 'nem Leichnam im Gestrüpp,
lass ab, Pätchen, Rauch 'n bisschen, iss 'nen
Happen, steck das Ding ein! Marsch! (Ab) (D 71)

The good sense of this decision speaks for itself, but simply to reject idealism like this offers no satisfactory solution to the despair experienced by the clergyman or Marie, and the attractions of such a commonsensical attitude are offset by Marie's feeling of desolation when she has to share the boring vacuity of Manky's way of life.

Another character who has her initial altruism crushed is Garga's mother, Maë.¹⁷ Her life's work has been a constant struggle to hold together the family she loves, but when Garga and Marie become more concerned with their respective relations with Shlink than with the family, she gives up the unequal struggle and leaves them to their own devices:

Garga (tritt ein) Wo ist sie?

John Wer?

Garga Die Mutter.

John Fort. Sie hat mir unten einen Grog bestellt.
Die gute, alte Haut.

Garga Schrecklich! Wie eine vom Regen langsam, langsam
zerfressene Brigg, die sich losgescheuert hat.
Ins Schwarze. Und ich Idiot habe nichts gemerkt. (D 68)

Before she disappears, however, she adds an important dimension to the conflict of values in this work. When Garga rails against all the "ordentlichen, dummen, sicheren Leute" (D 35) whose way of life he despises, and pleads for his right to exercise "die Freiheit,

unterzugehen" (D 35), his mother raises powerful ethical objections to his concern only with his own existential problems:

Mae Ja, schreie nur! Sage es nur, dass es alle hören. Wie alles umsonst ist und alles zuviel, was Mthe ist, und man wird weniger davon? Aber wie soll ich leben? Ihr geht weg, wie von einem Möbel, das kaputt ist, das nicht gut ist, aber ausreichend, und es hat seinen Dienst getan, und jetzt ist es aufgebraucht. Aber nach dem Möbel fragt keiner? Und es muss doch da sein, bis es völlig verfällt, und ach, ich lebe noch sovielen Zeit. (D 36)

The practical moral force embodied in Mae Garga exerts a pull in a quite different direction to the mutually opposed forces of idealism (which can, as in Garga's case, be quite selfish) and cynicism.

The moral viewpoint voiced by Garga's mother is also expressed in other less direct ways in the play. Two minor characters, Jane Montpassier, Garga's mistress, and Moti Gui, Shlink's erstwhile chief clerk, become casualties of the struggle between Shlink and Garga simply because they are satellites of these adversaries at the beginning of the fight. Jane is reduced to the level of a promiscuous alcoholic and is eventually murdered, while Moti Gui is forced by Garga to humiliate himself by fishing coins out of a slops-bucket with his teeth.¹⁸ The pathetic fates of these admittedly unattractive characters illustrate the sheer human waste which Shlink and Garga are prepared to create in pursuit of their existential goals. Their presence on stage thus adds weight to the element of moral opposition which is so important to the overall economy of the work.

ooo000ooo

The actions of Shlink and Garga are undeniably fantastic. This does not mean, of course, that they have absolutely no connections

with reality. Their needs and impulses are real enough, but they are given a freedom to act on these impulses and to seek to fulfill these needs which is just not part of our normal psychological reality. A fantastic action of this kind requires to be presented in a way which will overcome the problem of its psychological improbability. The following consideration of the stylistic characteristics of the work can therefore best begin with an examination of the means used by Brecht to create a recognisably "special" world in which the characters may freely follow their impulses.

The scene-settings are perhaps the most obvious means of conveying the fact that the action of the play takes place in a world which is set apart from the everyday world. These settings reflect symbolically the moods of the principal characters. In the opening scene, for example, Maynes' lending-library is presented thus: "Braun, Nasse Tabakblätter. Seifengrünes Schiebefenster, Stiegen. Niedrig. Viel Papier." (D 13). Almost every element in this description seems to convey something of Garga's inner world:¹⁹ the brown colour of the room suggests his feelings of depression at having to work here; the wet tobacco leaves may either specify the particular shade of brown or may suggest that the atmosphere is droopy, pleasure-denying (Garga and Shlink both smoke); the opaque window gives the impression of complete imprisonment, the low ceiling one of oppressiveness; the clutter of paper may be seen in relation to the dry, dusty, unsatisfying nature of the work, or to the unreality and bookishness of his attitudes to life. The same technique can be seen in the following scene, "Im Steinbruch": "Weisser Kalkhang. Vormittag. Hinten Rollen der Pazifikzüge. Menschengeschrei" (D 23); here the setting allegorizes the depths of the mind where Garga makes his decision to

fight Shlink rather than leave for Tahiti, the "Pazifikzüge" symbolizing his desire to travel south and the "Menschengeschrei" representing possibly the pain which Shlink has caused Garga.²⁰ Finally, mention must be made of what is perhaps the most striking example of this symbolic technique, namely in the scene "Die Mansarde Gargas" which is introduced thus: "Nacht. Fliegendes Geschrei von unten. Der Bretterverschlag wie schwankend. Ein Schiff" (D 87). Here Garga's room is made to rock like a ship in order to convey his inner turmoil.²¹

Another aspect of the "special" world in which the action is set is the use of symbolic gestures which express emotional events in a boldly stylized manner. For example, during the first attack on Garga, Shlink's crony "der Wurm" cuts up books with a knife. The meaning of this symbolic indication of Shlink's philistine attitude to literature is underlined by Garga's comment, "Man spießt die Literatur auf" (D 18): because of Garga's involvement with books it also suggests Shlink's plan to cut up Garga's life in accordance with his own whims. Wurm's use of the knife is just one small part of a whole arsenal of underworld accoutrements, speech and behaviour which Brecht uses to symbolise the destructive, anti-social nature of the impulses in which Shlink and Garga are indulging. Similarly, the physical impoverishment of the Garga family is less an expression of social awareness than an "objective correlative" of Garga's feelings of disgust at the spiritual poverty of a life lived within the confines of everyday concerns.

Brecht's use of language in the play is a particularly important means of creating an awareness of the apartness of its fictional world. As usual he employs the "gestic" technique of stylising speech

through the exaggeration of particular characteristics - as for example in Shlink's "Asiatic" habit of couching his speeches in elaborate formulae of politeness so as to keep his real motives and emotions hidden behind a mask. The most distinctive quality of the language of Im Dickicht is, however, not the fact that it is gestic but the extent to which it is metaphorical. There is not a wide variety of metaphor but certain key images and image-clusters are used with striking frequency. The "Dickicht" image which occurs in the play's title will serve as a suitable point from which to start tracing the intertwined threads of metaphor. The jungle or thicket is not an image of the modern city as a form of social and economic organisation; in fact it is explicitly contrasted with the city:

John Mein Bruder, du lieber Gott! Das hier ist eine Stadt, in solchen Löchern lebt man, mein Bruder lief im Dickicht herum, der Deserteur. (D 34)

The thicket is a place within or near to the city, a place to which Shlink and Garga retire in order to conduct the final fierce rounds of their struggle. The thicket is a spiritual setting symbolizing the wild, aggressive impulses in man's emotional make-up, an area of the self which normally remains hidden below the surface of the psyche but which exerts an increasing attraction over men with the growing denaturation of life in the modern metropolis.²² On the other hand, it is not a place where man becomes merely an animal. During their struggle in the thicket Garga laments the gulf which separates the simplicities of the primaeval world from the complexities of fully developed human experience:

Garga Der Wald! Von hier kommt die Menschheit, nicht? Haarig, mit Affengebissen, gute Tiere, die zu

leben wussten. Sie zerfleischten sich einfach, und alles war so leicht. Ich sehe sie deutlich, wie sie mit zitternden Flanken einander das Weisse im Auge anstierten und sich in ihre Hälse verbissen und hinunterrollten, und der verblutete zwischen den Wurzeln, das war der Besiegte, und der am meisten niedergetrampelt hatte vom Gehölz, war der Sieger! (D 93)

Just as the fight between Shlink and Garga is mental rather than physical, so the thicket in which it is fought is a spiritual tangle of ideas or emotions:

Shlink Er verirrt sich in der Reflexion. Durch das Los der Jane haue ich ihn heraus. Das Dickicht wächst zu hoch. Der Sturm muss ihn erreichen können. (D 129)

Shlink Passionen sind kostspielig. Sitzen Sie noch im Dickicht? Schlagen tüchtig um sich? Schneiden Äste ab, die sichtlich wachsen? (D 42)

Because this "jungle" is essentially a human, spiritual one, people are frequently referred to as trees:

Shlink (to Marie) Sie wollen eine Schlinge sein, ein Gestrüpp. Sie können nicht allein leben. (D 71)

Contrasting with these images of living, growing trees are images of dead or processed wood which are associated by Garga with the hated, unnatural life of civilised man:

Garga Ach, all die vielen braven Leute und die vielen fleissigen Leute, alle die vielen braven und fleissigen Leute, die an den Hobelbänken arbeiten und ihr Brot verdienen und die sauberen guten Tische machen, alle die vielen guten, braven Tischmacher und Brotesser mit ihren fleissigen, braven Familien, die so viel sind, ganze Haufen, wie ich sie verachte... (D 35)

It is no accident that Shlink, like the death-figure Mech in Baal, is a successful "Holzhändler" by profession; it is precisely because he has identified himself so completely and for so long with civilisation's exploitation of nature, that he rebels so violently against

this way of life and desires nothing more than to drag Garga down with him to the "Dickicht".

Another important group of images centres on the idea of fishing. Before the curtain rises, the audience is told in the "Programmzettel" that it is about to witness the "Fischzug eines malaischen Holzhändlers in einer Leihbücherbude" (D9). The thread of imagery is picked up again when Garga describes himself as having been "harpooned" by Shlink (D25), or as having lain like a fish in a pond and been attacked by a stork (D27). It is necessary to have recognised the significance of these images in order to make sense of Shlink's speech before his suicide (quoted above, p.108). These images of fishing are related to the jungle-imagery by references to the "Sumpf" (D77) in which the stork (Shlink) preys.

Apart from the natural imagery of the jungle, the "mythical" worlds of the boxing ring and the Wild West also provide images to characterize the struggle between Shlink and Garga.²³ The "Western" influence is to be seen in such words as "Prärie" (D19), "Sheriff" (D17), "Revolver" (D18), "Lynchjustiz" (D9) or in a phrase like "Die Hintergedanken werfen Sie nicht auf den Tisch" (D15) with its reminiscence of card-playing in a saloon. The imagery of boxing is to be found in such phrases as "Ich schlage jedem das Nasenbein ein" (D55), "Stülpen Sie ihn auf, den Hemdsärmel über Ihrem Bizeps" (D64), in the requests for "Ein Glas Wasser" (D65) or in Garga's admission "Ich wollte mit Ihnen boxen, richtig" (D93). A later "Vorspruch" invited spectators to view the play as a "Ringkampf" (GWI,126). The heterogeneity of such imagery and the linguistic clash with the frequently uncolloquial sentence structures in which they occur, contrive to heighten the element of the fantastic in the work. By

means of this fantastic struggle, life in the modern city is presented from the perspective of the "savage soul", the existential self desperately searching for fulfilment through intensity of experience in a world which is becoming increasingly "abgeplattet" (D 21) by the advance of civilisation.

The jungle and the fishing images work on the simple principle of providing physical correlates of emotional states or relationships. As such, they are really only an extension of a central cluster of images of the body which express the characters' feelings in deliberately simple but forceful terms. A character's innermost self is symbolized as his "Gesicht". Hence the use of the gesture of spitting in the face to symbolize deeply wounding attacks on a person's self-respect. Shlink's great strength lies in his ability to keep his real self or "Gesicht" hidden behind the mask of his physical face. The metaphorical use of the word "Gesicht" thus produces statements which are superficially nonsensical:

Garga Aber ich will gern noch Ihr Gesicht sehen. Ihr milchig-glasiges, verdammtes, unsichtbares Gesicht!

Shlink Suchen Sie's.

Garga Vielleicht haben Sie gar keines.

Shlink Vielleicht ist es aus Luft. (D 77)

The spiritual significance of the physical image is brought out by using the plural form "Gesichte" (visions) in place of the singular "Gesicht": "Der Feind in den Wäldern verbirgt seine Gesichte" (Garga, D 92). This view of the personality as essentially constituted by the individual's "vision" is one of the clearest points of contact between Brecht and the mainstream of Expressionist writing.²⁴ As part of this complex of physical metaphor, images of skin (thick or thin) convey the degree of a person's sensitivity. Because, on the

one hand, civilisation is built on "skinning" people,²⁵ while on the other hand serving as an extension of man's protective hide, the walls of the buildings may be talked of as coextensive with the characters' skins: "Was ist das für eine Budicke? Mit unseren Häuten bespannt! Dass es nicht in unsere Mägen regnet" (Garga, D 21). As a corollary of this usage, the skin is sometimes described as being penetrable, like bad or broken walls, by the weather: "Ich wollte, Sie sind im Elend und es schneite in Sie" (Shlink, D 70), "das ist die arme Jane, sie stopft die Lumpen ihres Rockes in den Mund, Schnee fällt in ihre Haut" (Garga, D 95). The wind (a symbol of transience) may make characters feel cold (lonely) or it may be felt as exhilarating:²⁶ "Das Eiland bleibt hinter Ihnen mit seinen Tieren und ihrer Krätze. Frische Winde nehmen Sie auf" (Shlink, D 44).

R. Pohl has described the language of the play as an "Experimentaltstil, der verständliche und Verständigung bewirkende Dialoge kaum je beabsichtigt".²⁷ Of the imagery in particular he writes, "Immer wieder bezeichnen metaphorische Andeutungen die Schwierigkeit der Kommunikation."²⁸ Yet, where he may have experienced some difficulty in following the dialogue (which is not altogether surprising in view of its stubborn opaqueness), the characters themselves evidently do not experience any such difficulty, for they move about within this "code" of metaphors in exactly the same way as people normally use everyday language. It is therefore inappropriate for Pohl to criticise Brecht for allowing characters to speak in a style which would not be the normal means of expression of such a character in reality.²⁹ The language in the play operates as an enclosed system with its own conventions, the principal one being the use of metaphors where most people would simply describe a thing directly, with the result that

highly metaphorical language ceases to become an individual speech characteristic. Linguistic individualisation does nevertheless take place, although created by other means; for example, Shlink uses peculiarly "Asiatic" turns of phrase while his henchman Moti Gui, a none too well educated thug, habitually uses the ungrammatical construction tun plus an infinitive ("Es tut die Kunden abstossen" D13).³⁰ On the other hand, it is true to say that the "künstliche Sprache"³¹ of the work is a symbol of inadequate communication, for although the characters exchange words (or metaphors) freely enough, each is necessarily so alone with his existential predicament that he can neither express his individual feelings nor understand those of others.³² The artificiality of the language is thus a way of "estranging" and so drawing attention to the foreignness of the coins of linguistic exchange, to the fact that words generalise, deaden,³³ simplify and codify expression so as to make it impossible for a person to express his feelings directly.³⁴ One character sums up the problem when he complains of "Worte! Sätze ohne Zähne!" (D71). From this perspective some light can be thrown on Brecht's statement: "Mit Dickicht wollte ich die Räuber verbessern (und beweisen, dass Kampf unmöglich sei wegen der Unzulänglichkeit der Sprache)" (GWI5, 69). A common criticism of Die Räuber has always been the dramatist's failure to bring the warring brothers together dramatically. Im Dickicht by contrast, sets out to show that no real struggle between two individuals is possible, because the existential self is essentially private and inaccessible, unable to communicate its pain to others and unable to know what pain it has caused to others.

The formal aspects of the play which we have been examining, the staging, the stylisation of gesture, the peculiarities of the

language, all co-operate in creating a special fictional world which is markedly different from the world in which we normally move. Herbert Ihering put this point well in his review of the premiere:

Ein Polizeibericht aus dem Chinesenviertel Chikagos ist Vision, ein Kolportagestoff apokalyptisches Gleichnis geworden (...) Brecht gibt die Atmosphäre, in der Unerhörtes, die Luft, in der Undeutbares geschehen muss. Er gibt mit den ersten Worten eine dritte Welt, in der der Kampf zwischen Menschen auf einer anderen Ebene, "in den Lüften", sich abrollen muss.³⁵

The construction of a special fictional world for these characters can, on the one hand, be seen as an act of liberation, a setting-free of impulses which are repressed in reality so that the spectator may vicariously share them for the duration of the play. On the other hand, the evident "otherness" of this fictional world can also be regarded as a way of containing or isolating these very impulses, as a means of gaining intellectual or emotional control over them. While allowing his characters (and through them, his audience) to enjoy behaving with the brutal ruthlessness of underworld thugs, Brecht simultaneously defines as ugly and irresponsible the actions which the liberated existential self might resort to in the pursuit of its aims. In other words this technique of giving larger-than-life expression to normally outlawed desires is ironic or ambivalent in effect.

Brecht draws on a number of forms of popular entertainment in Im Dickicht in order to find images which will both express and "contain" the violence of the action. At the first performance of the play the sensational gestures of the tabloid newspaper or the detective story were quoted, ironically, in the programme notes:

Durch den Prozess, der sich mit der Aufklärung des Mordes an der Jane Garga befasste, wurde eine jener dunklen Angelegenheiten im Chinesenviertel von Chicago ans Licht gezogen, die von der Presse so gewissenlos ausgeschlachtet werden. Der Fischzug eines malaiischen Holzhändlers in einer Leihbüch-erbude, die nahezu völlige Ruinierung einer eingewanderten Familie französischer Abkunft, die mysteriöse Lynchung des Malaien. (D9)

The underlined words were shouted out across the stage by newspaper vendors before the curtain rose; the intended effect, one presumes, must have been to create both an atmosphere of excitement and, at the same time, an ironic awareness of the clichéd, suspect nature of the emotions being appealed to. As has been noted already, in the play itself the resources of the Wild West are drawn on, with Garga regarding Shlink's challenge as an attempt at "die Prärie aufmachen" (D19), and various characters pulling revolvers at intervals throughout the action. Erich Engel's staging also sought to incorporate something of the atmosphere of the waxworks (which traditionally included a chamber of horrors) when he prescribed "Papierlaternen, dass das Panoptikum^mässige herauskommt" (D120).³⁶

The ambivalence of the play's stylistic peculiarities contributes to the tension between opposing sets of values which is generated in the course of the action, for the style both yields to the violence of the content and, by defining it, resists the pull of this violence. As a final illustration of the dual function of the formal characteristics, mention may be made of one aspect of the language and an aspect of the staging which have not so far been discussed. As R. Pohl has pointed out, there are moments when the passions of the characters break through the protective veil of artificial language and express themselves in freer, more fluid speech patterns than usual.³⁷ Such moments as these tend to intensify one's emotional

involvement with the characters:

Garga Nein, ich will nicht mehr.

Maß Du willst nicht mehr? Aber ich? Wie sollen sie hier durchkommen? Reisse mir doch nicht die Zähne aus! Ich kann vielleicht mehr arbeiten, oft schlafe ich halb beim Waschen. Und ich kann vielleicht etwas schneller laufen in der Stadt, aber ich kann sie nicht allein durchbringen, das weiss ich. (D 35-36)

The opposite effect to that achieved here, namely that of inhibiting such involvement in the fiction, appears to be the intention underlying Brecht's desire to have the actors not actually involved in a given scene seated at the back of the stage following the action in their scripts:

Alles vor Rundhorizont gespielt. Hinten die unbeschäftigten Akteure in zerstäubtem Licht, lesen mit. Der gestorbenen Jane Garga entgleitet das Buch, usw. (D 136)

The tension between emotional involvement in, and emotional distance from the fates of the characters is reflected not only in the style of the work, but also in Brecht's comments on it. For example, in an address "An den Herrn im Parkett", written in connection with the Berlin production of 1925, he described the play as one which, on the one hand, would appeal to the audience's desire for irrational excitement, while, on the other, offering an opportunity for the exercise of their rational powers:

Als Menschen dieser Zeit haben Sie das Bedürfnis, Ihre Kombinationsgabe spielen zu lassen, und sind steif und fest gesonnen, Ihr Organisationstalent gegenüber dem Leben, nicht minder auch meinem Bild davon, Triumphe feiern zu lassen. Deshalb waren Sie auch für das Stück Dickicht. Ich wusste, Sie wollen ruhig unten sitzen und Ihr Urteil über die Welt abgeben sowie Ihre Menschenkenntnis dadurch kontrollieren, dass Sie auf diesen oder jenen der Leute oben setzen (...)
Sie legen Wert darauf, an gewissen, sinnlosen Begeisterungs- und Entmutigungsgefühlen beteiligt zu werden, die zum Spass am Leben gehören. Alles in allem habe ich mein

Augenmerk darauf zu richten, dass in meinem Theater Ihr Appetit gekräftigt wird. Sollte ich es soweit bringen, dass Sie Lust bekommen, eine Zigarre zu rauchen, und mich selbst dadurch übertreffen, dass sie Ihnen an bestimmten, von mir vorgesehenen Punkten ausgeht, werden ich und Sie mit mir zufrieden sein. (D 139-140)³⁸

ooo000ooo

As is usually the case with Brecht's comments on his early works, his statements about Im Dickicht tend to be less helpful the later in time they were made. The commentary given in the "Programmheft zur Heidelberger Aufführung" (1928) is useful because Brecht evidently still saw the play in the same light as when he wrote it. Here he rightly defines the "einfachen Grundgedanken" of the play as:

den, dass purer Sport zwei Männer in einen Kampf verwickeln könnte, der ihre wirtschaftliche Situation sowie sie selbst bis zur Unkenntlichkeit verändert. Hier wird Sport als Passion einfach den für das Theater schon zur Verfügung stehenden Passionen angereiht. (D 142)

He also defines well the kind of conflict in which Shlink and Garga become involved:

Ungewohnt sind wohl auch die Kampfzonen, die in diesem Stück Anwendung finden. Als Kampfzonen werden nämlich gewisse Vorstellungskomplexe verwendet wie zum Beispiel diejenigen, welche ein junger Mann von der Art des George Garga von der Familie, von der Ehe oder von seiner Ehre hat. Diese Vorstellungskomplexe benutzt sein Gegner, um ihn zu schädigen. Ausserdem erzeugt der eine Kämpfer im andern gewisse Gedanken, die ihn zerstören müssen, er schießt Gedanken in seinen Kopf wie Brandpfeile. (D 142)

He also gives a warning not to regard the behaviour of the characters from a normal psychological point of view:

So dürfen Sie nicht erstaunt sein, wenn in den neueren Dramen gewisse Menschentypen in gewissen Situationen anders handeln, als Sie erwartet haben, und auch nicht, wenn Ihre Mutmassungen über die Motive einer bestimmten Handlungsweise sich als falsch erweisen. In dieser Welt

und in dieser Dramatik findet sich der Philosoph besser zurecht als der Psychologe. (D 141)

The difference between his standpoint in 1928 and his later Marxist standpoint is clear from his evaluation of the fight:

Das Bürgertum wird auch auf dem Theater, nachdem es hundert Jahre damit vertrödelt hat, Kämpfe zwischen Männern lediglich um Frauen zu veranstalten, für Kämpfe um wichtigere Dinge nur mehr wenig Zeit haben, bevor es sich genötigt sehen wird, sich auch im Theater ausschliesslich dem wichtigsten aller zeitgemässen Kämpfe, dem Klassenkampf, zu widmen. Einen so idealen Kampf, wie man in dem Stück Im Dickicht der Städte sehen kann, wird man vorerst nur im Theater, in der Wirklichkeit erst in fünfzig Jahren haben können. (D 141-142)

Whereas the later Brecht subscribed to the idea that class-struggle was only a necessary evil on the road to creating a better society, here he still admits to seeing a positive value in fighting as an end in itself.

The late essay, "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke", although informative in parts, is basically misleading because by this time Brecht had adopted a view of human behaviour which could not easily encompass the ambivalent attitude to conflict which he held when he wrote the play. Here he regards class-struggle as the "real" reality and insists that Im Dickicht merely reflected this reality in an inadequate, idealised manner:

Die Hauptpersonen trafen diese und jene Massnahmen, um zu Griff zu kommen. Sie wählten die Familie des einen Kämpfers zum Kampfplatz, seinen Arbeitsplatz und so weiter und so weiter. Auch der Besitz des andern Kämpfers wurde 'eingesetzt' (und damit bewegte ich mich, ohne es zu wissen, sehr nahe an dem wirklichen Kampf, der vor sich ging und den ich nur idealisierte, am Klassenkampf) (...). Dämmerhaft zeichnet sich eine Erkenntnis ab: dass die Kampfeslust im Spätkapitalismus nur noch eine wilde Verzerrung der Lust am Wettkampf ist. (GW 17,949)

Of course, the young Brecht was not as ignorant about class-struggle as the older Brecht would have us believe, and Im Dickicht, far

from being an unconscious reflection of this social phenomenon, was a quite conscious attempt to explore other aspects of human experience.

The conception of mental events as a more or less clear "reflection" of an "objective" social reality, which Brecht employs in this essay, also forms the basis of E. Schumacher's interpretation of the work. In Schumacher's hands the inadequacy and contradictoriness of the approach make themselves strongly felt. On the one hand he argues that Brecht was convinced of the irrelevance of anything which was not directly related to the reality of class conflict, but on the other hand he claims that this conviction controls the whole play only "unconsciously":

Er war allzusehr davon bewegt und beeindruckt, dass eigentlich die meisten Auseinandersetzungen, die die Menschen austragen, am Wesen der Sache vorbeigehen, dass sie nur Spiegelfechtereien sind, weil es den eigentlichen, echten Kampf nur an der Front der Klassengegensätze und im Ringen um Klassenziele geben kann. Diese Tatsache beherrscht aber nur unbewusst das ganze Stück, sie bricht ab und zu spontan durch und macht dann die Beziehung zum wirklichen gesellschaftlichen Leben der Menschen sichtbar.³⁹

The strategy of claiming that the play really says something other than what it actually says, based as it is on a doctrinaire theory of mind, permits the critic to seize on partial aspects of the work, elevate them to the status of symptoms of its "real", underlying meaning, and then go on to account for the fact that this alleged meaning is not a coherent and consistent organising principle in the work, in terms of the writer's inability to realise his true (although unconscious!) intentions:

Die richtige Deutung des Vorspruches⁴⁰ von Im Dickicht der Städte kann daher nur die sein, dass durch die Ironie das abstrakte Verhalten ad absurdum geführt werden und gezeigt werden soll, dass es ohne konkrete Beziehung, ohne

Berücksichtigung der Klassenverhältnisse keinen echten Kampf, kein wirkliches Ringen geben kann. Selbst wenn der Kampf 'an sich', das Kraftmessen, der Wetteifer als etwas Positives genommen wird, ist eine Austragung nur mehr auf der konkreten Plattform des Klassenkampfes möglich. Eine solche ironische Blossstellung von Illusionen, dass es einen Kampf 'an sich' in unserem Zeitalter geben könne, setzte aber voraus, dass im Stück dem Scheinkampf der wirkliche Kampf, wenn auch nur andeutungsweise, gegenübergestellt wird. Leider reichte dazu die Kraft des jungen Brecht nicht.⁴¹

Here Schumacher appears to suggest that there was nothing basically wrong with Brecht's alleged use of irony for the purpose of social criticism, but that the fault lay rather with his failure to state clearly what he meant by such irony! Yet elsewhere in his analysis Schumacher argues that such irony is merely an "Ausdruck der Unfähigkeit (...) das gesellschaftliche Leben, die Wirklichkeit, auf die entscheidenden Kategorien zurückzuführen."⁴²

Because of the supposed inadequacies of Brecht's play, Schumacher sees his critical task as that of supplying the real motives for the characters' actions. Thus Garga's hatred of "all die vielen guten Menschen" is reduced to "nichts als eine Abreagierung kollektiven Empfindens, das alle sogenannten Gemeinschaften durch den Kapitalismus bis auf den Grund fragwürdig und verdorben weiss."⁴³ The fight between Shlink and Garga is also interpreted in accordance with the theory that, although human nature is basically good, this goodness can only be expressed in perverted forms in capitalist society:

Umgekehrt ist die Hassliebe zwischen Garga und Shlink nur eines jener Surrogate der Gemeinschaft, die für den Kapitalismus bezeichnend sind, um der schrecklichen objektiven Entfremdung des Menschen vom Menschen zu entrinnen.⁴⁴

In order to accept this interpretation, one has to reject as false the characters' own assessment of their problems in existential

rather than social terms: as far as Shlink is concerned men are "infinitely" isolated, and the coldness of this loneliness has clear associations with death. It is true that Shlink and Garga are in revolt against society, but their revolt does not appear to be rooted in anything that is specific to a capitalist form of society: Garga simply rejects in "Sturm und Drang" fashion the boredom of an ordered existence;⁴⁵ the passage describing Shlink's growth of a thick protective hide points to an inherent cruelty in nature rather than to his experiences of life under capitalism:

Shlink Der Jangtse marterte die Dschunken. Die Dschunken marterten uns, ein Mann trat uns, so oft er über die Ruderbank ging, das Gesicht platt, nachts war man zu faul, das Gesicht wegzutun. Merkwürdigerweise war der Mann nie zu faul. Wir hinwieder hatten eine Katze zum Martern. Sie ersoff beim Schwimmenlernen, obwohl sie uns die Ratten wom Leibe gefressen hatte. Solche Leute haben alle diese Krankheit.
(D108)

In short, what Schumacher refuses to recognise is that in this play Brecht quite consciously turned away from the normal, everyday world where questions of social organisation have their proper place, and created instead a special fictional world in order to express a complex of subjective and existential rather than social problems.

Similar criticisms must be made of A. Heidsieck's reading of the play.⁴⁶ As distinct from Schumacher, Heidsieck emphasises the inconsistencies which he sees as existing between the socially significant details of the work and its lack of any coherent overall social meaning, and accuses Brecht of obscuring real social problems by taking the characters' socially-conditioned neuroses as starting-points for an action, the fantastic nature of which deprives it of any general social relevance. Heidsieck fails, however, to recognise the symbolic

value of the so-called "real" elements in the play. The problems of Shlink and Garga are problems of the individual's relation to others and to the fact of his own transience, not problems of particular individuals in specific social circumstances. Heidsieck gives a narrowly socio-economic meaning to details which do not necessarily yield such meaning. For example, he regards Garga's "empfindliches Ehr-Gewissen" as proving that his cult of freedom is really an internalised form of social compulsion:

Garga ist arm, aber er besitzt eine ideale, asketische Einstellung zum Leben, die Illusion, wahrhaft, weil in seinem bewussten Willen, frei zu sein und seine Mittellosigkeit in ebenso freiwilliger Entsagung zu ertragen. Dass diese Freiwilligkeit nur scheinbar, nämlich verinnerlichter Zwang ist, beweist sein empfindliches Ehr-Gewissen, das seiner materiellen Notlage so ganz unangemessen und überhaupt ganz unzeitgemäß erscheint: er erträgt nicht das Mitleid, das andere seiner Armut wegen mit ihm haben, ja, die Aufforderung, seine persönliche Ansicht über ein Buch zu verkaufen, gilt ihm als Beleidigung (...). Seine langjährige Frustration schlägt in plötzliche Aggression um. Hass erfüllt ihn gegen all die strebsamen, sich duckenden kleinen Leute, von denen er selber einer gewesen war.⁴⁷

Against this it needs to be said that Garga does not have an ascetic attitude to life (he spends one week in every four drinking), nor can he be described as "strebsam"; furthermore, Shlink's challenge to his so-called sense of honour has a philosophical significance which Heidsieck appears quite to overlook. It is one thing to criticize a writer on moral grounds for not committing his writing entirely to the depiction of concrete social problems, but it is quite another matter to deny that any other problems, of a more general nature, exist.⁴⁸

B. Ekmann, developing a detail from Schumacher's essay, sets out to interpret Im Dickicht as "eine Studie über formale Hegelsche Dialektik."⁴⁹ However, not only does Ekmann fail to illustrate

what he understands Hegel's philosophical position to be by relevant quotations from Hegel's works, and omit to adduce any evidence showing that Brecht had at this time a knowledge of this philosopher's writings and was positively influenced by them, he also fails to substantiate his thesis by close reference to the text of Brecht's play. Freud and behaviourism are also cited - again without evidence - as influences on Brecht in his writing of the play; no thought is given to the problem of how two such diametrically opposed conceptions of psychology might simultaneously exert influence. In arriving at his utterly pessimistic interpretation of the work Ekmann suppresses the element of enthusiasm and vigour which is present in the violence of the enemies' encounters.

R. Ley rightly regards Im Dickicht as a play concerned with existential rather than social problems, but arrives at an unnecessarily pessimistic reading by looking for (and, of course, failing to find) ideal solutions to the problems faced by the characters. Although clearly deeply concerned with unresolvable spiritual dilemmas, Brecht was also a pragmatist who sought ways of living with difficulties, and not simply an idealist trying to square the circle.⁵⁰ Although Shlink does not break out of his existential isolation, he does succeed in filling the last years of his life with an intense intellectual excitement ("Ich wollte den Kampf. Nicht das Körperliche, sondern das Geistige war es" - GWI, 190), which has made his isolation at least tolerable.⁵¹ There is no reason to suppose that he intended to achieve more.⁵²

A number of critics have placed considerable emphasis on the homosexual element in Shlink's relationship with Garga.⁵³ M. Esslin, for example, writes:

Without knowing it, and probably without the author's knowing, Shlink and Garga are the victims of homosexual passion. But as the motivation of the action is repressed, the play is presented as a series of motiveless events.⁵⁴

But the notion of homosexual love is made explicit in Shlink's words to Garga: "Ich liebe Sie.(still, heiser) Ich habe ein Pferd für Sie bereitgestellt" (D100). What is questionable is whether, in a work where so much has a metaphorical significance, this motif should be understood in a literal way.⁵⁵

One of Brecht's working notes on the play was "Liebe des Malaien: Anschauung (Wolkengleichnis. Freundesliebe, ohne Besitzwunsch)" (D134). When Shlink declares his love to Garga he explains: "Sie haben Ihren Hass: das ist das nämliche" (D98). Hatred and love are identical in this context because they both fulfill the same function of bringing two fighters into conflict with one another. Garga fights out of passionate hatred, whereas Shlink fights out of a sheer love of fighting and, by extension, from love of watching a worthy opponent at work ("Anschauung, Freundesliebe"). Long before Shlink's declaration of love (at which Garga, as part of the cut-and-thrust of the fight, evinces disgust), Garga had himself used love-imagery as he lay musing on a possible outcome of the contest:

Garga "Ich nenne ihn: meinen höllischen Gemahl in meinen Träumen", Shlink, den Hund. "Wir sind von Tisch und Bett geschieden. Er hat keine Kammer mehr, sein Bräutchen trinkt zuviel Absinth. Er bringt weisses Brot in die Familie! Nun, die Mätresse raucht Virginias und verdient sich was in die Strümpfe!" Das bin ich! (...) (Er lacht) "Ich werde einmal seine Witwe sein, gewiss, im Kalender ist der Tag schon angestrichen, und ich werde mit frischer Unterwäsche hinter seiner Leiche gehen, die Beine tüchtig breit in der lieben Sonne." (D47)

The homosexual relation alluded to here (that between Verlaine and

Rimbaud - the term "meinen höllischen Gemahl" is taken from Delires I in Rimbaud's Une saison en enfer) is translated into the imagery of a heterosexual relationship and seen in terms of spite and unfaithfulness as forms of revenge. It thus serves as an illustration of Garga's feelings towards Shlink, who loves him as a "Kämpfer", and towards himself for allowing his freedom to be prostituted through his involvement in the fight; it also expresses his very mixed feelings, of pleasure and self-disgust, at being "unfaithful" to Shlink by refusing to fight.

As has been pointed out already, some critics have suggested that the play is more or less incomprehensible. W. Gaede seeks to explain this alleged incomprehensibility in terms of the work's genesis:

Brecht versuchte, während er an Im Dickicht der Städte arbeitete, sich von der Münchener Boheme, in der Feuchtwanger residierte, zu lösen und in Berlin Fuss zu fassen. Damit ist im Stück, besonders aus der Perspektive Gargas eine verschlüsselte Stellungnahme zur literarischen Situation Brechts zu erwarten.⁵⁶

Gaede equates Brecht's language with Garga's and Shlink's with that of his friend Feuchtwanger and sees the play as an attempt to break with the "bilderreiche Sprache" which he has used in the past.

Apart from the fact that Brecht continues to use many of the same metaphors in his next work, Eduard II, it needs to be said against Gaede's approach that the text yields much more significance than his generalisations about incommunication suggest.

Conflict is to be found not only in the internal relationships in Im Dickicht, but also in the relationship of the work as a whole to certain contemporary attitudes. The obscurity and improbability

of the action naturally produced, as they were assuredly intended to, a good deal of irritation in many of its spectators.⁵⁷ But as well as adopting his usual provocative stance towards his bourgeois audience, Brecht also polemicised in Im Dickicht against certain ideas which were modish amongst intellectuals - even amongst personal friends of his. The contrasts between the Western and Eastern mentalities, between "Asiatismus" and "Amerikanismus", had become a constant topic of literary and cultural journalists, Asia being associated with "passive Indolenz", "Tiefe", while America was characterised by its reliance on rationality and technology and on "aktive Energie".⁵⁹ The fact that Brecht's close friend Feuchtwanger was fascinated by this subject and accepted the popular view that the Asian was essentially "keine militante Natur"⁶⁰ may have been a particular spur to Brecht to deal with this question. Brecht ironically inverts the normal view of the respective racial characteristics of Asian and Westerner by making Garga a character who cultivates inner freedom, which is supposedly the goal of the Asian - "Ich schlafe auf einer Art 'Östlichem Divan', wenn es Sie interessiert" (D 14) - and by having Shlink play an active role in initiating the fight. While it is true that Shlink thereafter adopts an impassive manner and employs passivity as a tactic, his need for violence and for the assertion of his will is just as strong as Garga's, even if it is expressed in a "negative" form, as masochism.⁶¹ In order to stress how little importance he attached to generalised notions of racial characteristics, Brecht advised producers, "das Asiatentum des Shlink durch einen schlichten gelben Anstrich anzudeuten" (D 143), but otherwise to allow him "to behave like an Asian, that is like a European."

To conclude, Im Dickicht is thematically of a piece with the plays which preceded it, containing as it does the same fundamental conflicts, the same balance of tensions between idealism on the one hand and cynicism on the other, between the claims of morality and the claims of the existential self, between the instinct for self-preservation and the allures of danger and self-destruction, between irony and passion. While not reflecting any development in Brecht's preoccupations,⁶² it does demonstrate his ability to vary his dramatic style and his interest in experimenting with new forms. This same interest can also be seen in his next work, an adaptation of Marlowe's Edward the Second, where, as will be seen, he saw an opportunity to tackle afresh the same basic situation as in Im Dickicht, while at the same time extending his formal repertoire by incorporating into a blank-verse chronicle-play techniques which he had learnt in the side-shows of Augsburg's annual "Plärrer".

NOTES

1. This is the title of the original version first performed in Munich in 1924 and now available in G. Bahr's edition, Im Dickicht der Städte, Erstfassung und Materialien (Frankfurt a.M., 1968) All references to this version are indicated thus: (D page number). The title Im Dickicht der Städte was given to a revised version of the play published by Brecht in 1927 and reproduced as the standard version in his collected works. References to this later version are indicated thus: (GWI, page number).
2. Max Spalter, Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore, 1967), p. 166.
3. Marianne Kesting, Das epische Theater (Stuttgart, 1959).
4. R. Gray, Brecht (London, 1961), p. 42.
5. H.F. Garten considers that a number of dramas written in the immediate post-war years, which were concerned with a flight from Europe to the South Seas, were indicative of a general mood of the times. H.F.G., Modern German Drama (London, 1964), p. 174. While this observation is undoubtedly valid, it also needs to be remembered that such works also formed part of a continuing interest in the exotic which existed long before the outbreak of war. J. Bithell gives a catalogue of novels which expressed and responded to this interest in: Modern German Literature (London, 1959), pp. 377-378.
6. Brecht has Shlink explicitly state his intentions in the revised version of the play: "Von heute ab bin ich Ihre Kreatur. Jeder Blick Ihrer Augen wird mich beunruhigen. Jeder Ihrer Wünsche, auch der unbekante, wird mich willfährig finden. Ihre Sorge ist meine Sorge, meine Kraft wird die Ihre sein. Meine Gefühle werden nur Ihnen gewidmet, und Sie werden böse sein" (GWI, 138). G. Bahr gives a detailed comparison of the two versions of the play in her study Im Dickicht der Städte. Ein Beitrag zur Bestimmung von Bertolt Brechts dramatischem Frühstil, Diss. (New York University, 1966).
7. Bahr interprets the phrase, "die Verhältnisse dieses Planeten" as referring to "die Unsicherheit der Gefühle, die Unzuverlässigkeit der menschlichen Beziehungen." Bahr, Diss., p. 19. The remark surely has a wider significance than this. Seen in relation to Shlink's preceding speech - "Die Polarforscher haben Mühe, nicht über den Pol hinauszustossen. Die Welt ist abgeplattet und findet kein Ende" (D 21) - it is evidently a general negation of all values other than purely material ones. As such it is a further provocation designed to make Garga decide to defend "higher" values by refusing Shlink's offer. Bahr's whole interpretation differs considerably from the one offered in this study; it sees Shlink basically as a lonely philanthropist whose aim is to teach Garga to appreciate the value of human relationships. There are at least two points which must be raised against such an approach: firstly, Shlink's nihilistic and cynical statements about his true intentions, secondly, the fact

that he chooses to fight Garga in order, supposedly, to be kind to him.

8. The decision to fight Shlink is taken in a symbolic scene, "Im Steinbruch" (D 23-24), where "Der Grüne", a projection of Garga's self, first alludes to Garga's loss of freedom and then provides the revolver with which to shoot Shlink and so regain his freedom.
9. In the scene "Im Kalkbruch" Garga had said to his companion: "Ich komme aus dem blauen Himmel" (D 24).
10. An indication of Shlink's motives is given earlier in the revised version of the play by his evident pleasure at Garga's aggressiveness: "Shlink (freut sich) Ein Kämpfer!" (GWI, 128)
11. Both Bahr (p. 146) and Ley in his article "Brecht: Science and Cosmic Futility", The Germanic Review 40 (1965), p. 205 et seq., overlook Shlink's positive evaluation of solitude, eg. D 50, 101.
12. This is made clear in the next scene where the same topic is again under discussion:

Shlink Sie laufen blind herum. Ich öffne die Augen
über Ihre Hilfsquellen.

Garga Indem Sie sie verstopfen. (D 52)
13. He immediately resumes his role as apparent benefactor after threatening to hand Garga over to the sheriff by offering to get him off the charge.
14. See the discussion of the play's imagery below, p. 116 et seq.
15. The parallel between Marie and her brother is underlined by Shlink's words: "Das ist Garga, George Garga!" (D 72), at the end of the scene, "Gehölz", where Marie has shown her emotional independence by demanding money from Shlink.
16. Brecht's uncertainty about how to end the play is reflected in a number of different endings which he considered at different times: "Am Schluss verstaut er die Meta hinter die Bretter, in die Kirche, auf den Sonntag. Er produziert. Er wendet sich dem Erboden zu. Der Mais bringt, man verkauft ihn" (D 135); "In dem letzten, mit Musserster Hingabe geführten Gefecht gewinnt George Garga den realen Boden wieder, er bricht den Kampf ab, der des Mannes Shlink letzte Sensation war, und übernimmt dessen Holzhandel in der grossen Stadt Chicago" (D 136-137). In the revised version of the play Garga goes to New York.
17. Although defeated in this play, the mother figure, as a representative of moral rectitude, is subsequently allowed her revenge in Die Mutter, as part of the moral backlash released by Brecht's decision to break with the ambivalence of his early attitudes.
18. Garga is here again using Moti Gui as a totem figure on whom to vent his desire to humiliate Shlink, as he had done previously

when he humiliated the Salvationist.

19. Bahr comments, Diss. p. 21: "Ganz allgemein steht die Bühne für sein Inneres: dunkel, wirr und von der Aussenwelt abgeschlossen." This is perhaps too general an interpretation, since Garga's inner life contains other elements not reflected in his surroundings at work.
20. Garga's companion, "Der Grüne", is also part of the scene's symbolism. He is a mirror image of Garga himself, representing both his desire to simply go away and forget about Shlink and his desire for revenge (he supplies the revolver while yet pointing out the attractions of drinking, smoking, lying with women). His name may be a pointer to Garga's lack of experience in handling difficult situations.
21. The ship (particularly the sailing ship) is repeatedly used as an image of the self both throughout the play and generally in Brecht's early poetry. Rimbaud's "bateau ivre" is possibly the immediate source of the image. The extensive and overt quotation of Rimbaud's poetry in this play has been notorious ever since A. Kerr's hasty accusations of plagiarism on Brecht's part. Brecht's reply to Kerr is included in Bahr's collection of "Materialien". (See D138-139)
22. In an unpublished diary note in the keeping of the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" Brecht described the play as dealing with the "Hinterwelt" hidden behind the façade of order in city life. In another, now published, entry, he commented: "Eines ist im Dickicht: die Stadt. Die ihre Wildheit zurück hat, ihre Dunkelheit und ihre Mysterien. Wie Baal der Gesang der Landschaft ist, der Schwanengesang.", Baal, Der böse Baal der asoziale, p. 156. H. Ihering, writing shortly after the first performance, saw the play as expressing man's responses to the new age of barbarism ushered in by the modern metropolis: "Wenn man später auf dieses Stück von Bert Brecht zurücksehen wird, so wird man erkennen, wie sehr gerade in diesem Werk das Anfangsgefühl ausgedrückt ist. Das Anfangsgefühl nach einer erlebnisarmen, bildungsreichen, nach einer seelisch laschen, technisch angespannten Zeit. Krieg und Revolution trafen auf eine Menschheit die durch Zivilisation so mechanisiert war, dass sie elementare Ereignisse nicht mehr elementar empfinden konnte. Das Drama konnte nicht wieder einsetzen, wo es abgebrochen war. Es konnte den Amerikanismus nicht leugnen, nicht weglöschen. Notwendig war aber, ihn nicht als Verfeinerung, nicht als Entwicklungsstufe zu sehen, ihn also nicht wieder historisch zurückzubeziehen, sondern als neuen, primitiven Anfang zu empfinden. Die letzte technische Präzision des Zeitalters konnte nur dann künstlerisch zeugungsfähig werden, wenn es gelang, sie als Barbarei zu erleben, als eine Urzeit, die produktiv wird für einen neuen seelischen Beginn." Von Reinhardt bis Brecht Vol. 2 (Berlin, 1959), pp. 57-58.
23. Brecht refers to boxing as "mythical" in his essay "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke": "Es war die Wildheit, die mich an diesem Kampf interessierte, und da in diesen Jahren (nach 1920) der Sport, besonders der Boxsport mir Spass bereitete, als eine

- der 'grossen mythischen Vergnügungen der Riesenstädte von jenseits des grossen Teiches', sollte in meinem neuen Stück ein 'Kampf an sich', ein Kampf ohne andere Ursache als den Spass am Kampf, mit keinem anderen Ziel als der Festlegung des 'besseren Mannes' ausgefochten werden" (GW 17, 948).
24. Brecht's early affinity with Expressionist thinking in this respect is evident from his comments on the paintings of Marées: "Na, mit Cas über Marees. Das ist einer wie die Literaten. Ein sauberer Arbeiter, brav, talentvoll, reinlich. Aber seine Bilder haben keine Metaphysik. Die Perspektive hört dicht hinter dem Tableau auf. Was dasteht, sieht man, was er weiss, steht da. Es ist sein Äusserstes. Kein Bild wird fertig. Es gibt kein Geschaffenes, das absolut, mangellos dahintersteht, nie ganz auszuschöpfen. Er macht aus vier, fünf Elementen die Tafel. Sie ist seine Erfindung, nicht seine Vision" (GW 18, 13).
25. A verse from one of the Mahagonny songs uses the same image:
- Auf der See
Und am Land
Werden allen Leuten ihre Häute abgezogen
Darum sitzen alle Leute
Und verkaufen ihre Häute
Denn die Häute werden jederzeit mit Dollars aufgewogen.
(GW 2, 541)
26. The ambivalence of this symbol of transience recalls the love-hate relationship which Baal had with death. The ambivalence of the "Kälte" imagery is fully present when Garga takes leave of Shlink: "Ich werde mein rohes Fleisch in die Eisregen hinaus-tragen. Chicago ist kalt. Ich gehe hinein" (D 100). Here Garga is facing up to a future of loneliness, but it is precisely by accepting this condition of existential aloneness ("coldness"), where the self is defined solely in its relation to death, that he realises again the freedom which Shlink could not take away from him, but could obscure by involving him in a distracting struggle for a spurious independence.
27. R. Pohl, Strukturelemente und Entwicklung von Pathosformen in der ^{Dramen} Sprache Bertolt Brechts (Bonn, 1969), p. 83.
28. Ibid., p. 85.
29. "Obwohl Brecht für die kämpfenden Figuren seines Dramas wünscht, dass niemals einer Klügeres sagt, als sein sonstiger Verstand zulässt, greifen die meisten Anstrengungen im Wie-Vergleich über irgend glaubhafte Möglichkeiten der sprechenden Figuren hinaus." Ibid., p. 84.
30. P. Trost states incorrectly that "Alle Personen des Stückes reden ein und dieselbe Sprache." "Die Sprache Bert Brechts", Germanistica Pragensia I (1960), p. 74.
31. Ibid., p. 74.
32. Brecht frequently expressed this awareness of the absolute indi-

viduality and incommunicability of each person's confrontation with death. The following example is taken from an early poem:

Jeder Mensch auf seinem Eiland sitzt
Klappert mit den Zähnen oder schwitzt.
Seine Tränen, seinen Schweiss
Sauft der Teufel literweis -
Doch von seinem Zähneklappern
Kann man nichts herunterknappern.

Jeder Mensch in seiner Sprache mault
Und kein Mensch versteht es, was er jault. (GW 8, 119)

33. In his early notebooks Brecht commented on the tendency of words to form an incrustation over reality: "Viele Dinge sind erstarrt, die Haut hat sich ihnen verdickt, sie haben Schilde vor, das sind die Wörter (...) Wir haben von den Dingen nichts als Zeitungsberichte in uns (...) Man hat seine eigene Wäsche, man wäscht sie mitunter. Man hat nicht seine eigenen Wörter, und man wäscht sie nie. Im Anfang war nicht das Wort. Das Wort ist am Ende. Es ist die Leiche des Dinges" (GW 20, 13).
34. W. Emrich has summed up the Expressionists' sense of linguistic crisis thus: "Satzkonstruktionen, vorgegebene logische Fügungen der Syntax, überlieferte, vorgeprägte Wortbedeutungen schieben sich nach expressionistischer Auffassung vor das ursprüngliche Erlebnis und zerstören oder verfälschen seine lebendige Unmittelbarkeit." Protest und Verheissung (Frankfurt a.M./Bonn, 1960), p. 117. Whereas many Expressionists tried to create a special poetic diction which would overcome the obstacles imposed by normal language, Brecht preferred to exaggerate the obstacle-character of speech.
35. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht vol. 1, p. 312.
36. In his essay "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke" Brecht pointed to the importance of the influence exerted by the "alljährlichen Herbstplärrer, einen Schaubudenjahrmarkt" on his imagination when he was working on Im Dickicht. (See GW 17, 950).
37. Strukturelemente, p. 88.
38. Here, as elsewhere in the quotations from Brecht, the emphases are Brecht's.
39. E. Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 67.
40. In this preface to the revised version of the play (GW 1, 126) Brecht advised spectators to ignore the motives of the fighters and to pay attention only to the way they fight and to the outcome of the contest. Schumacher sees contradictions in this which he interprets as evidence of irony on Brecht's part. It is simpler to regard the "Vorspruch" as an attempt to direct attention away from the usual questions of psychological probability, which, if they were in the forefront of the spectator's mind, would make any appreciation of the play impossible.

41. Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, pp. 66-67.
42. *ibid.*, p. 66.
43. *ibid.*, p. 71.
44. *ibid.*, p. 71.
45. There is a similarity between Garga's exclamation "Ich sehe die Vision über den papiernen Zeitaltern" (D 21) and Karl von Moor's words: "Mir ekelt vor diesem tintenklecksenden Säkulum." Die Räuber I, ii.
46. A. Heidsieck, Das Groteske und das Absurde im modernen Drama (Stuttgart, 1969), p. 47 et seq.
47. *ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
48. H. Lüthy aptly characterised the kind of approach taken by Heidsieck when he criticised Brecht's later re-interpretation of his early works as a procedure "die nachträglich Motive wie Daseinsnot, Vereinzelung und Auswechselbarkeit banal als nur nicht recht deutlich gemachte Brandmarkungen gesellschaftlichen Unrechts verstehen möchte." H.L., "Vom armen Bert Brecht", Der Monat 44 (1952), p. 122.
49. B. Ekmann, Gesellschaft und Gewissen, p. 39.
50. As an illustration of this attitude one can cite the closing lines of the early poem Der gordische Knoten:

Nicht alles, was schwerfällt, ist nützlich, und
Seltener genügt eine Antwort
Um eine Frage aus der Welt zu schaffen
Als eine Tat. (GW 8, 143)

The relevance of this attitude to an understanding of Im Dickicht is indicated by the dedicatory lines which Brecht wrote in the copy of the play which he gave to Zuckmayer:

Es geziemt dem Manne
Zu rauchen
Und zu kämpfen mit der Metaphysik.

See Carl Zuckmayer, Als wärs ein Stück von mir (Wien, 1966), p. 381. It is equally significant, of course, that Brecht felt the need to fight against the seductions or threats of metaphysics.
51. The emphasis on the intellectual nature of Shlink's conduct of the fight is made explicit in the revised version of the play which is quoted here.
52. Shlink's scornful laughter at Garga's attempts to give the struggle some higher validation suggest that his own interests were purely in fighting "wie ein Boxer": "Sie kämpfen nicht wie ein Boxer, Sie kämpfen wie ein Missionar. Wie ein Missionar, der ein Atheist ist. Missionar der unbefleckten Jungfrau. (Lacht)" (D 92-93).

53. C.R. Lyons, "Two projections of the isolation of the human soul: Brecht's Im Dickicht der Städte and Albee's The Zoo Story", Drama Survey 4 (1965), p. 121 et seq.
M. Kesting, Das epische Theater (Stuttgart, 1959), p. 68.
M. Esslin, A Choice of Evils (London, 1959), p. 215.
E. Bentley, "On Brecht's In the Swamp, A Man's a Man, and Saint Joan of the Stockyards" in: P. Demetz (ed.), Brecht. A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, 1962), p. 51 et seq.
54. M. Esslin, A Choice of Evils, p. 215.
55. Spalter makes this point: "The homosexual element so recurrent in Brecht's early work is present here as well, though one is far less conscious of it because of Brecht's attempt to give everything a deeper metaphorical significance." Brecht's Tradition, p. 166.
56. F.W. Gaede, "Bertolt Brecht" in: W. Rothe (ed.), Expressionismus als Literatur (Bern, 1969), p. 602.
57. H. Ihering mentions the scandal caused by Im Dickicht in his review of Eduard II. See G. Rühle, Theater für die Republik, p. 510.
58. An unpublished diary note dealing with Im Dickicht laconically mentions "Schopenhauer" as somehow relevant to the play. Presumably this has to do with Brecht's ironic play with the clichés about Eastern mentality.
59. R. Müller, "Roosevelt", Der Ruf (Wien, Mai 1913). "Amerikanismus" subsequently became an important element in "Neue Sachlichkeit", but was not an attitude which first appeared then. Brecht was himself for a time attracted by the myth of a better land across the Atlantic: "Wie mich dieses Deutschland langweilt! Es ist ein gutes mittleres Land, schön darin sind die blassen Farben und die Flächen, aber welche Einwohner! Ein verkommener Bauernstand, dessen Roheit aber keine fabelhaften Unwesen gebiert, sondern eine stille Vertierung, ein verfetteter Mittelstand und eine matte Intellektuelle! Bleibt: Amerika!" (GW 20, 10).
60. L. Feuchtwanger, Erfolg (Berlin, 1930), p. 306.
61. As Eric Bentley points out "human passivity has its own negative dynamics." "On Brecht's In the Swamp...", p. 51.
62. That the Shlink-Garga relationship was already present in Brecht's mind, in part at least, in 1919, is suggested by the fact that one of his jottings for Baal contains a speech which is almost identical with Shlink's last words to Garga: "Geh nicht weg, Johannes! Wen hast du noch auf der Welt? Die Wälder sind abgeholzt, die Geier sind sehr satt, und die goldene Antwort wird in den Boden vergraben." Baal. Der böse Baal der asoziale, p. 71. The only change made in Im Dickicht is the substitution of Garga's name for that of Johannes. (See D 101)

CHAPTER FOUR

Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England

The conflicts which are the central concern of this study are to be found not only in Brecht's early plays but also elsewhere, in his early fiction and non-fictional writings. Before going on to examine Brecht's fourth major dramatic undertaking, his adaptation of Marlowe's Edward the Second, it is worth considering briefly some examples of these conflicts as they appear in other, non-dramatic contexts, as this will serve to underline their importance for an understanding of Brecht's mind in these early years.

The clash of a moral with an amoral, existential perspective on life which has been observed in all three plays so far examined, can also be seen in Brecht's conflicting views on political questions. On the one hand he was capable of urging trade-unionists to attend a performance of Hauptmann's Rose Bernd because of the play's revolutionary significance:

Sie ist kein ganz guter Mensch, sie ist kein schlechter, aber ihr wurde übel getan; sie hat viel getan, aber sie hat mehr gelitten: Schmeisst keine Steine auf sie!

Das ist ungefähr der Inhalt, er geht nicht über Bühnenkaiser, Prinzessinnen singen nicht darin, es kommt kein Lohengrin zu dieser Beschimpften, aber wir müssen hineingehen, es ist unsere Sache, die in dem Stück verhandelt wird, unser Elend, das gezeigt wird. Es ist ein revolutionäres Stück. (GW 15, 24)

On the other hand, the young Brecht was equally capable of showing an almost Nietzschean disdain, which would certainly have embarrassed the mature socialist dramatist, for the normal, quite understandable desire of ordinary people simply to be rid of their material problems:

Es ist eine sichtbare Angelegenheit, dass die kapitalistische Klasse in Europa verbraucht ist, sie gibt nichts mehr

her, vor allem keine Begierden mehr. Die Menge links ist gut, solange sie kämpft; dann, wenn sie gesiegt hat, muss sie ersetzt werden. Ein ärgerlicher Anblick schon die Eisenbahnen etwa, die niemand gehören, mit denen nicht gearbeitet wird, die nicht dazu dienen, Männer berühmt oder tot zu machen, die einfach aus dem Spiel herausgezogen sind, nützliche zivilisatorische Hilfsmittel, nicht mehr Zwecke! Es kommt nur darauf an, ob man das Glück in so kleine Stücke zerschneiden will. Man sollte es nicht. Und es lässt sich auch nicht. Es würde verschwinden wie Schnee, wenn man ihn anlangt. Lasst euch nichts einreden: 100000 Mark sind viel, aber 5 mal 20000, das ist nicht viel. Sollen sie in ihren frischgestrichenen Einheitshütten hocken zwischen Grammophonen und Hackfleischbüchsen und neben fix gekauften Weibern und vor Einheitspfeifen? Es ist kein Glück, denn es fehlt die Chance und das Risiko. Chance und Risiko, das grösste und sittlichste, was es gibt. Was ist Zufriedenheit? Kein Grund zum Klagen, das ist ein Grund zu wenig, nichts sonst! Und das Leben ohne Härte, das ist dummes Zeug! Güte und Grossmut und Kühnheit, das ist nichts ohne die Sicherheit, dass das Selbstverständliche Roheit, Dummheit und Appetitlosigkeit ist! (GW 20, 16-17)¹

The openly revolutionary sentiments of the Rose-Bernd review are admittedly rather exceptional in Brecht's early writings, yet the social concern revealed there does continue to assert itself, albeit in veiled forms, throughout the Twenties.² His frequently expressed desire to attract into the theatre the public of the sporting stadia is just one example of his interest in meeting the needs of the common people. He insisted that, "Ein Theater ohne Kontakt mit dem Publikum ist ein Nonsens" (GW 15, 83) and proclaimed "Unsere Hoffnung gründet sich auf das Sportpublikum" (GW 15, 81). His great admiration for the popular Munich comedian Karl Valentin rested on this man's ability to combine entertainment with enlightenment in such a way as to appeal to even simple people:

Dieser Mensch ist ein durchaus komplizierter, blutiger Witz. Er ist von einer ganz trockenen, innerlichen Komik, bei der man rauchen und trinken kann und unaufhörlich von einem innerlichen Gelächter geschüttelt wird, das nichts besonders Gutartiges hat. Denn es handelt sich um die Trägheit der Materie und um die feinsten Genüsse, die durchaus zu holen sind. Hier wird gezeigt die Unzulänglichkeit aller Dinge,

einschliesslich uns selber. Wenn dieser Mensch, eine der eindringlichsten geistigen Figuren der Zeit, den Einfältigen die Zusammenhänge zwischen Gelassenheit, Dummheit und Lebensgenuss leibhaftig vor Augen führt, lachen die Gäule und merken es tief innen. (GW 15, 39)

Whether the public really did share Brecht's philosophical appreciation of Valentin, one may seriously doubt. That Brecht should view Valentin with the sophisticated eyes of a young intellectual, is characteristic of the uneasy relation to popular forms of entertainment which underlay his avowed dedication to satisfying the appetites of the general public.³

Presumably Brecht would have considered Valentin's sketches as belonging to the type of "Bedarfsstück" which he distinguished (in an essay entitled "Über das Unterhaltungsdrama") from the kind of play which seeks merely to engage the spectator's mind in an intellectual game:

Es gibt Stücke, die einen auf ihre Art darin unterstützen, mit dem Leben fertig zu werden, schlimmstenfalls durch schwindelhafte Vortäuschungen (von denen die leichtfertigsten die einer tragischen Perspektive sind). Sie regen den Nachahmungstrieb an oder vermitteln gewisse (oder vielmehr ungewisse) Kenntnisse praktischer Art oder Erkenntnisse. Handelt es sich um das letztere, dann sind diese Erkenntnisse nur lohnend, wenn sie dem Zuschauer eingepflegt werden, das heisst, sie müssen ihm so leiblich geboten werden, dass sie ihn ganz durchbluten wie Blut bei einer Transfusion. Die Erkenntnisse müssen seinem Instinkt einverleibt werden. Ich habe bisher von den Bedarfsstücken gesprochen: aber hier, in dem letzten Punkt, berühren sie sich mit den Unterhaltungsstücken. Unterhaltungsstücke sind solche Stücke, die irgendwie Ideen verleiblichen: also höhere Allegorien, Spielereien, Luxusstücke. Zweifellos bilden diese Unterhaltungsstücke eine höhere Gattung als die Bedarfsstücke, und sie verlangen auch ein besseres Publikum. (GW 15, 43)

For all his professed admiration for Valentin - and his own, perhaps symptomatically, weak "Einakter" may be a tacit tribute to this particular mentor - it is significant that he admits not just the importance but even the higher intrinsic merit of the plays of the intellectual

game type. In his own major plays the intellectual content is difficult, if not esoteric, and the "popular" forms in which the content is cast are used ironically: the romantic melodrama (Trommeln), the thriller (Dickicht), the Chaplinesque farce (Mann ist Mann). As an intellectual who believed that the intellect, when highly developed, necessarily made men aware of their irremediable existential loneliness, his attitude to the common people could hardly be less than condescending. This belief in the loneliness of the intellectual is another symptom of the Nietzschean element in his early thought:

Er (Hebbel) kommt vermittelt einer scholastischen Dialektik fast immer bis zur äussersten Formulierung der beiderseitigen Rechte und Pflichten. Aber es ist dann noch ein ungeheurer Schritt zu jener eiskühlen und unbewegten Umluft höchster Geistigkeit - wo Recht und Pflicht aufhören und das Individuum einsam wird und die Welt ausfüllt und Beziehungen unmöglich und unnötig werden. (GW 15, 50)⁴

Brecht's Nietzschean proclivities even lead him to pour scorn on men's "Herdentrieb" and their attempts to evade the fact of their individual isolation:

Ich denke, dass es von einem dramatischen Dichter vielleicht nichts Unsittlicheres gibt als eine gewisse Schamlosigkeit in bezug auf die gewisse Schwäche des Menschengeschlechts, mit einem Herdentrieb geboren zu sein, ohne die zur Bildung einer Herde erforderlichen Eigenschaften aufzuweisen. Fast alle bürgerlichen Institutionen, fast die ganze Moral, beinahe die gesamte christliche Legende gründen sich auf die Angst des Menschen, allein zu sein, und ziehen seine Aufmerksamkeit von seiner unmöglichen Verlassenheit auf dem Planeten, seiner winzigen Bedeutung und kaum wahrnehmbaren Verwurzelung ab. (GW 15, 59-60)⁵

The (admittedly perverse) heroism of the protagonists in Brecht's early plays stems from their willingness to face up honestly to the problem of human isolation. Yet, just as Brecht's intellectuality prevented him from being able to write easily consumable popular plays,

so part of his mind made him unable to produce a consistently Nietzschean theatre of cruelty. Always there are formal elements in his supposedly "nihilistic" works which keep the world on stage at some distance from the real world. In his aesthetic reflections, too, an oscillation can be observed between emotional identification with acts of violence and an ironically amused response to such behaviour. In the following passage the element of emotional identification is expressed in the vocabulary of the digestive process, while the sense of detachment comes out in the more conventional aesthetic vocabulary of colours, shapes or sounds:

Ich bin ein Raubtier und benehme mich auf dem Theater wie im Dschungel. Ich muss etwas kaputtmachen, ich bin nicht gewohnt, Pflanzen zu fressen. Deshalb roch es oft nach frischem Fleisch im Gras, und die Seelen meiner Helden waren sehr farbige Landschaften, mit reinem Kontur und starker Luft. Das Gestampfe Kämpfender beruhigt mich, die sich zerfleischen, stossen Verwünschungen aus, die mich sättigen, und die kleinen bösen Schreie der Verdammten schaffen mir Erleichterungen. Der grosse Knall erregt mich musikalisch, die endgültige und unvergleichliche Geste befriedigt meinen Ehrgeiz und stillt zugleich mein Lachbedürfnis. Und das Beste an meinen Opfern ist das tiefe, unendliche Grollen, das stark und satt aus dem Dschungel bricht und ewig andauernd die starken Seelen erschauern lässt. (GW 15, 46-47)⁶

In another notebook-jotting his need to maintain emotional distance from his characters leads him to toy with the idea of bringing clowns on stage between scenes to provide a kind of comic relief, or what he would later have described as a "V-Effekt":

Wenn ich ein Theater in die Klauen kriege, engagiere ich zwei Clowns. Sie treten im Zwischenakt auf und machen Publikum. Sie tauschen ihre Ansichten über das Stück und die Zuschauer aus, schliessen Wetten ab über den Ausgang (...). In der Tragödie wird die Szenerie auf offener Bühne umgebaut. Clowns gehen über die Bühne, ordnen an: "Er geht jetzt unter, ja. Machen Sie das Licht düsterer! Die Treppe macht einen tragischen Eindruck. Die Karyatiden erlauben nur mehr Bankrott. Er wird Fliegen fangen müssen. Er hatte eine gute Art, die Hände in die Hosentaschen zu stecken. Wie er sagte: 'Man muss faul sein wie eine

Wachtel !' - das war gut ! Hier findet die Hauptszene statt. Es wird sogar geweint. Die Heldin hat Taschentücher zugesteckt. O, wär es zu Ende !" (Sie sagen das alles traurig, wirklich ernsthaft, es sind grünbelichtete traurige Burschen, die grünen Engel, die den Untergang herrichten ...). Die Clowns reden über die Helden wie über Privatpersonen. Lächerlichkeiten, Anekdoten, Witze. (GW 15, 50-51)

Thus, Brecht's early remarks on political, aesthetic and philosophical matters reveal a number of the same tensions between conflicting tendencies as are evident in his dramas.

The aggressiveness of Baal and Shlink towards their fellow-men has its roots in their existential confrontation with the fact of their own transience: their personal conflict with the world issues in conflict with other individuals. This pattern of behaviour is not restricted to characters in Brecht's plays, but is to be found also in his early short stories. In particular, the story, Bargan lässt es sein (1921) sheds valuable light on the attitude to life of Brecht's early heroes and can usefully serve to introduce a discussion of Leben Eduards des Zweiten, since the play and the story have a great deal in common. Bargan is a tale of treachery.⁷ The pirate captain Bargan betrays his faithful crew when he takes as his homosexual favourite a man called Croze, nicknamed the "Klumpfuss von St. Marie" (GW 11, 22). Bargan subjects himself wholly to the whims of this ugly, sadistic creature, and by so doing allows his crew to be led into a series of traps in which many of his men lose their lives. Eventually the survivors of the crew regain control of the situation, reboard their ship and lock Croze in a wooden cage. When Bargan then begs to be allowed to exchange his ship for Croze's freedom, the crew agrees and sets the pair of them adrift in a small open boat. Bargan's strange passion for this altogether distasteful creature is interpreted by the story-teller, himself a member of the crew, as being the fate

of a man, "der eine Krankheit hat und über die Sterne nachdenkt" (GW 11, 34). It will be recalled that the protagonist of the anecdote entitled Die Erleuchtung felt his whole life changed by a sudden insight into the transitoriness of all existence, even including that of the stars:

Man hat keine Verantwortung, dachte er. Das Gestirn ist rein vorläufig. Es saust mit allerlei andern, einer Reihe von Gestirnzeug auf einen Stern der Milchstrasse zu. Auf einem solchen Gestirn hat man keine Verantwortung. (GW 11, 47-48)⁸

This mental state, a mixture of gratitude and terror at the freedom from moral obligations which life in an ultimately meaningless world offers to the individual is presumably the same sickness as Bargan, who also contemplates the stars, has contracted. Bargan's "love" for Croze is his response to the moral void in which he exists: his adoption of the sadistic and ugly Croze is a symbolic act of self-surrender to a destructive world, his masochism an acceptance of the sadistic nature of life:

Ich aber dachte an sein ganzes Schicksal in dieser Nacht, und alles lag klar vor mir wie eine Wiese in vollem Morgenlicht, die von einem Wald langsam gefressen wird und nur vorerst noch da ist. Dieser da hatte sein Geld auf eine Karte gesetzt, und nun verteidigte er sie. Aber die Karte war eine Niete, und je mehr er draufsetzte, desto mehr flog auf, das sah er selber ganz genau, aber er wollte wohl sein Geld los haben, er konnte nicht mehr anders. So ging es ihm, der ein grosser Mann war, eine Anstrengung Gottes, so konnte es jedem von uns gehen, mitten im Licht wurde man überfallen, so unsicher sind wir alle auf diesem Stern. (GW 11, 35)

The narrator feels that Bargan's fate has given him a new insight into the nature of God:

Und in der Nacht, als er langsam fortruderte und ich ihm nachsah, dann sah ich ihn niemals wieder, hörte auch nichts von ihm, noch von dem Klumpfuss, fiel mir manches ein über das Leben auf diesem Stern, und ich kam Gott näher als in vielen Gefahren, in denen ich selber war.

Denn ich verstand mit einem Male Gott, der wegen einem so rüudigen, fetten Hund, der kein Messer wert war, den man

nicht schlachten, sondern verhungern hätte lassen sollen, einen solchen Mann wie Bargan hingab, für den es keinen Vergleich gibt, der ganz und gar dafür geschaffen wurde, den Himmel zu erobern. Und der nun, weil er etwas haben wollte, dem er nützen konnte, sich an diesen Aussatz gehängt hatte und alles sein liess für ihn und wohl noch froh war, dass es kein guter Mann war, den er liebte, sondern ein böses gefräßiges Kind, das ihn ausschürfte wie ein rohes Ei, mit einem einzigen Zug. Denn ich will mich vierteilen lassen, wenn er nicht noch Genuss daran hatte, an dem kleinen Hund, auf den er sein Auge geworfen hatte, mit allem was sein war, zu Grunde zu gehen und drum alles sonst sein liess. (GW 11, 36)

God and his world are above all treacherous, a divine attribute with which some native women are brutally confronted when Bargan and his pirates capture their village:

Sie erhoben sich und standen zitternd vor Kälte im Hof herum, denn sie hatten meist nur Hemden an, es war so verflucht rasch gegangen, dass Gott sein Gesicht von ihnen abwandte, um die Ernte in Brasilien zu besehen. (GW 11, 22)⁹

Since the world is merely the plaything of a sadistic god, Bargan decides that he can only live out the truth of his life if he, as part of the world, betrays and allows himself to be betrayed, if he takes sadistic pleasure in destroying others and masochistic pleasure in his own destruction.¹⁰ Through his co-operation in his own destruction Bargan exercises the limited degree of freedom which his existential situation gives him. In his "Lehrstücken" Brecht was later to use the word "Einverständnis" to describe an attitude to the world which, although different in certain respects, is in some ways similar to the one outlined here. The heroes of these later plays have to accept certain facts about life before they can act effectively, in particular they must acknowledge the extent to which the individual's life is shaped by the interaction of supra-individual, class forces. Within this limiting social context, however, the individual is free to seek to influence the group which he belongs.

Although the later plays focus almost exclusively on the individual's relation to society, even seeking to define the self in wholly social terms, whereas the early plays take as their starting point the individual's relation to the universe at large, the same structure of experience - acquiescence as the prerequisite of a limited freedom, - continues to obtain. What the following analysis seeks to show, is that the same view of life as was found in Bargan forms the basis of the protagonist's behaviour in Leben Eduards des Zweiten.

ooo000ooo

The adaptation of works by other authors was an important aspect of Brecht's work for the theatre throughout his career and was eventually to become the main outlet for his creativity on his return to Berlin after the Second World War. His later adaptations were concerned to a great extent with developing the audience's historical awareness by presenting it with pictures of life in past ages and inviting it to perceive critically both the parallels and contrasts between the past and the present. "Widerspruch" was a central category of these adaptations. It was involved on the one hand in the attitude of the present to the past, and on the other in the presentation of the historically determined contradictions in past events. In direct contrast to this later development, his first adaptation,¹¹ of Marlowe's Edward the Second, tends to reduce the historically specific meaning of events.¹² Brecht is not interested at this time in bringing a modern audience's historical self-understanding into dialectical confrontation with a past age, but seeks rather to use Marlowe's picture

of feudal anarchy simply as raw material from which to fashion a dramatic image of the complex of moral and emotional tensions which preoccupied him in these early years.

The earliest of Brecht's comments on the subject of adaptation to be published so far dates from 1926, two years after he had completed work on the Marlowe play. However, as no major change in his thinking took place in the interval, these comments can be used as a guide to his approach to the works of other authors in these years.¹³ In all these remarks the main emphasis is on having regard only to the "Materialwert" (GW 15, 105) of works of the past.¹⁴ Indeed he positively advocates "vandalising" classical works and treating them purely as raw material, disregarding their original meaning, using, if suitable, just the "grobe Handlung" (GW 15, 106), fitting it out "mit anderem Sinn" and generally stamping "den Stil unserer Epoche" onto them. "Neue Gesichtspunkte" (GW 15, 113), he argued, were necessary if older works were to be made acceptable to "erwachsenen Zeitungslesern", but he does not define clearly which new points of view he would like to see used. While acknowledging that Piscator's "Anwendung eines politischen Gesichtspunktes" (GW 15, 113) had shown how more could be derived from a classical play than a mere "Schwelgen in Erinnerungen", he tended to be critical of Piscator's methods and argued that old plays should be revamped, "nicht aber zur Vorführung irgendeiner Tendenz" (GW 15, 175). In another context he remarked that he intended to use "als Gesichtspunkt die Relativität" (GW 15, 70), but unfortunately nowhere in these early notes does he define what he understands by relativity. The fact that he uses the term "Relativitätstheorie" (GW 17, 974) in account of his early ideas suggest that he may have been thinking in terms of an analogy with Einstein's theories in the field of physics. It

is possible to see some connection between the concept of the relative validity of results gained by adopting a particular frame of reference and the characteristic shifts of perspective in Brecht's early works, as for example in the recurrent contrast of an existential with a moral view of an event. Some support for this interpretation can be found in his use of the term in the following quotation, "Relativität des Unglücks: dasselbe Unglück wirkt sich ganz verschieden aus, je nach der Kraft, auf die es stößt".¹⁵ However, until Brecht's early notebooks are published in full, no real clarity can be achieved on this point, and it therefore seems best to refrain from using "Relativität" as an interpretative concept in the meantime.

Brecht's adaptation of Edward the Second does have a good deal of the ruthlessness suggested by the word "Vandalentum" and it does operate on the principle of retaining only the "rough outlines of the plot" while giving to it a different meaning. The intellectual "toughness" of this approach is, however, counterbalanced by the element of admiration for the original, which underlies the decision to adapt in the first place. That the process of reworking was in Brecht's view both a correction of, and a tribute to, the work of his predecessor, is evident from his statement that he undertook this particular adaptation, "weil ich den Marlowe inszenieren wollte und er nicht ausreichte" (GW 15, 69), and from his later description of his adaptation as "eine Kopie, gierige Reminiszenz an eine glücklichere dramatische Ära" (GW 17, 952).

The attractions which Marlowe's play held for Brecht are not hard to discern. Not only had Marlowe presented a chaotic period of

history in such a light as to emphasize the vanity of men's temporal endeavours, he had also concentrated attention on the extent of men's capacity for violence and treachery. In some remarks made a few years after this adaptation Brecht touched, in passing, on the difference of emphasis between his own view of Edward and Marlowe's presentation of the king's character:

Das Geheimnis der grossen Dramenfiguren besteht zum Teil darin, dass sie nahezu jeden Körper haben können und Platz für eine Menge privater Züge in ihnen ist. Ebenso wie in den in Betracht kommenden Dramen mehrere Ansichten über den Stoff zugelassen werden vom Dichter, sind die Figuren ganz unfixiert. Eduard II. zum Beispiel kann ebenso ein starker böser Mann wie ein schwacher guter sein. Denn die Art von Schwäche, die Art von Bosheit, die er hat, ist eine ganz tiefe und metaphysische und bei Leuten aller Arten vorhanden. (GW 15, 195)

Seen from the standpoint of Christian metaphysics, Marlowe's Edward is a weak man whose mind is torn between its spiritual duties and the temptations of earthly passions; the career of Brecht's Eduard, by contrast, takes place within the context of a transcendental void, and the king's freedom is restricted merely to choosing the manner of his inevitable destruction.¹⁶

In Marlowe's play the frailty of the human condition is demonstrated in an action of awe-inspiring magnitude by showing a mighty ruler in the role of Everyman, being tempted and having to give an account of himself when summoned by Death.¹⁷ The dangers besetting the soul during this mortal life can be shown with particular clarity in the case of a king, because his crown both imposes on him particularly onerous duties and, by the power it gives him, exposes him to great temptations of pride and passion, both of which he can indulge with a degree of freedom denied to most men. King Edward's fate of imprisonment is in this play a poetically, "wittily" just retribution

for his sin of allowing his soul to become the prisoner of his vain ambitions.¹⁸

Brecht's Eduard also ends his days in prison, but differs from Marlowe's in not experiencing his imprisonment as a source of suffering, but rather as a source of masochistic pleasure. Brecht took as his starting point for this radical change a detail in the original: Edward's pain is increased by the fact that his body, in not succumbing to torture, seems to conspire against him:

Matrevis Gurney, I wonder the king dies not,
Being in a vault up to the knees in water,
To which the channels of the castle run,
From whence a damp continually ariseth,
That were enough to poison any man,
Much more a king brought up so tenderly.

Gurney And so do I, Matrevis; yesternight
I opened but the door to throw him meat
And I was almost stifled with the savour.

Matrevis He hath a body able to endure
More than we can inflict and therefore now
Let us assail his mind another while. (ME 100)

It seems that his body, the seat of the passions and prison of his soul, has now become an instrument of his punishment. For Brecht's Eduard, on the other hand, the resilience of his body under the duress of pain is a source of pleasure:

Eduard Die Grub, drin sie mich halten, ist die Senkgrub,
Und über mich her, seit sieben Stunden, fällt
Der Kot Londons. Doch sein Abwasser härtet
Meine Gliedmassen. Sie sind schon wie Holz
Der Zeder. Geruch des Abfalls macht mich noch
Masslos vor Grösse. Gutes Geräusch der Trommel
Lässt wachen den Geschwächten, dass ihn nicht
Anlangt sein Tod in Ohnmacht, sondern im
Wachen. (E 224)

This last detail, Eduard's determination to meet death with open eyes, is another example of Brecht's technique of developing, in a perverted form, motifs already present in the original. Marlowe's Edward is

shown as a penitent Christian who wants to meet his death in full consciousness in order that his soul may be prepared to meet its Maker:

Edward Yet stay awhile, forbear thy bloody hand.
And let me see the stroke before it comes
That even then when I shall lose my life
My mind may be more steadfast on my God. (ME 103)

Brecht's Eduard, on the other hand, wants to see death coming so that he may continue to experience to the very last moment the fact of his existence with all the conscious intensity that he can muster. This blasphemous perversion of the Marlowian theme is intensified by having Eduard compose and sing "Psalmen/Weils Fr hjahr wird" (E 223). These psalms celebrate spring, not as the season of Christ's death and resurrection, but with a pagan glorification of violence and of the psalmist's own energy:

Eduard Gut war Regen, Nichtessen s ttigte. Aber
Das Beste war die Finsternis. Alle
Waren unschl ssig, zur ckhaltend viele, aber
Die Besten waren, die mich verrieten. Darum
Wer dunkel ist, bleibe dunkel, wer
Unrein ist, unrein. Lobet
Mangel, lobet Misshandlung, lobet
Die Finsternis. (E 224)

Whereas the repentance of Marlowe's Edward marks a turn for the better in a sinful life, the blasphemy of Eduard in prison crowns a life of blasphemy. Not believing in God, he claims for himself the powers which are normally God's alone; thus, when he wants Anna to commit adultery with Mortimer, he offers to give her absolution for her sins:

Eduard Man sagt,
Der Mortimer hat alle Macht, Geh du
Zu ihm, denn dieser Mensch ist eitel.
Ein Schlag wie seiner verf llt einer K nigin leicht.
Dring in ihn, wende K nste an, deine
Besondern. Die Erde geht schier bald unter.
Was ist ein Eid? Ich gebe dir Absolution (E 177-178)

His masochistic hymns to suffering and darkness are his response to a world which, "geht schier bald unter", and in which man consequently becomes law unto himself.¹⁹

Eduard's masochism in prison should not be regarded as the outcome of his experiences, but rather as the now revealed motive for seeking these experiences in the first place.²⁰ His words in praise of pain finally clarify the reason for his curious behaviour in the years preceding and culminating in his imprisonment and torture. Seen in this light, his career is a search for opportunities to exercise and suffer violence, a search which he feels to be the proper response to the inescapable fact of individual isolation.²¹ In Eduard's view man neither has a God to turn to (hence his cynical arrogation of the power of forgiveness) nor is he able to make any real contact with another human being:

Eduard Ach, Spencer,
Da Worte roh sind, nur trennen Herz von Herz,
Und Verständigung uns nicht geschenkt ist,
In solcher Taubheit bleibt nur körperlich Berühren
Zwischen den Männern. Doch auch dieses ist
Sehr wenig und alles ist eitel. (E195)

Encapsulated in his individuality, all he can do is exercise his capacities as an individual. Eduard therefore leads a life of unremitting struggle, deliberately manoeuvring himself into dangerous situations in order to find the measure of his individual capacity for treachery, cruelty and suffering. His aim is to embody in his life the principle of transience to which all existence is subject, to consume and be consumed in turn, seeking at least to determine how the world shall bring about his death, and thus to realize the limited degree of freedom which is his within an overall existential situation of unfreedom. His philosophy and strategy are similar to Shlink's

in Im Dickicht, but he succeeds where Shlink fails. Whereas Shlink was unable to bring Garga to kill him and had therefore to take recourse to suicide, Eduard does manage to manoeuvre his chosen enemy, Mortimer, into murdering him and suffering in turn the consequences of this action.²² The following analysis of the action and of the changes made in adapting Marlowe will show how Brecht allows him to achieve this goal.

One major aspect of the play to be radically altered as a result of the changed conception of the king's role, from that of victim of his social role and emotional needs to that of the active manipulator of his own fate, is the king's relation with Gaveston. Marlowe's Gaveston combines those qualities of aestheticism, sensuality and cunning that one might expect to find in the male "mistress" of a king. The speech in which he contemplates how he will hold his patron's favour illustrates all these qualities:

Gaveston I must have wanton poets, pleasant wits,
Musicians, that with touching of a string
May draw the pliant king which way I please;
Music and poetry is his delight,
Therefore I'll have Italian masques by night,
Sweet speeches, comedies and pleasing shows,
And in the day when he shall walk abroad,
Like sylvan nymphs my pages shall be clad,
My men like satyrs grazing on the lawns
Shall with their goat feet dance an antic hay. (ME 9)

This Gaveston is a schemer in politics and appears to be the active, dominant partner in his relationship with Edward. This is suggested by the imagery of the triumphant conqueror in which he voices his delight at being reunited with the king:

Gaveston It shall suffice me to enjoy your love,
Which whiles I have I think myself as great
As Caesar riding in the roman street,
With captive kings at his triumphant car. (ME 13)

The imagery of the king in chains, omitted by Brecht because inappropriate to his active conception of Eduard, reinforces Marlowe's central theme of the monarch's enslavement (to his passions, to his pride, to his throne) which runs through the whole play and culminates, as has been remarked already, in the poetic justice of his physical imprisonment. The witty appositeness in turn of the death which puts an end to this imprisonment has often been remarked on. So integral has the fiery spit with which his anus is pierced become to the English reader's conception of Edward's fate that it is not surprising that Moelwyn Merchant should be disturbed by its absence in Brecht's version of the play:

It is interesting that this is Bert Brecht's most notable failing in his adaptation, Leben Eduards des Zweiten, undertaken in 1923 with Feuchtwanger. The death is evasively laconic: Eduard has pleaded for the peace of total darkness and after the briefest exchange with Lightborn, asks him why he has come: "For this", says Lightborn - and stabs him.
(ME xxi)

Yet this change is of the essence of the adaptation and should not be thought of as a failing. The spit is omitted because, in a context where the king's homosexuality is no longer a main focus of attention, such a manner of death must lose its aptness.

The omission of the spit is in fact entirely consonant with a number of changes in Gaveston's role which also reduce the importance and alter the significance of the homosexuality theme.²³ Brecht reduces Gaveston's role to that of an uncomprehending decoy in the king's sado-masochistic game with his peers, and to this end takes away any wit and charm that he may have, so as to make him merely a boorish "Schlächtersohn".²⁴ The frequently repeated reference to Gaveston as a "Schlächtersohn" may form part of the pattern of blasphemy running through the play: the senseless slaughter of this

man is possibly a perversion of the saving death of the "Menschensohn" Christ. Eduard, a self-appointed god, is shown playing cruelly with the feelings of his creature in a "love scene" which takes place in the midst of a battle:

Gaveston Viel Volk in London sagte, dieser Krieg
Hört nicht mehr auf.

Eduard Höchst eigen rührt es Unser Aug, dich, Gaveston,
In dieser Stunde, ohne Waffen, Uns vertrauend,
Ohne Schutz Leders und Erzes, nackter Haut,
Vor Uns zu sehen, im gewöhnten
Irischen Kleid. (E 168)

Gaveston's lack of protection in a dangerous situation is for Eduard symbolic of the human condition, and the death which he subsequently allows Gaveston to suffer is an act of sacrifice to the destructive forces with which Eduard identifies himself. The cruelty in Eduard's treatment of Gaveston, only implied in this love scene, is made explicit in the following scene where Gaveston, a hunted animal, sinks exhausted to the ground:

Gaveston (fliehend)
Seit diese Trommeln waren, der Sumpf, ersäufend
Katapult und Pferde, ist wohl verrückt
Meiner Mutter Sohn Kopf. Keuch nicht! Ob alle
Schon ertrunken sind und aus und nurmehr Lärm ist,
Hängend noch zwischen Erd und Himmel? Ich will auch nicht
Mehr rennen. Denn es sind nurmehr Minuten und
Ich rühr jetzt keine Hand mehr und ich leg
Mich einfach in den Boden da, damit
Nicht ich bleib bis ans Ende der Zeiten.
Und wenn morgen der König Eduard
Vorbeireitet, mich zu quälen, rufend: "Danyell!
Wo bist du?" bin ich nicht mehr da. Und jetzt
Bindest du dir deine Schuhe auf, Gav, und bleibst
Sitzen. . (E 169)

To define Gaveston's role in the sadistic game Eduard plays with his barons, Brecht uses again the angling imagery which he had already employed in Im Dickicht, and which he must have been pleasantly surprised to find already present in Marlowe's play. Marlowe intro-

duces the image in a speech of Mortimer's concerning Gaveston:

Mortimer Junior Fair queen forbear to angle for the fish,
Which being caught, strikes him that takes
it dead,
I mean that vile torpedo, Gaveston,
That now I hope floats on the Irish seas. (ME 27)

In a later scene Lancaster, when asked what emblem he will bear in the forthcoming tourney, chooses a design which prophesies the death of Gaveston:

Lancaster My lord, mine's more obscure than Mortimer's:
Pliny reports there is a flying-fish
Which all the other fishes deadly hate,
And therefore being pursued, it takes the air;
No sooner is it up, but there's a fowl,
That seizeth it; this fish, my lord, I bear
The motto this: Undique mors est (ME 39)

The subsequently revealed significance of the fish imagery is already present when it first occurs in Brecht's play, namely when Eduard invites his favourite to accompany him to the "Teich von Tynemouth":

Eduard Mein Gaveston, du hast nur mich zum Freund.
Lass sie! Wir gehen an den Teich von Tynemouth,
Fischend, Fische essend, reitend, schlendernd
Auf den Ballistenwällen Knie an Knie. (E 157)

What the imagery implies, unbeknown to Gaveston, is that he is to serve as the bait to catch the anger of the barons: Eduard's aggressive intentions are underscored by his choice of the "Ballistenwällen" as the place to flaunt his dalliance with the hated Gaveston. The king's provocation becomes even more explicit in the next but one scene where the barons watch as Eduard demonstrates his new military machines, ostensibly to Gaveston, now Earl of Cornwall:

Lancaster Der König von England führt dem Earl von Cornwall
Seine Katapulte vor.

Erzbischof Er führt sie uns vor.
(...)

Lancaster (nach einem Katapult-Einschlag)
Gut gezielt, Eduard. Solch ein Einschlag macht
Nachdenklich. Die Katapulte
Sind Eduards lange Arme. Er greift
In Eure schottischen Kastelle, Erzbischof,
Mit seinen Katapulten. (E160)

When Mortimer takes up the thread of fish-imagery in his Helena-speech in parliament, he alludes to the nature of Gaveston's role in the king's relations with his barons:

Mortimer Paris schreit
Aus seinem Fenster, dieses sei sein Haus,
Das seine Burg sei, und die Troer, wählend,
Er habe nicht Unrecht, klatschen grinsend Beifall.
Die Griechen weiter liegen fischend auf den Segeln,
Den herabgelassenen, bis in einer Ale-Kneipe
Im Hafenviertel einer einem
Die Nase blutig haut, ausredend sich
Dies sei um Helena.
Vor jemand sichs versah in folgenden Tagen,
Griffen vieler Hände nach vieler Hälsen.
Von zerbrochenen Schiffen spiesste man viele auf,
Ertrinkende, wie Thunfische. (E164)

Like Helena in this ironic account of the Trojan War, Gaveston is no more than an excuse for a conflict, which, like the "pub-brawl" in Troy, is sought and fought for its own sake. Gaveston's passivity and lack of any intrinsic importance is further emphasized by another variant on the fish metaphor, Mortimer's reference to the weeping, terrified favourite, now the prisoner of the barons, as a "Wässrigen Stockfisch" (E170). The usual metaphorical connotation of "Stockfisch", namely "whipping-boy" (because dried fish was beaten to make it palatable), also reiterates Gaveston's scapegoat-role in the war.

Whereas for Marlowe's Edward Gaveston is the object of a blinding passion, Brecht's Eduard merely uses his favourite as a means of provoking his barons into war. The difference between the respective attitudes of the two kings to Gaveston is brought out by their differing responses to the news of his death. Edward immediately swears to

avenge the loss of his beloved favourite:

Edward (kneeling)

By earth, the common mother of us all,
By heaven, and all the moving orbs thereof,
By this right hand, and by my father's sword,
And all the honours 'longing to my crown,
I will have heads and lives for him as many
As I have manors, castles, towns and towers.
Treachurous Warwick, traitorous Mortimer!
If I be England's king, in lakes of gore
Your headless trunks, your bodies will I trail,
That you may drink your fill and quaff in blood,
And stain my royal standard with the same,
That so my bloody colours may suggest
Remembrance of revenge immortally
On your accursed traitorous progeny,
You villains that have slain my Gaveston. (ME 62)

Edward's oath is to avenge the death of his lover and the assault on his sovereign freedom which Gaveston's murder signifies. Brecht's Eduard, by contrast, swears an oath which expresses blood-lust without relating this specifically to the loss of Gaveston nor to his rights as king:

Eduard Bei euer aller Mutter, bei der Erde,
Beim Himmel, bei den Plänen der Gestirne,
Bei dieser harten, vertrockneten Hand,
Bei dieser Insel sämtlichem Eisen,
Bei den letzten Eiden einer entleerten Brust,
Bei allen englischen Ehren, bei meinen Zähnen:
Ich will haben eure missgeschaffenen Leiber,
Sie zu verändern, dass die Mütter euch
Nicht mehr kennen. Ich will haben eure weissen,
Hauptlosen Stümpfe. (E 179)

As Herbert Ihering put it, in a perceptive early commentary on the play: "Brecht interessiert sich für die Homosexualität Eduards überhaupt nicht. Die Liebe des Königs zu dem proletarischen Günstling ist nur der Folgen wegen da. Verwirrung, Krieg, Verbannung, Flucht, Misshandlung, Rebellion, Erniedrigung des Königs und doch nicht Thronentsagung, seine Ermordung und Sühne."²⁵

Because of the shift in Brecht's presentation of the theme of Eduard's homosexuality away from the motives of infatuation and pride,

and towards that of revolt, certain changes were made in the role of the queen. In the original, the king, after having been forced by the barons to renew the banishment order against Gaveston, asks the queen to use her influence with Mortimer and the other peers to procure his favourite's return. If she fails, she is forbidden to return to court, but if she succeeds she is to be reconciled with the king. This whole episode emphasises the extent to which Edward's love for Gaveston determines his state of mind: while Gaveston is gone, he is lovesick, determined to take revenge against the barons, and harsh in his treatment of the queen, but when she succeeds in securing Gaveston's return, he becomes as happy as a child, kind to the queen, and generous towards the peers. The incident also demonstrates his political naiveté, for it shows him as foolish enough to believe that he can rely unreservedly on the queen's love for him, simply ignore her hatred of Gaveston, and enter into a bargain with Mortimer. In fact, the queen and Mortimer betray him by appearing to accede to his desire to have Gaveston back while secretly planning to kill the favourite at the merest provocation on his return. In Brecht's version, by contrast, there is no question of the king agreeing to banish Gaveston, with the result that the scenes showing his fluctuations of mood according to the state of his relations with Gaveston simply disappear. Brecht does, however, find an opportunity to use the incident of Edward's request that the queen approach Mortimer, but gives this a quite new significance. When the king hears that Gaveston has been taken prisoner, he orders Anna to prostitute herself with Mortimer to obtain his release; he also demands that she go to Scotland to find more troops for him. But whereas Marlowe's Edward had held out the promise of reconciliation, this Edward makes absolutely no attempt to conceal his dislike of the queen while yet

insisting that he will never free her from the marriage which his father arranged for them:

Eduard Ein Ding, überantwortet testamentlich,
Seid Ihr mir eigen. Mir verschrieben, unerwünscht,
Ohne mein Einverständnis nie frei.

Anna Ihr schickt mich fort und bindet mich zugleich?

Eduard Ja. (E 178)

In this scene, the naiveté of Marlowe's infatuated king has been replaced by cunning. Maltreated as she has been and for long frustrated sexually, Anna is clearly bound to seek solace with Mortimer and so betray Eduard. This is, of course, precisely what Eduard wants her to do, because this will not only provide a spurious cause of contention with Mortimer, behind which to hide his true sado-masochistic intentions, but will also mean that Mortimer will later have the Scottish troops with which to attack the king.

As well as changing the king's attitude to the queen, Brecht also changes Mortimer's relation to her. Whereas for Marlowe's Mortimer Isabella was a coveted prize, both personally and as the mother of the next king of England, whose protector Mortimer would like to be, Brecht's Mortimer accepts Anna in the same spirit as Eduard gives her away: she is to be courted because, like Gaveston, she can serve to give some spurious justification to the struggle between the two men. Mortimer makes no pretence of his contempt for Anna even during his courtship of her:

Mortimer Madame, die Haut wird schlecht von zuviel Tränen
Verwaiste Nächte machen alt. Tranige Gefühle
Erschlaffen den Leib. Schafft Euch, Mylady,
Befriedigung. Das rohe Fleisch,
Gewöhnlich, will benetzt sein. (E 161)

Anna rightly feels that there is a strong element of aggression in this sexual approach; her choice of the word "anspringt" conveys

this ambiguity:

Anna (für sich)
Sehr elender Eduard, wie erniedrigst du mich,
Dass ich diesem nicht ins Gesicht schlagen darf,
Sondern muss stillhalten, blossstehen,
Wenn er mich anspringt in Geilheit. (E161)

Anna's union with Mortimer is based on a common antagonism towards Eduard and not on mutual love. This is made clear in the scene following the Battle of Killingworth when they both swear revenge on the king:

Anna Der sein Weib missachtete vor aller Augen.
Mortimer Der sein Reich auspresste wie ein Zuhälter
Anna Und mich in Stricken hielt und wegjagte
Mortimer Und das Land ausnahm wie ein blutiges Stück Wild.
Anna Triff ihn, Mortimer!
Mortimer Weil er dich wegtrat wie eine räudige Hündin
Anna Weil er mich wie eine schlechte Hündin wegtrat
Mortimer Die eine Königin war
Anna Die ein Kind war an Unschuld,
Ohn Wissen um Welt und Menschen
Mortimer Friss ihn an! (E187)

Their relationship breaks down when Anna, who needs violent struggle to compensate her for the emotional loss which separation from Eduard means to her, grows bored and impatient at the tactical struggle which Mortimer has to continue to wage after capturing Eduard. Deprived of the opportunity, first for love, then for hatred, she turns to drink and "lacht über die Leere der Welt" (E 205). Her gradual descent into a state of desperate, cynical boredom underscores the nihilistic view of life which forms the background to the aggressions of the king and Mortimer.

Strangely enough, Anna also performs another, quite different function in the play, namely as one of the voices of morality which

are raised against the senseless struggle of the king with his barons. Just after swearing bloody revenge on Eduard, Anna expresses remorse at the bloodshed this revenge will cost:

Anna Ach Mortimer! Über uns ein Krieg zieht her,
Der stürzt am End die Insel ins Weltmeer. (E188)

This double function of Anna's as accomplice in violence and moral critic of violence accounts for the inconsistency of her attitude towards Gaveston during the battle of Killingworth. At the opening of one scene she is shown expressing hatred of Gaveston:

Anna Weh, jetzt muss ich nachjagen dem König Eduard.
Dem er zog, mich verwitwend, in diese Schlacht
Von Killingworth für den Teufel Gaveston.
Mir schauert meine Haut, wenn ich ihn anblick.
Er aber taucht sein Herz gleich einem Schwamm
In ihn,
Und so bin ich für immer armselig. (E173)

Yet in the course of this same scene, she pleads for kindness to be shown to Gaveston as he is being led off to his death. Anna is evidently an emotional character who responds easily to changes in human situations. This impression is strengthened by a later scene where, although for long disaffected from Mortimer, she pleads with her son Eduard to temper justice with humanity when dealing with Mortimer's crimes. Moved to fury by injustice against herself, yet capable of pity for a suffering fellow creature, Anna is a very human figure (though hardly an attractive one). Yet it is the fate of such characters in Brecht's early works not to understand the cold, calculating evil of which determined men are capable, and to be crushed, inwardly or outwardly, as a result of their contact with such men. Not until Brecht embraces the political philosophy of Marxism-Leninism does he envisage the possibility, on the basis of organised mass action, of morality having the power to assert itself against evil. Yet even

this solution is only a partial one, for on the one hand it demands that, for the sake of long-term moral aims (the freeing of the proletariat), ethical considerations may in the short term have to be ignored, and on the other requires that the agents of morality subject themselves to a rigorously rational code of action, which means that the original source of their moral impulses, their feelings, has to be all but smothered. Brecht is then of course careful to avoid giving much consideration to the possibly negative long-term effects on the personality and on the political-moral goals it sets itself as a result of such subjugation of the emotions under the dictates of political rationalism. The problem of Stalinism is not allowed to arise in the later works, and yet it is just this type of development which Brecht seems to imply as inevitable when, in Leben Eduards des Zweiten, he shows the weak, emotional individuals going to the wall, while the powerful, in order to exercise and maintain their power, have to use every available means, and subordinate all other considerations to the coldly rational pursuit of their own personal-political aims.

The new focus which Brecht brings to bear on his material is evident not only in his handling of the theme of homosexuality and the resulting changes in the roles of Gaveston and Anna, but also in his presentation of the king's attitude to his office. A central concern of Marlowe's play is with the problems and, in Merchant's phrase, the "ironies of kingship" (ME xiv). This subject is given ironic treatment by having the conflicting principles of legalism and divine right represented by individuals with marked personal failings. Edward's insistence on the absolute and inalienable nature of his inherited authority is made to appear questionable by placing emphasis

on his personal arbitrariness and the abuse of his office for private ends; equally, Mortimer's defence of the peers' right to depose an unjust king ill conceals his own ambitions for royal power. The matter is made more complex still by the introduction of a curious see-saw like effect whereby Edward gains in moral stature as he is weakened physically and politically, while Mortimer's initial concern for the political health of his country gradually becomes debased to purely personal Machiavellianism when he acquires power.

In Brecht's version, the problems of feudal sovereignty cease to be a focus of attention.²⁶ This is particularly noticeable in the changes made to the scenes where Edward is asked to abdicate. In the original, the king is troubled by feelings of guilt at the thought of relinquishing a divinely sanctioned office:

Edward Inhuman creatures, nursed with tiger's milk,
Why gape you for your sovereign's overthrow?
My diadem I mean and guiltless life;
See, monsters, see, I'll wear my crown again;
What, fear you not the fury of your king?
But hapless Edward, thou art fondly led;
They pass not for thy frowns as late they did,
But seek to make a new-elected king,
Which fills my mind with such despairing thoughts,
Which thoughts are martyred with endless torments,
And in this torment comfort find I none,
But that I feel the crown upon my head,
And therefore let me wear it yet awhile. (...)
here receive my crown;
Receive it? No, these innocent hands of mine
Shall not be guilty of so foul a crime. (ME 85)

Brecht's Eduard, by contrast, absolutely refuses to abdicate, although not because of qualms about his duty to remain king:

Eduard (Er setzt die Krone wieder auf)
Unmenschliche, genährt mit Tigermilch,
Gieren nach ihres Königs Untergang.
Seht, Bestien, her von Westminster's Abtei!
Ich kann sie nicht abtun, mein Haar geht mit,
Das ganz verwachsen ist mit ihr. Oh, sie
War eine leichte Last mir alle Zeit gewesen.
War wie die leichte obre Kron des Ahorns
Sehr leicht und lieblich allezeit zu tragen,

Und allezeit wird nun ein dünnes Blut
Und Fetzlein Haut, ganz schwarzes Blut, dran kleben
Von Eduard Ohnmacht, Armut, Tigerbeut. (E 200-201)

Eduard feels the crown to be an organic part of his person, his kingship an attribute which he cannot give up without damaging himself. He clings to the crown so fiercely because it is the last possession he can defend against his enemy Mortimer, and, by defending it, protract the struggle which he has sought with this man. Eduard has identified himself wholly with his role as Mortimer's enemy, so that his crown, the ostensible object of their contest, must from now on, by virtue of this act of self-definition through conflict and suffering, bear the marks of all that he endured in its defence ("Und allezeit wird nun ein dünnes Blut" etc). To intensify these sufferings, and so increase the satisfaction to be derived from enduring them, he even deliberately starves himself so as to be in the weakest possible physical condition when pressure is put on him to abdicate. When at last Mortimer himself comes to demand his crown (in a confrontation which has no counterpart in the original) Eduard reveals his strategy:

Mortimer So werdet Ihr also zustimmen?

Eduard Es ist nicht in Unserm Plan. Der Stoff
Dieser letzten Tage klärt sich heraus. Eduard, dessen
Zerfall unabwendbar, doch nicht fürchterlich
Herannaht, erkennt sich. Nicht gelüstig
Auf Sterben, schmeckt er Nützlichkeit
Schrumpfender Vernichtung. Eduard, der nicht mehr
Der arme Eduard ist, zahlt billig mit Tod
Solchen Genuss am Würger. Kommt doch, wenns
Soweit ist, Ihr selber, Mortimer! (E 220)

This plan of Eduard's, to make his enemy murder him and thus to bring about his downfall in turn, is again a development of an idea which is present as little more than a rhetorical boast in the original:

Edward He of you all that most desires my blood
And will be called the murtherer of a king
Take it. (ME 85)

After taking leave of Mortimer, Eduard begins to prepare himself for the next, final stage of their contest by ceasing his fast, so that he will have sufficient strength to meet the most strenuous test of all:

Eduard Jetzt aber, Rice ap Howell, gebt mir Essen.
Denn Eduard isst jetzt. (Er sitzt und isst.)
Nun ich nicht entsagt hab, weiss ich, das Nächste,
Das sie bringen, wird sein mein Tod. (E 203)²⁷

Thus, in the remodelling of the scenes dealing with Eduard's abdication, the main thrust of Brecht's adaptation can again be seen to be towards presenting the theme of the vanity of life in a radically new light. Whereas Marlowe's king is initially blinded by the passions of love and pride and has to learn through suffering to loose the bonds which tie him to earthly things, Brecht's Eduard is, from the outset, fully conscious of death's power to render all human effort vain, so much so, in fact, that he bases all his actions on this certainty. In his case, however, the conviction is nihilistic, not Christian, and leads, not to contemplation of the heavenly, but to the desire to experience the transience of this life with the utmost sado-masochistic intensity.

To complement the changes made in the king's character, Brecht alters that of his principal enemy, Mortimer. The Hotspur-like characteristics of the original Mortimer are dispensed with and replaced by an emphasis on his capacity for political scheming. The first scene in which he figures shows him, significantly, "in seinem Haus, zwischen Büchern, allein" (E158). His opening words show contempt for the world of political action; but the very fact that

he is studying the career of Caesar does betray a positive interest in military affairs:

Mortimer Es erzählt Plutarch von Gajus Julius Cäsar,
Dass er in einem las und schrieb und seinem Schreiber
Diktierte und die Gallier schlug. Es scheint,
Dass Leute seines Wuchses ihren Ruhm
Zogen aus einem eigentümlichen Mangel
An Einsicht in die Nichtigkeit menschlicher
Dinge und Taten, gepaart mit einem
Erstaunlichen Mangel an Ernst: kurz, ihrer
Oberflächlichkeit. (E 158)²⁸

Mortimer's reply to the Archbishop's request that he involve himself in political action might give the impression that he is a man with a social conscience:

Erzbischof Ihr schwelgt, Roger Mortimer, abgekehrt
In klassischen Schriften, Meditationen
Abgelebter Zeiten,
Dieweil, ein aufgestörter Termitenhauf,
London Euch braucht.

Mortimer London braucht Mehl. (E 158)²⁹

However, as the dialogue progresses, his underlying contempt for the common people is revealed in his unwillingness to involve himself in politics merely because of the king's homosexual favourite, or because of the consequences for the country of this fact:

Mortimer Soll ich
Ob solchen Spasses der Natur tragen mein Antlitz
Auf den Markt des schweissigen Volkes? (E 159)

Mortimer's intelligence makes him see the need for using moral arguments when the occasion demands, for example, when pleading for his life before parliament, but he is fundamentally a cynic, not a moralist. In fact, he reproaches Anna for useless and inappropriate moralizing:

Anna Erfolgreiche Schlacht schenkt der Gott der Könige
Denen, die fechten im Schatten des Rechts. Weil Wir
Erwiesen im Erfolg, also im Recht, sei Dank
Dem, der den Planeten für Uns lenkte, Wir sind

Gekommen mit Waffen in diesen Teil Unsrer Insel,
Damit nicht ein Geschlecht, verworfener als andre,
Verknotend Kraft mit Kraft, wüste in England,
Durch eigne Waffen blutig, schlachtend
Die eignen Körper. Wie es deutlich aufzeigt
Der höchst scheussliche Fall des verführten Eduard,
der-

Mortimer Mylady, wenn Ihr Soldat sein wollt, dürft Ihr
In Reden Leidenschaft nicht zeigen.
Verändert ist
Das Antlitz dieser Insel, gelandet heute
Englands Königin mit ihrem Sohne Eduard. (E 192)

Mortimer is, as the Erzbischof recognises, "kalt mit Passion" (E 159), able to remain cool even when pursuing passionate aims. The passionate side of his character is revealed in his warning to the archbishop of what his involvement in the opposition to the king might mean:

Mortimer Wollt ihr am Ätna eure Suppe kochen?
Ihr seid am Falschen. Wer anfängt
Einen Hahn zu rupfen, ihn zu essen, oder
Weil sein Gekräh gestört hat, solchen kann am Ende,
Gesättigt, aus Geschmack am Schinden, Lust ankommen,
Abzuziehn die Haut dem Tiger. Seid ihr
Des eingedenk? (E 159)

This combination of aggressiveness with cunning makes Mortimer the ideal opponent for Eduard, since he too combines these qualities in his person. When Eduard releases Mortimer, ostensibly to be a witness to the king's revenge on his barons, but really to renew the war as a fight between the king and his chosen opponent, he contrasts Mortimer's character with his own in a way which is not supported by the subsequent course of events:

Eduard Ihr Mortimers rechnet
Stumpfäugig, seid in Büchern daheim
Wie Würmer. Doch in Büchern steht nichts
Von Eduard, der nichts liest, nicht rechnet,
Nichts weiss, und der mit Natur verknüpft ist
Und von sehr andrer Speise sich nährt.
Ihr mögt gehen, Lord Mortimer. Geht herum,
Ein wandelnd Zeugnis in der Sonne,
Wie Eduard Longshanks Sohn seinen Freund
Rächte. (E 185)

Although Eduard does appear at times to be stupid - his "bad" conduct of the battle of Killingworth led to the loss of Gaveston, and his "poor" conduct of the later war with Mortimer results in his own defeat - these are only tactics in an overall strategy: the loss of Gaveston was followed by the wild slaughter of the barons, his "defeat" at Mortimer's hands eventually leads to Mortimer's execution by the very parliament before which he had once demanded the banishment of Gaveston. Eduard's cunning in fact eventually proves greater even than that of his chosen opponent, the "eel" Mortimer.

To concentrate attention on the conflict between the king and Mortimer, Brecht severely pruned away episodes and characters which had their place in the original either simply because they happened historically or because they illustrated the vagaries of historical development and thus underlined the theme of the unpredictability of "Fortuna". Ihering has pointed out the essential difference between Marlowe's "tragic History" and Brecht's "Historie": "Historie bedeutet nicht 'historisches Schauspiel', nicht Geschichte im zeitlichen Sinn, sondern Geschichte als Mitteilungsform, Historie wie Ballade, wie Moritat. Der Stoff ist kolportagehaft, jahrmarktsmässig gesehen."³⁰ Brecht was not at all interested in historical authenticity; in fact, as Labouille has pointed out, "Not only does he repudiate historical facts, he perverts them, deliberately inventing a series of dates for which there is no evidence in Holinshed, Marlowe or anyone else."³¹

But he was interested, like the "Moritatensänger" of the fair-ground, in scenes of cunning, treachery and violence. Brecht's lack of concern for historical accuracy enables him to bring the action

more swiftly to the point of war by having Eduard refuse categorically to banish Gaveston, thus omitting the unnecessary complication of his expulsion and recall. More importantly, in the scene where the demand for the banishment is made, he reduces the number and importance of the other peers and increases the role of Mortimer. Whereas Marlowe's younger Mortimer had made a direct, passionate attack on the king and his favourite, Brecht's more intellectual Mortimer adopts the tactic of giving an ironic account of the Trojan War as an oblique warning against the possible future consequences of obduracy on Eduard's part.³² The king responds to this speech by weeping. Why he weeps is not clear; it may be anger at the suggestion that his favourite is "ne Hur", it may be hurt majesty, or it may be that these are tears of sorrow that much blood will be shed. On the other hand, his tears may equally well be an expression of release from great emotional tension, for his words "Gott gebe, / Dass deine Lippe, Mortimer, nicht lügnerisch ist" (E 165-166) suggests that he is grateful for a promise which he has detected in Mortimer's description of the carnage in Troy.

The ensuing conflict between the king and the barons has its meaning underlined by the symbolic title, "Die Schlacht von Killingworth": the value of the battle lies in the slaughter perpetrated there. In this battle, Mortimer is again given a more important role than in the original. Whereas in Marlowe's play the barons, with Mortimer amongst them, act as a body, Brecht has Mortimer distance himself from the others by using the cunning which is his chief characteristic, in an effort to save his own skin, should the battle turn against the barons. He (and not Warwick as in the original) takes charge of the captured Gaveston and orders his soldiers to keep him safe until eleven o'clock the following morning, when they are to

rejoin Mortimer in Killingworth Wood. He also orders them to spread the rumour that they are taking their prisoner to the "Schindanger", expecting, rightly, that this rumour will reach Eduard and cause him to betray the barons with whom he has arranged to parley next morning. Mortimer then "klüglich" absents himself from this parley. He thus forces the king to renew the fighting in order to capture him and so makes the king responsible for Gaveston's death:

Mortimer Was Euern Freund anlangt, den Danyell Gaveston,
So lief er gegen fünf Uhr,
Als Englands König zu einem Tiger ward,
Lebend im Holz von Killingworth.
Hättet Ihr, als meine Freunde anfangen zu reden,
Nicht übertrommeln lassen ihre Stimm,
Hätte also nicht zu kleines Vertrauen,
Zu starke Leidenschaft, zu rasche Wut
Euer Aug getrübt, so lebte noch
Euer Günstling Gaveston. (E 185-186)

With this announcement, made just after he has been released by Eduard to serve as a "wandelnd Zeugnis" of Eduard's revenge, Mortimer believes he has fired the parting shot in the first round of their contest. Yet it is really Eduard who has won the round, for he has intended to sacrifice Gaveston and is pleased to have found one particularly able opponent with whom to fight a longer war than the other barons were capable of sustaining.

Whereas in the first half of the play Eduard's actions are openly sadistic, he begins to change over to a more masochistic course of action after his actions at Killingworth. After executing the peers, he continues to wage war for another four years, but his conduct of his military affairs becomes increasingly strange. He tears up field reports, ignores warnings of approaching ships and of troops gathering at the port of Harwich. He neglects his army, allows it to disperse and, when he hears of villages being burnt in the North, pretends to take this as a sign that Anna is on her way with the Scottish troops

he sent her for four years previously ! His servant Baldock comments aptly:

Baldock Er glaubt nichts. Seit er verfällt, bemüht er sich, Schnell zu vergessen, was man ihm sagt. (E 190)

Thus, whereas in the original Edward is defeated simply by the greater military strength of Mortimer and Isabella, Brecht's king is himself responsible for the easy victory which his enemies gain over him.

The underlying reason for this strange behaviour becomes apparent in the later scenes which make it clear that his intention has been to test his own spiritual and physical resources to their limit. This he can only do if he rids himself of his army. As has been pointed out already, he deliberately starves himself during the period of imprisonment and torture to be in the weakest condition possible when the demand is made for his abdication. Only when he has withstood the temptation to exchange his crown for physical comfort, does he resume eating in order to build up reserves of strength again for his final and worst ordeal, his murder (E 203). However, his enemy is intelligent enough to see that he must avoid directly murdering the king, because he knows that such a course of action would undoubtedly bring about his own downfall. Instead, he devises a plan which may make it unnecessary actually to kill the king: he has Eduard exposed to unremitting deprivation and exhaustion, and kept constantly on the move, so that no-one might find him, and announces that the king has abdicated. Eventually, however, he is challenged to produce Eduard before parliament and, when a last attempt to extract his abdication from the king fails, he is obliged, as Eduard had planned, to have him murdered. Mortimer's own execution, on the orders of Eduard's son, follows soon after. Yet because Mortimer shares the king's nihilistic view of life, Eduard cannot be said to

have defeated Mortimer any more than the latter can be said to have defeated the king. Eduard enjoyed his masochistic role as long as it lasted and Mortimer his sadistic one. That this role would one day come to an end, that it would, in fact, eventually destroy him, Mortimer has known all along:

Mortimer 's ist, Knabe, die schlumpichte Fortuna treibts,
Ein Rad. 's treibt dich mit nach aufwärts.
Aufwärts und aufwärts. Du hältst fest. Aufwärts.
Da kommt ein Punkt, der höchste. Von dem siehst du,
's ist keine Leiter, 's treibt dich nach unten.
Weils eben rund ist. Wer dies gesehn hat, fällt er,
Knabe, oder lässt er sich fallen? Die Frage
Ist spasshaft. Schmeck sie! (E 288)

The struggle thus ends with neither combatant winning a victory or suffering defeat.

Violence and treachery are not solely the prerogative of the principal combatants in this play, although such men do clearly set the pattern of behaviour in this feudal society. In the opening dialogue of the play between Gaveston and two "Individuen", the theme of violence is immediately introduced, as it is in Marlowe's original, with the hostility between these men of different stations in life:

Erstes (zum Zweiten)
England zahlt nichts
Für alte Soldaten, Sir.
Gaveston Dafür zahlt England ein Sankt James-Spital.
Erstes Wo einer verreckt.
Gaveston Verrecken ist Soldatenlos.
Zweites So?
Verreck du selber in deinem Engeland!
Und fall von eines Soldaten Hand! (E 152)

Gaveston in turn immediately uses the power invested in him by Eduard to humiliate, with Eduard's connivance, the "Erzabt" who was

responsible for having him banished by Eduard's father. Later in the action this "Erzabt" finds an opportunity to repay the king's violence with treachery when he allows him to be captured by Mortimer's troops while seeking sanctuary in the Abbey of Neath. He further tries to extract a statement of abdication from Eduard after his preferment, presumably as a reward for the betrayal, to the Archbishopric of Winchester. But when the balance of power has shifted against Mortimer, this same churchman is prepared to testify against Mortimer that Eduard has not in fact abdicated:

Mortimer Ich weiss von Euerm Eduard nichts, den ich
Nicht lieb, nicht hass, von dem mir nie
Geträumt hat. Haltet Euch in Sachen, die ihn
Angehn, an Berkeley, nicht mich! Ihr selber,
Winchester,
Wart gegen ihn.

Erzabt Die Kirche war, mit wem Gott war.

Mortimer Mit wem war Gott?

Erzabt Mit dem, der siegte, Mortimer. (E 211)

In a society where treachery is the norm of behaviour established by the powerful, the lower orders necessarily have to practice it to defend themselves. Thus the sycophant Spencer, in order to procure his own advancement, is prepared to have a ballad singer arrested for treasonably singing a song directed against the king, despite the fact that Spencer himself has just been participating in the malignment of Eduard. Just as the powerful betray both themselves and the lower classes, the lower classes betray not only each other but also their masters. Baldock, for example, an intimate servant of the king, betrays Eduard when his own life is threatened by Mortimer. In the scene where this particular betrayal takes place there are two blasphemous allusions to the Passion, one to Judas' betrayal of Christ, the other to Christ's glance at Peter after his breach of faith (Luke ch. 22, v. 54):

Rice ap Howell Im Namen Englands: wer unter euch ist
der König?

Spencer Hier ist kein König.

Baldock (geht auf Eduard zu)
Nehmt dieses Tuch, ich bitt Euch, lieber Herr.
Ihr habt Schweiss auf Eurer Stirn.

Rice ap Howell Den fasst. Dieser ist es.

Eduard (im Abgehen, zwischen Bewaffneten, sieht
Baldock an.)

Baldock (weint) Meine Mutter in Irland will Brot essen.
Herr, Ihr verzeiht mir. (E197)³³

The treachery here need not be seen as onesided, for the king in punishing Baldock with a look of accusation, may well be playing a cruel game with his servant.³⁴ He has, after all, not fled to safety in Ireland, and in all probability has deliberately allowed himself to be caught. In his "psalms" sung in prison, moreover, Eduard praises traitors: "Die Besten waren, die mich verrieten" (E 224). Eduard's punishment of Baldock is thus probably no more than a game to him, such as Mackie Messer plays with his former friend the police chief Brown (in Die Dreigroschenoper) who, like Baldock, has been forced to commit treachery:

Mac Dieser elende Brown. Das leibhaftige schlechte Gewissen. Und so was will oberster Polizeichef sein. Es war gut, dass ich ihn nicht angeschrien habe. Zuerst dachte ich an so was. Aber dann überlegte ich mir gerade noch rechtzeitig, dass ein tiefer, strafender Blick ihm ganz anders den Rücken hinunterlaufen würde. Das hat gesessen. Ich blickte ihn an und er weinte bitterlich. Den Trick habe ich aus der Bibel. (GW 2, 446)

Leben Eduards des Zweiten, in short, shows life as an unending struggle in which every man is a threat to every other.

The presentation of violence in this "Historie" is ambivalent. On the one hand Eduard's nihilistic pursuit of pleasure in his own destruction is undoubtedly given a heroic aura.³⁵ Above all, it is suggested that his way of life is at least honest and consistent (see the speech beginning "Gut war Regen ..." quoted in full above, p. 157). The bare language and the powerful rhythm of the king's speeches combine to create an impression of strength and energy. On the other hand, a photograph of Brecht's staging, in his 1924 production, of the dungeon scene shows Eduard as a barely human figure.³⁶ In other words, Brecht presented Eduard's heroism in an "alienated" manner, so as to make the audience aware of the strangeness of the man who takes this attitude to the world. Already in this production Brecht was putting into practice a technique of presenting the actions of "great" individuals in a new, questioning light, which he formulated thus some four years later with reference to Richard III:

Es ist, wenn der Dramatiker die Figur etwa des dritten Richard darstellt, nicht seine Aufgabe, uns die Taten dieses Menschen möglichst begreiflich zu machen, sondern sie uns als ganz ungeheuerlich, unmenschlich, fremdartig, ihren Täter als bemerkenswertes, aber fast unzugängliches Tier vorzustellen. Dadurch entsteht der Zuwachs im Zuschauer, denn er erlebt die Reichhaltigkeit und durch sein Verständnis keineswegs erschöpfbare Göttlichkeit der Welt. (GW 15, 194)

The ambivalent attitude to violence evident in the presentation of the king can also be observed in the theatrical handling of the common people on whose backs the battles of the mighty are fought out. On the one hand, Brecht's sympathy for their suffering as a result of senseless wars is communicated through the satirical bite of a ballad which is sung repeatedly during the battle of Killingworth so as to maintain an awareness in the audience of the real

consequences of such games of war:

Balladenverkäufer

Edis Keksweib hat einen Bart auf der Brust
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns
Drum hat der Krieg gegen Schottland aufhören gemusst -
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns
Der Peer von Cornwall hat zuviel Schilling im Strumpf
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns
Drum hat Patty keinen Arm mehr und O'Nelly nur 'nen Stumpf
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns
Edi laust seinen Gavy und hat niemals nicht Zeit
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns
Drum ging Johnny in die Binsen von dem Sumpf vor Bannockbride
Bitt für uns, bitt für uns, bitt für uns. (E 157)

During the battle of Killingworth the peers march on "Boroughbridge" under cover of darkness, and their soldiers sing this ballad as they march with the words "In der Nacht" substituted for the "Bitt für uns"; the effect is to contrast a quite different experience of the darkness of evil with Eduard's praise of it:

Soldaten (singen)

Die Mädchen von England im Witfrauenkleid
In der Nacht
Ihr Buhle vermodert vor Bannockbride
In der Nacht
Schrein Aheave und Aho.
Der König von England lässt die Trommel schlagen
In der Nacht
Dass man nicht hört die Witwen von Bannockbride klagen
In der Nacht
Mit Arom Rombelow.

Lancaster Alles glückt. Wir packen diese Nacht noch Boroughbridge
(E 175)

The element of revolt in the ballad was underscored in production by having the citizens of London sing "Bitt für uns" in chorus in such a way as to suggest menace. M. Fleisser recalls this detail in her account of the production:

Gespentisch steht mir die hohe Pappkulisse der Londoner Häuser mit den vielen kleinen Fensterläden vor Augen, plötzlich fliegen alle Läden auf, um aus jedem Fenster einen sprechenden Kopf freizugeben, und alle diese Köpfe

stossen miteinander eine Art Gebet hervor, das eine einzige Anklage gegen den König ist, wie bei einer Litanei von oftmaligem Bittfüruns unterbrochen, dieses Bittfüruns aber ist in Wirklichkeit keine Bitte um Erbarmen, vielmehr ein hastiges angreiferisches Flüstern, das einem mit solcher Drohung an die Nerven geht, dass jedermann spüren muss, dies wird nicht weniger als eine Revolution, und nach dem letzten gespenstischen Bittfüruns fliegen mit einem einzigen trockenen Klapp die Fensterläden wieder zu. (E 266)

To some extent this sympathetic attitude towards the victims of Eduard's wars is offset by the presentation of the soldiers who kill and are killed in them. In the following reflection on his production (in which he refers to himself in the third person), Brecht's description of the soldiers' behaviour draws critical attention to their passivity:

In dieser Inszenierung war das Eigentümlichste der Soldat. Er zog unter eintönigem Trommelwirbel in den Kampf. Marschierte unaufhörlich, wenn der Mond am Himmel stand. Er marschierte nach dem Befehl des Eduard II, und er marschierte nach dem Befehl des Mortimer, und der marschierte nachdem er an einem Donnerstag die Bewegung der grossen Politik auf dem Globus nachzog. Indem der Soldat marschierte war jede Zeit für ihn verloren - er verschwindelte die Zeit mit Singen. Wenn die Friedensglocken läuteten, legte er die Waffen nieder und sich auf den Boden. Wenn die Schlacht wütete, wurde sein Gesicht weiss wie Kalk, wenn die Schlacht verlorenging, so sprang er über Brücken und warf die Waffen weg. Diese Soldaten waren tausend Tommys. Sie waren Masse, aber behielten ihren Eigennamen (Namen ihres Vaters). Die Masse Reinhardts war eine Horde von Statisten, die dem Protagonisten die Stichworte brachte, die Masse Jessners ist ein Teil des Theaterapparats. Bei Brecht war sie Theatralisierung des Soldaten. Primitiv in ihren Lebensäusserungen: wenn sie marschieren, singen sie, wenn sie in Gefahr sind, werden sie blass. Wenn sie fliehen, werfen sie die Waffen weg. Primitiv in ihrer Verwendung: wenn die Trommel dröhnt, müssen sie marschieren im endlosen Zug, solange bis die Friedensglocken läuten, wenn sie im Dunkel Schlacht spielen, und Speere auf Speere stossen. Das alles gab den Soldaten in der Schlacht eine Bewegung und ein Schicksal. Das wurde alles mit den einfachsten Theatermitteln erreicht, und gab zugleich die Bilder des Soldaten, die in Geschichtsbücher hätten eingefügt werden müssen.³⁷

The allusion to the First World War ("Diese Soldaten waren tausend

Tommys. Sie waren Masse") suggests that Brecht wanted to draw attention to the parallels between long past ages and the present in the way the mass of people have their fates dictated by the powerful few. Yet the contradiction between their preparedness to fight senseless battles and their awareness, expressed in their songs, of this very senselessness, must raise the question of their own responsibility for their fate. That Brecht was personally angered by the soldiers' passive acceptance of their fate is recalled by Bernard Reich:

Im Text ist das den Brecht empörende Sklaventum der Soldaten nicht durchgestaltet - er interessierte sich daher für eine stärkere szenische Prägung dieses Gedankens. Er liess die Gesichter der Soldaten mit Kohle beschmieren, was sie einander gleichmachte. Auch in späteren Inszenierungen wurde das kalkbeschmierte Gesicht manchmal als Ausdruck der moralischen Konformität, manchmal aber auch als Zeichen für den Gleichmacher Tod verwendet. (E 260)

An ambivalent attitude to violence is, then, evident in the author's sympathetic presentation of two antagonistic perspectives, that of the abnormal individuals Mortimer and Eduard on the one hand, and, on the other, that of the normal mass of people who only want to be left in peace. This ambivalence is reinforced by the play's formal characteristics. The technique, for example, of slightly altering a well known phrase or saying so as to create a headline effect in the flow of dialogue was one which Brecht was later to use widely to socially critical effect. In Leben Eduards des Zweiten such phrases do occur, but usually do not have a clearly satirical purpose. When Lancaster comments "Eine Hure macht noch keinen Krieg" (E158), the effect is to draw attention wittily to the cause of contention between king and barons, and underline the grotesqueness of a situation where one individual's whims can lead to the death of

of many men. But when Gaveston says to his enemy, the "Erzabt", "Ja, Junge. In London gibts Heulen und Zähneklappern" (E 155), he is merely making a threat in a humorous way, without a moral point being made thereby. Gaveston's unusual choice of words simply objectifies, in a consciously theatrical manner, the element of street-corner-thuggery in his behaviour.³⁸ The majority of formal devices in the play have the function of stylising speech or behaviour in this way, so as to outline situations and attitudes with demonstrative, "gestic" boldness, and thus to make it clear what the issues involved are, but without overtly suggesting where the rights or wrongs of matters lie. Distanced objectivity and clarity of presentation are the two main aims fulfilled by the formal aspects of the play, as the following analysis will show.

The linguistic means by which Brecht contrived to present his material as objectively as possible include paradox, systematically deployed metaphors, and the use of unusual syntactical structures as the basis of rhetorical patterns of speech.³⁹ Paradox is used to sum up Gaveston's peculiar fate as being "durch günstige Umständ/ Erledigt, ausgemerzt durch zuviel Glück" (E 163), and to define the significance for the country of the wars of the powerful:

Spencer Die Schlacht kreisst schon zwei Tage, erschwert,
Weil Heer dem Heere gleich sieht und jeder
Sankt Georg und England ruft. Mit Sankt Georg
Zerfleischen Brüder sich, und wie zwei Molche,
Im Kampf zerknäuel, zahnt sich Heer in Heer,
Und Englands Dörfer brennen auf für England. (E 176)

The animal imagery applied here to the armies forms part of a widely flung net of such metaphors. Here, the intention is undoubtedly to criticize the tendency of wars to animalize and depersonalize human activity, to reduce the individual's importance to that of

an organ of some bloody animal.⁴⁰ Yet animal metaphors are also used to express qualities of wildness and strength in a positive way:

Eduard Der wunde Hirsch
Rennt um ein Kraut, das seine Wunde zumacht.
Doch klafft des Tigers Fleisch, so rauft er sichs
Mit roher Klaue. (E 198)

The different uses of the animal imagery, on the one hand presenting violence as courageous or exhilarating, on the other as inhuman and ugly, illustrate well the moral ambivalence of the adaptation, and at the same time the objectivity of the playwright in bringing together both aspects of his theme by applying to each various metaphors drawn from the same basic comparison.

The following extract from Mortimer's "Helena" speech will serve to illustrate Brecht's creation of a stylised form of diction as a means of giving full emotional weight to the characters' words while yet preserving the awareness of artifice necessary for aesthetic distance to be preserved:

..... Spähend
Nach Wetterstrich früh,
Bekümmert einzig, ob abends Fische anbeissen,
Fielen gegen Mittag in Verwirrung und Absicht
Sämtliche.
Gegen zehn Uhr noch gesichtet
Mit Menschenantlitzen,
Gegen elf Uhr
Vergessend Sprache ihres Landstrichs, findet
Troer nicht Troja, Grieche Griechenland nimmer.
Vielmehr spüren sie menschlicher Lippen Verwandlung
In Tigerlefzen. Schlagen, gen Mittag, die Zähne
In die Weichen des Nebentiers,
Das aufächzt. (E 164-165)

Here, emphasis is given to details by placing them outside the normal grammatical order and thus giving them rhetorically pointed positions: "fielen Sämtliche gegen Mittag in Verwirrung und Absicht" is thus

transformed into "fielen gegen Mittag in Verwirrung und Absicht/
Sämtliche", so as to give the paradoxical adverbial phrase the added weight of end-positioning in its line, and the subject, "Sämtliche", more power by isolating it in a line of its own and withholding it to the very last. Obliqueness of formulation calls attention to the matters formulated: dying is expressed in terms of forgetting one's native language, being unable to find one's country again.⁴¹ Yet the pathos of this account is tempered by the fact that the sentiments of the speaker are expressed in diction which, because of its syntactical peculiarities, archaisms and strong sense of order, is markedly theatrical and distinct from everyday language.⁴² Particularly important for the creation of order in this speech is the repetition of adverbs of time to mark the stages in the battle: "früh", "abends", "gegen Mittag", "gegen zehn Uhr", "gegen elf Uhr". Such rhetorical patterning on the basis of parallels and repetitions serves to maintain control over the language without involving the difficulties which a metrical principle of patterning can bring with it. The rhetorical patterns, used in conjunction with the lexical and syntactic peculiarities of German classical drama, enabled Brecht to create the "gehobene Sprache" he needed for the play while avoiding the anodyne effect of the "ölige Glätte des üblichen fünffüssigen Iambus" (GW 19, 396).⁴³

Along with such verbal stylisation Brecht also aims at stylisation of gesture to create the same dual effect of dramatic power and conscious theatricality. A good illustration of this is to be found in the scene where Anna finally breaks her ties with Eduard and joins forces with Mortimer:

Anna Will ich werden zu einer Wölfin,
Reissend durchs Gestrüpp mit nackten Zähnen,
Nicht ruhn,
Bis Erde deckt den längst entseelten Eduard,
Eduard Gloster, meinen Gatten von ehdem,
Vorgestern, Erd deckt.
(Sie wirft drei Hände Erde hinter sich.) (E188)

Thus ritualized, Anna's feelings are both fully expressed and yet kept within the safe confines of a clearly symbolic representation of life.

The theatrical idiom of Brecht's "Historie" is that of the "Schaubudentheater" or "Moritat". This choice of style reflects once more his ambivalent attitude to violence. On the one hand, the "Moritat" is a form which offers entertainment in the form of vicarious indulgence in bloody deeds.⁴⁴ Brecht's focus on scenes of violence and suffering - the preparations for hanging Gaveston, Gaveston digging his own grave, the capture of the peers, Eduard's torture and murder - provides food for such appetites. On the other hand, the use of the "Moritatenstil" in a modern theatre was also an objectification of the fact that an opportunity for indulgence in violence was being offered by the performance. The play thus ironizes itself through its style, drawing attention to the primitiveness of the behaviour it presents and of the emotions it appeals to. Over and above this, the crudity and naiveté of such primitive dramatic conventions as the monologue, the aside, the sententious rhyming couplet, the reading-out of captions for each scene, were useful both as deictic devices to bring out clearly the issues of the play, and as a means of preserving a sense of artifice.

Finally, mention must be made of Brecht's directing technique, as this also evidently contributed to the ambivalent presentation of

violence in the play. His own account of the handling of a number of scenes indicates that he wanted to convey both an awareness of artifice and something similar to the kind of pleasurable (because apparently unreal) involvement in aggression which the stylised events of farce allow us to indulge in:

Das Requisit wurde nach theatralischem Prinzip gearbeitet. Die Holzäxte, Schleppeßel und Speere der Soldaten zwangen dem Schauspieler eine bestimmte akrobatische Bewegung ab. Das Tuch, viereckig und breit auseinandergefaltet, gab dem Verräter Baldock Gelegenheit, die verschmitzte Bewegung zu unterstreichen und zugleich ein Taschenspielerkunststück zu liefern. Auch der Henker und die Mörder verstanden ihr Handwerk. Die Peers wurden sehr flink mit einem Seil umschürt und wie ein Bündel von der Bühne weggezogen. Das Hängen Gavestons wurde sehr präzise ausgeführt, es war eine Nummer für sich. Man konnte sich über das traurige Schicksal Gavestons betrüben und zugleich sich freuen, wie geschickt er an den Ast gehängt wird" ⁴⁵

Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe marks a certain advance in theatrical effectiveness as compared with Im Dickicht. The archaic style of the "Moritat" and the historical distance of the late Middle Ages created effortlessly the degree of aesthetic detachment which Brecht needed to counterbalance the violence of the action. Brecht's choice of contemporary Chicago as the setting for Im Dickicht, by contrast, had forced him to stylize language and gesture in a far more contrived manner in an effort to create a similar distancing effect - of "a cold, unreal Chicago" - with the result that the play becomes so obscure and stilted that it fails to generate in the first place the excitement which the alienating devices should counteract. The ease with which Brecht was able to accommodate his violent vision of life to the setting provided by Marlowe's original possibly explains why he described the adaptation as a "gierige Reminiszenz an eine glücklichere dramatische Ära" (GW 17, 952). Yet it cannot be said that the formal advance beyond Im Dickicht is matched by a

comparable degree of thematic development in Leben Eduards des Zweiten. Indeed plot, characters and perspective are so similar in these two plays that the adaptation does little more than mark time as far as Brecht's creative elaboration of the conflicts which are his chief preoccupation is concerned. Brecht's next work, on the other hand, the comedy Mann ist Mann, adds a new dimension to his treatment of these conflicts by approaching the theme of violence through its manifestations among the lower orders in society, among people who in the past might have been the soldiers of Eduard or Mortimer. As will be seen, this new approach led Brecht to give increased weight in this play, as compared with the earlier experiments, to the forces of opposition to violence, but not to the extent of eliminating the fundamental clash of different experiences of violence which generates the dynamics of his early dramatic writing.

NOTES

1. Brecht's use of the terms "Begierde" or "Appetit" resembles Nietzsche's use of the word "Instinkt". One can compare, for example, the following judgement of Brecht's on the disappearance of vitality from bourgeois society with Nietzsche's condemnation of Western civilisation on the same grounds:

In Zeiten aber, wo eine breite Schicht Menschen niedergeht, werden ihre Lebensäusserungen schwächer und schwächer, ihre Vorstellungskraft erlahmt, ihre Appetite schwinden hin, ihre ganze Geschichte bietet nichts Merkwürdiges mehr, nicht einmal für sie selber. (...) Diese Menschenschicht hat ihre grosse Epoche gehabt. Sie hat ihre Monumente errichtet, die geblieben sind, aber auch diese übriggebliebenen Monumente können nicht mehr begeistern. (GW 17, 976)

Der ganze Westen hat jene Instinkte nicht mehr, aus denen Institutionen wachsen, aus denen Zukunft wächst (Nietzsche, Werke, VIII, (Leipzig, 1906), p. 151).

2. Great emphasis is placed on Brecht's alleged (but not proven) disappointment with the revolution of 1918 as a reason for his turning away from the cause of the proletariat, in the studies by H. Kaufmann, Bertolt Brecht/ Geschichtsdrama und Parabelstück (Berlin, 1962) pp. 110-126, and E. Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 495.
3. H. Ihering claimed that the success of Eduard II was "der Erfolg des Zeiterlebnisses. Nicht im Sinne der Aktualität, sondern im Sinn von Erkenntnis der anonymen Publikumsleidenschaften" Von Reinhardt bis Brecht vol. 2 (Berlin, 1959), p. 20. One can only doubt that this success was scored with an audience composed of sports fans as Ihering suggests, "Er spürt das Publikum der Strasse, der Sportpaläste, der Sechstagerennen, der Boxkämpfe. Er erlebt seine Feindschaft, seine Vorliebe, seine Erregung, seine Erschlaffung produktiv mit. Er überwindet das Publikum durch Gestaltung. Er lässt unbewusst die Energien der Masse in seine Arbeit einströmen." *ibid*, p. 19.
4. Nietzsche's imagery is perhaps the clearest expression of his belief in the loneliness of the great, and particularly of the highly intellectual individual. Brecht's image of "jener eiskühlen und unbewegten Luft höchster Geistigkeit" resembles Nietzsche's lines:

Ich suchte, wo der Wind am schärfsten weht?
Ich lernte wohnen,
Wo niemand wohnt, in Eiden Eisbär-Zonen,
Verlernte Mensch und Gott, Fluch und Gebet?
Ward zum Gespenst, das über Gletscher geht?

Gedichte (Stuttgart, 1964) p. 315.

The similarity between Nietzsche's conception of life as being essentially "Jenseits von Gut und Böse"; and Brecht's view that

at the highest level of intellectual clarity "Recht und Pflicht aufhören", hardly needs to be stressed.

5. Nietzsche's disparaging view of modern man as a "Herdenthier" is shared by Brecht here. It is interesting and ironic to note the similarity of imagery, but difference of evaluation, when Brecht later stresses the importance of men's forming collectives, as happens elsewhere in nature, and the need for the collective to be prepared to sacrifice the individual if need be:

Zur Überwindung von Schwierigkeiten bilden sich in der Natur Kollektive (Schwalben beim Nachdemstudenfliegen, Wölfe bei Hungerzügen und so weiter)
(...)

Ein Kollektiv ist nur lebensfähig von dem Moment an und so lang, als es auf die Einzelleben der in ihm zusammengeschlossenen Individuen nicht ankommt. (GW 20, 61)

The theme of the individual's insignificance reinforces this link and contrast between Brecht's early and his later thinking. The "winzige Bedeutung" of the individual is taken in the early plays as a challenge to self-assertion in heroic struggle with the universe: Eduard II desires "Krieg zu führen gegen die Kraniche der Luft, / Den Fisch der Tiefsee, rascher nachwachsend als getötet" (E 190). The "Lehrstücke", by contrast, demand that the individual reduce himself to his "kleinste Grösse", which is that of a creature seeking bare survival, and subsume himself for defensive and offensive purposes in a collective.

6. Brecht's later attacks on the "Kulinarismus" of audiences who "consume" the sufferings of characters on stage for pleasure (GW 15, 143) would appear to be rooted in the way in which he himself responded to drama.
7. The narrator reads treachery in the eyes of Croze: "Dabei sahen wir ihm in die Augen, und ich kann euch sagen und konnte es damals schon, es lag Verrat auf ihrem Grund, Schleim und verfaulte Fische" (GW 11, 23). The fish imagery used here is also to be found in Leben Eduards des Zweiten.
8. This same problem of cosmic transience is reflected on in one of Brecht's early "psalms":
1. Wie erschreckend in der Nacht ist das konvexe Gesicht des schwarzen Landes!
 2. Über der Welt sind die Wolken, sie gehören zur Welt. Über den Wolken ist nichts.
(...)
 4. Immer denke ich: wir werden nicht beobachtet. Der Aussatz des einzigen Sternes in der Nacht, vor er untergeht!
(...)
 7. Wir fahren mit grosser Geschwindigkeit auf ein Gestirn in der Milchstrasse zu. Es ist eine grosse Ruhe in dem Gesicht der Erde.
Mein Herz geht zu schnell. Sonst ist alles in Ordnung.
(GW 8, 241)

9. The imagery here may help to clarify a rather obscure passage in Im Dickicht:

Marie (auf dem Podest, sie lässt einen Geldschein in den Bottich flattern.)

Als ich die Scheine in den Händen hielt, sah ich Gottes Auge auf mir ruhen. Ich sagte: ich habe alles für ihn getan. Gott wandte sich weg, es war, als ob Tabakfelder rauschten. Was für eine bittere Armut ist mir alles, alles geworden.
(D 79-80)

Marie is apparently betrayed by god when, for the sake of an ideal (love), she refuses to allow herself to be misused by Shlink any longer.

10. It may be that Nietzsche's philosophy of "Ja-sagen", formulated particularly in Also sprach Zarathustra, as the proper response to a cruel but beautiful world, influenced Brecht's thinking on this point.
11. Throughout the following, the adaptation is treated as Brecht's work. Although ostensibly a combined project with Feuchtwanger, the only evidence as to the nature of the latter's role in the undertaking, is Fleisser's statement that Feuchtwanger insisted that Brecht consistently write in a "rough" style: "Die Arbeit scheint so vor sich gegangen zu sein, dass Brecht zuvor sein Geschriebenes mitbrachte, dies Geschriebene wurde dann von beiden beklopft, der Lion war der Eiserne, der viel jüngere Brecht kam gern in ein geniales Schludern. Wie alles auf der Welt war es nicht immer die reine Freude, Feuchtwanger stöhnte mir einmal vor, Brecht sehe schon nicht mehr, was er mache, er sei jetzt zwei Tage in Augsburg gewesen und habe von dort ganz abscheulich glatte Rhythmen mitgebracht, es koste unendliche Mühe, das alles wieder aufzurauhen, damit es gehörig holpere, bei Brecht müssten die Dinge nämlich holpern." Marieluise Fleisser, "Aus der Augustenstrasse", in: Bertolt Brecht, Leben Eduards des Zweiten Vorlage, Texte und Materialien (Stuttgart, 1968), p. 265. All references to the play are to this edition, and take the form: (E + page number). Although the decision to treat this work as Brecht's alone is a purely pragmatic one, the evidence of his adaptation, in 1925, of Feuchtwanger's play Warren Hastings (retitled Kalkutta, 4. Mai) does suggest that he was the dominant personality. In the notion of making Hastings a considerably more brutal character, whose chief motivation for political action is the "Spas" he derives from it, one can see evidence of Brecht's having imposed on the material the attitudes which interested him.
12. Volker Canaris states with some justification that "Brecht's Leben Eduards des Zweiten entpolitisiert einen politischen Stoff". "Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England" als vormarxistisches Stück Bertolt Brechts (Bonn, 1973) p. viii. Canaris does, however, overstate the case when he seeks totally to eliminate politics from Brecht's version, and to make them the sole focus of interest in Marlowe's original.

13. That no major change in Brecht's thinking took place in this period, will have to stand as an unsupported assertion for the moment. The analysis of Mann ist Mann and Die Dreigroschenoper (his next adaptation) will seek to substantiate the point that his ideas do not change radically in the years between writing Eduard II and formulating these remarks on adaptation.
14. The "Materialwert" of a play was, in Brecht's view, its "gestischer Gehalt" (GW 15, 181), that is, the sum of the attitudes which the characters adopt to one another.
15. The "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" reference for this is BBA 1355/98. This otherwise unpublished statement is quoted by L. Laboulle in her Ph.D. thesis, Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht (Leicester, 1961), p. 126.
16. L. Laboulle, "A Note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II", Modern Language Review 54 (1959), p. 220, and J. Svendsen, "The Queen is dead: Brecht's Eduard II", The Drama Review 10 (1966), p. 163, deny that there is any metaphysical dimension to the play. Yet, surely the cosmic scale of Eduard's struggle ("Krieg zu führen gegen die Kraniche der Luft/Den Fisch der Tiefsee") implies that it is the world, with its lack of any transcendental significance, which is his real enemy. A negative metaphysical dimension must clearly be distinguished from the absence of any metaphysical dimension in the play.
17. Marlowe has Death appear in the traditional guise of a Mower, and gives to this figure the task of betraying Edward to his pursuers, Edward the Second, Act IV, Sc. vi. All references to this play in the following are to W. Moelwyn Merchant's edition (London, 1967). References are given after quotations in the form: (ME + page number).
18. Moelwyn Merchant comments in the Introduction to his edition of Edward the Second, "That suffering and death should bear an appropriate relation to sins committed is a commonplace of mediaeval thought, theological, literary or aesthetic" (ME xxi).
19. Svendsen draws attention to revolt as a central aspect of Eduard's behaviour, but reduces the motif to the status of an expression of Brecht's own psychological difficulties. Yet, no biographical evidence is adduced to support the claim that the play is "a solid expression of Brecht's fundamental psychological composition and attitudes". "The Queen is dead", p. 162.
20. Canaris argues that Eduard only understands his own actions and situation as a result of his tortures and imprisonment, "Eduard II" als vormarxistisches Stück, p. 57. Yet, although Eduard does say to Mortimer, "Der Stoff/Dieser letzten Tage klärt sich heraus" (E 220), and claims that he now "schmeckt (...) Nützlichkeit/Schrumpfender Vernichtung" (E 220), it must be remembered that Eduard has for long sought and enjoyed the process of his own decay. In a speech made before his defeat by Mortimer he says:

Vier gute Jahre. Leben in Zelten ist
Und Heereszügen angenehm zu schmecken.
Pferde sind eine gute Sache. Wind reinigt die Lunge.
Und wenn die Haut auch schrumpft und Haar ausfällt,
Der Regen wäscht die Nieren und alles ist besser
Als London. (E189)

21. R. Ley seems to take too pure a view of Eduard's motives when he states, "In a meaningless world, the sense of sin is lost and the law of futile love at all costs is proclaimed". "Brecht: Science and Cosmic Futility", Germanic Review 40 (1965), p. 215. Far from agreeing that "Brecht has heightened and purified the homosexual relation between a loveless king and a hapless Gaveston" (ibid., p. 214), I would maintain that Brecht takes away from Eduard the capacity for love which was evident in Marlowe's version, and supplants this with a cruel, utterly egotistical desire to play with the feelings of his favourite.
22. Shlink's suicide marks his failure, in the last analysis, to be able to live out the truth of his existential situation and accept the utter alienness of death. Kafka, whom the young Brecht greatly admired, summed up the logic of the situation which Shlink refuses to acknowledge, thus: "Man darf niemanden betrügen. Auch nicht die Welt um ihren Sieg." Hochzeitsvorbereitungen auf dem Lande (New York, 1953), p. 44.
23. U. Weisstein is surely correct in criticising E. Bentley for the claim that "Brecht's Gaveston is a sexual partner first and last" which he made in the Introduction to his English translation of the play, Bertolt Brecht. Edward II. A Chronicle play (New York, 1966), p. x. Weisstein comments thus, "In stressing this aspect of the play at the expense of all the others, Bentley overlooks the fact that the homosexual pattern of the play is symptomatic of a profounder issue." "Marlowe's Homecoming or Edward II crosses the Atlantic." Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht LX (1968), p. 241.
24. L. Laboulle has pointed out this reduction of Gaveston's status to that of a mere, unattractive, bone of contention, "A Note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II", p. 217.
25. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, vol. 2, p. 21.
26. The replacement of "the public debates and consultations of Marlowe's play" by "soliloquies and dialogues", noted by Laboulle, "A note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II", p. 216, arises from the diminished importance of the theme of sovereignty.
27. Laboulle oversimplifies Eduard's attitude in this scene to the point of distortion when she states that the refusal to abdicate is merely "a manifestation of the instinct for self preservation" (ibid., p. 216). The refusal certainly is a tactic to prolong his struggle with Mortimer, but it is also one which he knows will be followed immediately by his murder.

28. Canaris overlooks Mortimer's cynicism at this early stage when he argues that he "suddenly" gains insight into the vainness of political endeavour when he is about to be executed, "Eduard II" als vormarxistisches Stück, p. 63.
29. A positive view of Mortimer as a politically responsible person is taken by Gray (Brecht, p. 43), and Beckley, "Adaptation as a feature of Brecht's dramatic technique", German Life and Letters 15 (1961-62), p. 276.
30. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht Vol. 2, p. 20.
31. "A note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II", p. 215.
32. It is the ironic tone of this speech, calculated as it is to provoke the king's anger, which prevents it from being the unambiguous "anti-war speech" that Beckley claims it to be, "Adaptation as a feature of Brecht's dramatic technique", p. 276.
33. As Ley has pointed out, the allusions to the Passion in this scene also include the cock-crow, the bloody sweat, and, in Eduard's invitation to Baldock "to break bread with him", the Last Supper, "Brecht: Science and Cosmic Futility", p. 214.
34. Because of Eduard's delight in treachery, it seems inappropriate to see him, as Ley does, as "a helpless Christ on the brink of despair in the Garden of Gethsemane", *ibid.*, p. 214. The allusion is, rather, a blasphemous, sacrilegious one.
35. It is difficult to agree with Beckley's view that "All sympathy for the king is alienated", "Adaptation as a feature of Brecht's dramatic technique", p. 275.
36. The photograph is reproduced in Willett The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht, p. 25.
37. BBA 329/21.
38. The many "colloquialisms and vulgarisms" which, as Weisstein rightly observes, were an important element in Brecht's translation of the work into his own dramatic idiom have the function of coarsening the characters in a similar manner to the debasement of Gaveston here. U. Weisstein, "The first version of Brecht/Feuchtwanger's Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England and its relation to the standard text", Journal of English and Germanic Philology LXIX (1970), pp. 208-209.
39. Schumacher lists the linguistic peculiarities used by Brecht: "Zu den besonderen Mitteln gehört hier die Voranstellung des Genitivs, die Trennung des Genitivs vom Nominativ, das Weglassen der bestimmten und unbestimmten Artikel, sowie der Fürwörter und Endungsvokale." Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 89.
40. Spencer describes the opposing armies as "zwei Molche/Im Kampf zerknäuelte" (E176), and Mortimer sees "Bemenschte Pferdeherden/ Einander auffressen" (E170).

41. Canaris gives a good account of other expressions for death in this play, particularly those which emphasize the animal, inhuman quality of dying. "Eduard II" als vormarxistisches Stück, pp. 98-99.
42. Laboulle judges the language of the play harshly: "The characteristic style of Eduard II seems due neither to the exigencies of dramatic verse, which Brecht here uses for the first time, nor to his model, but rather to a certain perplexity in the author's mind. With its digressions and repetitions it seems to reflect the obsessional circling of the mind around an idea." Laboulle, "A note on Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II" pp. 218-219. There are speeches, such as Gaveston's writing of his will, when Brecht expresses some degree of confusion in the mind of the character, but these are exceptional in the work. After one has mastered the art of reading Brecht's admittedly unusual language in the play, one is struck by its order and balance, rather^{than} by its lack of clarity.
43. A link between the theme of conflict and Brecht's chosen mode of expression in this work was made by the author himself in a later essay: "Es handelte sich, wie man aus den Texten sehen kann, nicht nur um ein "Gegen-den-Strom-Schwimmen" in formaler Hinsicht, einen Protest gegen die Glätte und Harmonie des konventionellen Verses, sondern immer doch schon um den Versuch, die Vorgänge zwischen den Menschen als widerspruchsvolle, kampfdurchtobte, gewaltdätige zu zeigen" (GW 19, 397).
44. W. Behrend, a critic of the first performance, described the work as a "Schauerhistorie", quoted in Rühle, Theater für die Republik, p. 509.
45. BBA 329/22-23.

CHAPTER FIVE

Mann ist Mann

So far, a number of conflicts in Brecht's early plays have been examined, conflicts between a moral and an existential perspective on life, between nature and civilisation, prudence and passion, self-preservation and self-destruction, activity and passivity, irony and involvement, freedom and necessity. In Baal, Im Dickicht and Leben Eduards des Zweiten, the main characters were relatively sophisticated, intellectual types who were conscious of these conflicts and based their actions on their insights into man's existential situation. Mann ist Mann is just as much a philosophical play as these others, but with the important difference that the leading characters are not conscious of the philosophical significance of their situation. Whereas the earlier protagonists deliberately set in motion the action which becomes their fate, with full knowledge of the likely painful consequences of this action, the characters in Mann ist Mann are swept along on the tide of an encompassing, supra-individual action which constantly harries them and hounds them into conflict after conflict. This larger action is the advance of the British army in India, a symbol of the march of modern civilisation.¹ The earlier heroes were also caught in an action which it was beyond their power to control, namely the natural cycle of birth and decay, but their participation in this process took the form of actively seeking opportunities to exercise such individual freedom as they had in order to choose the speed and manner of their inevitable destruction.² In Mann ist Mann, by contrast, the characters mostly do not understand the compulsions of the process in which they are involved, so that when they do make "choices" - which are never completely free - they tend to bring about unwanted consequences.

The development towards the encompassment and ironic relativisation of individual action within a social framework has already been adumbrated in the first chapter of this study, where the first published version of Baal was contrasted with the revised version of that play, the Lebenslauf des Mannes Baal, written at the same time as Mann ist Mann, in order to show how Brecht had moved to a more ironic view of his hero's behaviour, which he now saw as a hopeless gesture of defiance in the face of the onward march of urban civilisation. In Mann ist Mann the characters have even less freedom than the "man Baal", for, whereas he does at least contrive to live outside society, protesting in his individualistic manner against the civilisation of the great cities, the characters in the new comedy are all so thoroughly conditioned by society that everything they do only contributes in the end to the consolidation of the social system in which they are or become caught. The only freedom left to them lies in playing their respective social roles cunningly, so as to extract as much personal profit as possible - or without cunning, which tends to result in unsought self-injury of one kind or another. The analysis of the play will begin by showing how the theme of freedom, which, as was seen, was of considerable importance in Im Dickicht and Leben Eduards des Zweiten, is treated "negatively" here, that is, with the intention of demonstrating the extent of the "little man's" unfreedom within contemporary civilisation.

The first demonstration of the individual's lack of freedom is given in the second scene of the play, where four soldiers find that their actions have unforeseen consequences. The chief concern of these soldiers is to ensure that they have a sufficient supply of whisky to satisfy their vast appetite for liquor, an appetite which

their social role has encouraged them to cultivate, since part of the soldier's pay is his daily tot:

(Vier Soldaten: Uria Shelley, Jesse Mahoney, Polly Baker, Jeriah Jip, mit einem Maschinengewehr auf dem Wege zum Kamp. Sie haben Whisky getrunken und singen den Mann-ist-Mann-Song)

Jesse Das Ganze halt! Kilkoa! Gleich wie die gewaltigen Tanks unserer Queen mit Petroleum aufgefüllt werden müssen, damit man sie über die verdammten Strassen dieses zu langen Goldlandes rollen sehen kann, so ist den Soldaten das Whiskytrinken unerlässlich. (MIM 9)³

The soldiers' thirst for whisky and their readiness to steal money from the "Gelbherrenpagode" in order to obtain it, is a reflection on a small scale of the ethos of the British imperial system to which they belong: their desire for money and whisky is matched by the desire of the queen to obtain the gold of this "Goldland", and their crime of burglary mirrors the criminal nature of imperialist aggression.⁴ That the army should forbid its soldiers to commit crimes of this kind does not negate this pattern of correspondence, but merely limits it, as any similarity between the real exploiters in society and the exploited "exploiters" in the lower reaches of society must necessarily be limited. In this scene the latent contradiction in the soldiers' situation, between the appetite which the army has encouraged them to develop and the limitations placed by the army on the fulfilment of that appetite, between the aggressions encouraged by their social role and the limits placed on the expression of these aggressions by society, begin to unfold their harmful implications for the men. Their attempt to rob the temple is not only a painful experience in itself, since the place is full of booby-traps, but also leads to the loss of one of their number, Jeriah Jip, who leaves a large patch of hair in some tar which has been smeared on the door-lintel, and therefore cannot return to camp, lest his

"Glatze" should betray the fact that the unit was guilty of the robbery. Thus the compulsion of their appetites leads the soldiers into a further loss of freedom, in that their attempt to satisfy their appetites has injurious consequences which in turn compel them to take further action to save themselves. The other three soldiers decide to hide Jip in a palankeen until the evening, when they intend to return to shave his head completely in order to avoid detection. That they must postpone this plan till the evening again results from their unfreedom as soldiers - they are obliged to hurry away from the scene of the crime because they must be on parade very soon. This postponement in turn leads to another series of chance events which further illustrate the inability of individuals such as these to control their own fates. Before pursuing the chain of conflicts in which the three remaining soldiers become embroiled, it is proposed to examine first the subsequent fate of Jip.

Having been placed dead drunk into the palankeen by his comrades, Jip is dragged into the temple by its owner when a shower of rain threatens to soak the basket. His imprisonment in the basket and his removal to inside the temple symbolise the theme of unfreedom which his fate illustrates, for in all this he is unconscious, the passive object of the interplay of arbitrary forces. This theme is developed further when the owner of the temple, finding the drunk in his palankeen, decides Jip's immediate future by determining to recoup the loss sustained in the robbery through the transformation of Jip into a "Gott" whose groans from within a "Gebetskasten" will extract money from gullible worshippers (MiM 36). Here again, a situation of physical imprisonment symbolises a lack of freedom for the individual to shape his own life. Jip's conversion into a bogus god makes him

the first character in the play to experience a change of identity. Here, as elsewhere in the play, an involuntary change of identity serves to underline the dominant theme of the contingency inherent in individual existence, the character's change of name pointing back in time to the arbitrariness of his first name and to the contingent, physical origins of so-called individual identity.⁵

Interwoven with the existential aspects of the characters' various fates, however, is a socially critical aspect, which is implicit in the involvement of business interests in each change of identity which they have to suffer. The satire aims at showing how social factors aggravate already serious problems in the individual's life. As has been seen already, business interests have contributed considerably to the shaping of Jip's identity before the action began, for it is as a soldier of the queen, who has imperialist ambitions in this "Goldland", that he becomes a drunk lost on the road to Kilkoa. The new identity given him by Herr Wang also serves the material ambitions of his new employer. And just as the old social role led him into contradictory situations, so his new function produces its own contradictions in him, namely a conflict between pleasure at having his appetites for food and drink well satisfied by Wang, and a sense of loyalty to his old comrades:

Jip (isst schneller) Das ist ein gutes Beefsteak, aber es ist falsch, dass ich hier sitze. Sicher haben Polly und Jesse auf mich gewartet. Vielleicht warten sie jetzt noch. Es schmeckt wie Butter. Es ist schlecht von mir, es zu essen. Horch, jetzt sagt Polly zu Jesse: Jip kommt bestimmt. Wenn er nüchtern ist, kommt Jip. Uria wird vielleicht nicht so stark warten, weil Uria eben ein schlechter Mensch ist, aber Jesse und Polly werden sagen: Jip kommt. Das ist keine Frage, es ist ein passendes Essen für mich nach all den Getränken. Wenn nur Jesse nicht so fest an seinen Jip glauben würde, aber er sagt sicher: Jip verrät

uns nicht, und das ist natürlich schwer zu ertragen für mich. Es ist ganz verkehrt, dass ich hier sitze, aber es ist gutes Fleisch. (MiM 47)

Jip's feelings towards his friends may be seen as a moral impulse, or as a selfish need for companionship, or as the effect of social conditioning by life in an army which makes great play of comradeship (see the Mann-ist-Mann-Song - MiM 128), or as a mixture of such elements; but whichever aspect of his motives one stresses, the decision to leave his flourishing business with Wang in order to return to Polly, Jesse and Uria is a tragic one. The consequence of this decision, his only "free" action in the course of the play, is that he is left alone in the mountains between India and Tibet, the victim of his moral sense, or, more cynically, of blindness arising from such other human weaknesses as gullibility or the need for friendship. Jip has failed to realise that the identity for which he has sacrificed his material interests is largely dependent on contingent circumstances of a material kind which lie beyond his control. Thus, just as he acquired the identity of Jip, soldier in the queen's army and comrade of Polly, Jesse, and Uria, because it suited the interests of the army, himself and his friends for him to have this identity, so he must lose this identity now that the army's interests are met without his having it. Because of his failure to recognise the primacy of selfish, material considerations in life he tries to rise above enslavement to his physical appetites, and suffers as a consequence. The tragic undertone of the "comedy" breaks through the farcical surface in Jip's angry speech of farewell to his companions:

Jip Der Eiswind von Tibet soll euer Mark aussaugen, ihr werdet nicht mehr die Hafenglocke von Kilkoa hören, ihr Teufel! Ihr sollt marschieren bis ans Ende der Welt; und dann sollt ihr umkehren, mehrere Male. Der Teufel selber, euer Lehrer, wird euch nicht um

sich haben wollen, wenn ihr alt seid, und ihr sollt weitermarschieren müssen durch die Wüste Gobi bei Tag und bei Nacht über die grünen wehenden Roggenfelder von Wales, und das wird über euch kommen, weil ihr einen Kameraden in der Not verraten habt. (MiM 124)

Such tragedy as Jip experiences was avoided by the heroes of the earlier plays because they did not place any trust in the social dimension of existence, seeking instead only the fulfilment of their personal needs, and thus could not have their trust betrayed in this way. Tragedy is also avoided by Galy Gay, the hero of Mann ist Mann, through his adoption of a cynical attitude of self-gratification at all costs, but his "philosophy" is the antithesis of the nihilistic sado-masochism which gave the fate of Eduard some heroic stature, and is likely to end in disappointment of a kind that Baal, Shlink or Eduard, who are consciously and consistently nihilistic, are spared. In the increasing weight given to the tragic implications of the characters' fates, and in the renewed focus on the extent to which social factors are responsible for aggravating men's existential problems, lies an important shift of emphasis in Brecht's early dramas, a development which ultimately leads to the activist phase in his writing. As will be seen, the development which begins here with increased doubt being cast on individualistic strategies for the avoidance of tragedy, culminates in the advocacy of social strategies for its avoidance.

A grotesque variation on the themes of individual unfreedom and contingency of identity is provided by the fate of "Charles Fairchild, genannt Blody Five" (MiM 5), the sergeant in the unit to which the machine-gun crew have been posted. Fairchild first appears in the role of the irate N.C.O. who is determined to bring to task the soldiers responsible for robbing the temple. Ironically, however,

the very rain-shower which will prevent the three soldiers rescuing Jip from the palankeen and which could thus have given Fairchild the satisfaction of arresting them, leads the sergeant himself into a situation where he is obliged to change identity and commit offences against the honour of his uniform. It is Fairchild's misfortune to be "vielleicht der geschlechtlichste Mensch unter der Sonne" (MiM 33), whose sexual appetite is aroused suddenly and violently whenever it rains. This absurdity is not without deeper significance, for the association of sexuality with rain (traditionally a fertility symbol) is intended to underline the impersonal and irrational quality of the force of sexuality. Just before the rain begins, there emerges a conflict between Fairchild's social identity, as the embodiment of disciplined soldierly virtue, and his appetitive, physical self, which is expressed in the exaggerated, mechanical stiffness of his movements as his inner rigidity increases in a vain attempt to resist his sexual impulses:

Hiobja Warum geht der Sergeant so wie ein Bajonettständer?

(Blody Five tritt auf, entsetzlich verändert)

Leokadja (sieht ihn an) Hallo, Hiobja, schnell! Ziehe das Regendach über die Kantine: Es gibt Regen.

Blody (während die achte Kompagnie ihre Namen sagt) Sie lachen. Aber ich sage Ihnen, ich möchte dies alles verbrennen sehen, dieses Sodom mit Bartisch und Schaukelstuhl und dir, die du allein ein Gomorrha bist. Schau mich nicht so verzehrend an, du getünchtes Babylon.

Leokadja Weisst du, Charlie, eine Frau sieht das gern, wenn ein Mann so leidenschaftlich ist!

Blody Der Zusammenbruch der Menschheit fing damit an, dass der erste dieser Kaffern seinen Knopf nicht zumachte. Halt dein Maul! Das Exerzierreglement ist ein Buch voller Schwächen, aber es ist das einzige, an das man sich als Mensch halten kann, weil es einem Rückgrat gibt und die Verantwortung vor Gott übernimmt. In Wirklichkeit müsste man in die Erde ein Loch graben und hinein Dynamit tun und den ganzen Erdball in die Luft sprengen, dann würden sie es vielleicht sehen, dass man

Ernst macht. (MiM 33)

In order to resolve the contradiction between his conscience, the socially conditioned nature of which is reflected in the mixture of biblical and military idioms in his speech, and his instincts, Fairchild changes his identity as predicted and later demanded by Leokadja Begbick:

Leokadja Wenn es einmal regnet, ist Blody Five, der gefährlichste Mann der indischen Armee, ungefährlich wie ein Milchzahn, denn bei Regen verwandelt sich Blody Five in Blody Gent, und der blutige Gent befasst sich drei Tage lang nur mit Mädchen. (MiM 31)

Leokadja has the power to bring about this transformation into "Blody Gent" because she can determine whether or not Fairchild gains access to her daughters in order to satisfy his craving. Her main motive for insisting on his transformation is her own material gain, for not only does she profit from the drinks which Fairchild has to buy for the whole bar, but the three soldiers have promised to help fold away her canteen tent in time for the imminent departure of the troop trains, if she agrees to help them by preventing Blody Five from interfering with their acquisition of a replacement for Jip. Thus, as in the case of Jip, business interests are involved in the sergeant's change of identity, so that the temporary release from his accustomed social role does not mean an escape from exploitation but simply the exchange of one situation in which he is exploited for another. Here again the point is made that the effects of man's inherent existential unfreedom, represented in this case by Fairchild's irrepressible sexuality, are worsened by the conditions of life in a capitalist, imperialist society.

The destruction of Fairchild's public persona during his period as "Bloody Gent" is expressed not only by his being subjected to insults and physical assaults, but also by a symbolic incident in which his reputation as "der gefährlichste Mann der indischen Armee" (MiM 31) is destroyed. In his drunken state he reveals that the action which won him the name of "Bloody Five" amounted to no more than the shooting down at point-blank range of five defenceless natives. When mockingly challenged to demonstrate his renowned marksmanship, he is unable to hit an egg at short range. His failure here, which crowns the loss of his name, is linked by the egg-motif to the future ascendancy of Galy Gay, the man who is at this moment also having his identity changed so that he may serve as a replacement for Jeriah Jip (for it is said of Galy Gay that he is "innerlich wie ein rohes Ei" - MiM 57); the failure to hit the egg symbolises his failure to expose the fraud in which Galy Gay is involved, and foreshadows not only his own castration but also the time when Galy Gay, and not Bloody Five, is hailed as "der grösste Mann, den die Armee hat" (MiM 126). The final stage in Fairchild's renunciation of his old identity comes when he denies being who he is in order to avoid duties which would take him away from widow Begbick's daughters:

Soldaten Sie sind ein wunderbarer Soldat, Bloody! Es geht von Ihnen etwas aus, dass man schauert. Sie müssen auch eine ungeheure Lendenkraft besitzen. Wie? Und dabei sind Sie ein so netter Mensch. Und im Grund gutmütig.

Soldat (herein) Ist hier der Sergeant Charles Fairchild? Der General befiehlt, er soll laufen und seine Kompagnie am Güterbahnhof aufstellen.

Bloody Sagt nichts, dass ich es bin!

Soldaten Es ist kein solcher Sergeant hier. (MiM 93)

When Fairchild recovers from his collapse into a drunken stupor to discover that his sexual appetite has led to the loss of his

military reputation, he decides to prevent any similar conflict in future by castrating himself:

Stimme des Blody Five Was für eine Schande ist über mich gekommen? Wo ist mein Name, der gross war von Kalkutta bis Cooch-Bihar? Wo ist das Gestern, das vergangen ist? Sogar mein Rock ist dahin, den ich getragen habe! Sie haben mich in einen Zug gelegt wie ein Kalb in einen Schlächterkarren! Mein Mund ist zugestopft wie mit einem ziphilitischen Hut, und im ganzen Zug sagt man, dass ich nicht mehr Blody Five bin! Ich muss hineingehen und diesen Zug so zurichten, dass man ihn wie eine verbogene Blechröhre auf einen Schuttablagerungsplatz schmeissen kann. Ich will sie alle wie Ungeziefer zerdrücken, die mir das getan haben, so wahr ich Blody Five heisse. Dass ich esse, ist nicht wichtig, sondern dass ich Blody Five bin. Das ist ganz einfach (...)
Das ist ganz einfach. Das ist die Lösung. Da ist ein Strick. Da ist ein Armeerevolver. Da kenne ich gar nichts. Aufständige werden erschossen. Das ist ganz einfach! Johnny, pack deinen Koffer. Mich kostet auf dieser Welt kein Mädchen mehr einen Pfennig. So. Das ist ganz einfach. Dabei darf mir noch nicht einmal die Pfeife ausgehen. Ich übernehme die Verantwortung. Ich muss es tun, damit ich Blody Five bleibe. Gebt Feuer! (MiM 112-114)

The instrument of Blody Five's castration is an army revolver, and the terms in which he describes it ("Aufständige werden erschossen") are those of a military execution. These symbolic details underline the significance of his action as an example of self-mutilation through voluntary identification with the aims of the system which exploits him.⁶ The motif of "Essen", which really plays no part in his choice, is inserted to stress the parallel between his fate and those of Galy Gay and Jeriah Jip, and stands here as a general term for the appetitive self, the appetites being sexual in his case, which is in conflict with his social identity. Like Jip, he feels obliged to resolve this contradiction by sacrificing his physical interests to "higher" considerations. Yet, so mechanical is the morality of military discipline

to which he subordinates his private needs, so insubstantial is the prestige which is his ulterior motive in this decision, so grotesque, in short, is his fate, that his castration produces a feeling of shock rather than one of tragic identification. In Blody Five's case, the diminution of human freedom as a result of social and instinctual pressures is the most extreme in the play.

Both Fairchild and Jip try to undo the changes brought about through the passing of time when they seek to regain an identity which they have lost. The remaining members of the machine-gun crew also attempt the same thing when they struggle to sustain their collective identity as "die Maschinengewehrabteilung der 8. Kompagnie" (MiM 28), which is threatened by the disappearance of Jip. Unlike Jip or Fairchild, they have no higher motives (however illusory) for doing this, but are concerned rather simply to avoid being detected and punished as criminals. Their fate is inextricably intertwined with another, contrasting one, namely that of Galy Gay, the apparently innocuous stevedore whom they persuade to assume the identity which has been left vacant, so to speak, by the departure of Jip. Because the struggle of the three soldiers to regain their old identity is much simpler than Galy Gay's experience of change, it is best dealt with first.

After losing Jip, the three must quickly find someone to stand in for him on parade that day. In the expectation that they will be able to rescue Jip in the evening, they use enticements and flattery to persuade a stranger, Galy Gay, to don a uniform and play the part of Jip in the meantime. But when they later learn that Jip is being well supplied with steak and whisky by Wang, they realise that they will now have to devise some means of making Galy Gay into Jip's

permanent replacement. The outcome of their complicated manoeuvres is that Galy Gay outwardly accepts the new identity which they foist on him, but, by continually threatening to relapse into his old self as Galy Gay, and to expose their trickery to the military authorities, he ensures that it is he who controls their lives and not the other way round. Thus, the soldiers' resistance to change again leads to unwelcome consequences similar to those experienced by Jip and Blody Five when they exerted what they believed to be their freedom to control their own lives:

Jesse Wir sind in Staub und Wasser alle Strassen dieses zu langen Landes entlanggestiefelt, von dem Hindukuschmassiv bis zu den grossen Ebenen im südlichen Pandschab, aber von Benares bis Kalkutta unter Sonne und Mond haben wir nur Verrat gesehen. Dieser Mann, den wir aufnahmen und der uns unsere Schlafdecken genommen hat, so dass wir jetzt um unseren Schlaf kommen, ist wie eine Ölbüchse, die ein Loch hat. Ja und nein ist ihm das nämliche, er sagt heute so und morgen so. Ach, Uria, wir sind mit unserer Weisheit zu Ende. Lasst uns zu Leokadja Begbick gehen, die bei dem Sergeanten wacht, dass er nicht von seiner Plattform fällt, und sie bitten, dass sie sich zu ihm lege, damit er sich wohl fühlt und nichts fragt. (MiM 104-105)

This third illustration of the harmful results of a conflict between appetite and social role again points to the limits of human freedom. Just as Jip chose a course of action which changes in the outside world had made impossible to carry through, namely return to the company, and just as Blody Five's decision in favour of discipline and prestige was manifestly an involuntary, socially conditioned reflex, so the three soldiers have their freedom of choice limited by the absence of an alternative to finding a replacement for Jip. The experiences of Galy Gay, which represent the fourth and central treatment of the theme of freedom must now be examined.

In an interview given to Bernard Guillemin at the time he was working on this play Brecht described Galy Gay's transformation as having been brought about by "drei Gefühlsingenieure" and as taking the form of an "Ummontierung" (SzT 2, 271). The mechanical metaphor used here also appears in the play, in the phrase "menschliche Kampfmaschine" (MiM 126) which is applied to Galy Gay, and in a "Zwischenspruch" spoken by Leokadja Begbick on behalf of the playwright:

Aber Herr Bertolt Brecht beweist auch dann,
Dass man mit einem Menschen beliebig viel machen kann.
Hier wird heute abend ein Mensch wie ein Auto ummontiert,
Ohne dass er irgend etwas dabei verliert. (MiM 62)

The demonstration of the thesis that man is so unfree that he can be handled like a machine, takes the form of showing Galy Gay's characteristics before he is transformed, and then showing how the "Gefühlsingenieure" use these characteristics as psychological levers with which to manipulate him into behaving as they want him to. As has been indicated already, the demonstration does not entirely bear out the thesis, for, although the soldiers are successful in persuading Galy Gay to adopt the name and role of Jeriah Jip, he is sufficiently cunning to use his un-machine-like freedom of action to emerge as their leader rather than the will-less robot they had intended to construct.⁷

Galy Gay's opening speech, the very first of the play, presents him as a man whose attitude to life is almost perfectly adapted to his material circumstances:

Galy Gay Liebe Frau, ich habe mich entschlossen heute, entsprechend unserem Einkommen, einen Fisch zu kaufen. Es übersteigt das nicht die Verhältnisse eines Packers, der nicht trinkt, ganz wenig raucht und fast keine Leidenschaften hat. Meinst du, ich soll einen grossen Fisch

kaufen, oder benötigst du einen kleinen?

(MiM 7)

His decision to buy a fish for supper is just what is required of him by the immediate situation. His lack of vices or passions make it unlikely that he will ever do anything which "übersteigt die Verhältnisse eines Packers". On the other hand, his rather pompous, inflated style of speech conflicts with his lowly station in life and suggests that he may be a little conceited. This slight contradiction in his situation makes possible his subsequent overstepping of the limits of his stevedore situation and eventual transformation into a soldier. This fateful characteristic is described by his wife as "Grossspurigkeit" (MiM 58). The tension in him between natural inertia, evident in his tendency to simply adapt himself to the immediate situation in which he finds himself, and a capacity for running out of control, is expressed in his wife's warning:

Frau Du bist wie ein Elefant, der das schwerfälligste Tier der Tierwelt ist, aber er läuft wie ein Personenzug, wenn er ins Laufen kommt. (MiM 8)

It is his tendency to adapt passively to situations which first interests the soldiers and earns him the name of "ein Mann, der nicht nein sagen kann" (MiM 22). Uria is prompted to say this of him after watching his behaviour with Leokadja Begbick whose basket he is carrying home, presumably because she has engaged him in his capacity as free-lance "Packer". As they walk along the apparently deserted road she tries to suggest to him that he might use his strength quite differently on her behalf:

Leokadja Der Appell für die Neuen findet in wenigen Minuten statt. Wie Sie hören, wird schon getrommelt. Jetzt ist niemand mehr unterwegs.

Galy Gay Wenn es wirklich schon so spät ist, muss ich eilig zurück in die Stadt Kilkoa, denn ich

habe noch einen Fisch zu kaufen.

Leokadja Gestatten Sie mir die Frage, Herr, wenn ich Ihren Namen richtig verstanden habe, Galy Gay, ob für den Beruf eines Packers grosse Stärke nötig ist.

Galy Gay Ich hätte es nicht geglaubt, dass ich auch heute wieder fast zehn Stunden durch lauter Unvorhergesehenes abgehalten werden würde, rasch einen Fisch zu kaufen und heimzugehen, aber ich bin wie ein Personenzug, wenn ich ins Laufen komme.

Leokadja Es ist zweierlei: einen Fisch zum Fressen zu kaufen, und einer Dame beim Korbtragen behilflich zu sein. Aber vielleicht wäre die Dame in der Lage, sich in einer Form erkenntlich zu zeigen, die den Genuss eines Fischessens aufwiegt. (MiM 20)

During this exchange Galy Gay cleverly evades Begbick's sexual advances by keeping up a flow of polite and seemingly inane chatter, thereby all the time adroitly ignoring her suggestions. He is evidently not so stupid or defenceless as others think. He continues to defend himself successfully when Leokadja changes her line of attack from a sexual to a commercial one by offering to sell him a "Gurke" for the money which is intended for the fish. But when she feigns offence at his refusal of her offer, his defences collapse, and his desire to avoid offence at all costs, which is partly an expression of his "weiches Gemüt" (MiM 7), partly a habit acquired from having a servile job, determines his response:

Leokadja Dann schlage ich Ihnen vor, für das Geld, das Sie für den Fisch bestimmt haben, diese Gurke zu kaufen, die ich Ihnen aus Gefälligkeit ablassen würde.

Galy Gay Aber ich benötige allerdings keine Gurke.

Leokadja Ich hätte nicht erwartet, dass Sie mich so beschämen würden.

Galy Gay Es ist nur, weil das Wasser für den Fisch schon aufgesetzt ist.

Leokadja Ich verstehe. Ganz wie Sie wollen, ganz wie Sie wollen.

Galy Gay Nein, glauben Sie mir, wenn ich Ihnen sage, dass ich Ihnen gern gefällig sein würde.

Leokadja Schweigen Sie, Sie reden sich nur immer mehr hinein.

Galy Gay Ich will Sie keinesfalls enttäuschen. Wenn Sie mir die Gurke jetzt noch ablassen wollten, wäre hier das Geld. (MiM 21-22)

It is at this point that the soldiers become convinced that Galy Gay is "Einer, der nicht nein sagen kann" (MiM 22). His polite amenability would certainly seem to warrant this title, as would his passive yielding to "lauter Unvorhergesehenes", and the keenness to do business which has led him here. On the other hand, he has effectively said "no" to Begbick's sexual advances, which indicates that he does have a mind of his own, although not a highly developed one. The soldiers, however, ignore this potential in him - to their cost, as it later turns out.

The soldiers immediately set to work on Galy Gay, exploiting his politeness, his gullibility, his professional opportunism, his willingness to adapt to new situations and demands, his timidity and his vanity, all of which are aspects of "nicht nein sagen", in order to lure him into Widow Begbick's "Kantine":

Polly Sehen Sie, es ist merkwürdig, Herr, aber ich kann den Gedanken nicht aus dem Kopf bringen, dass Sie aus Kilkoa kommen müssen.

Galy Gay Aus Kilkoa? Allerdings. Dort steht meine Hütte sozusagen.

Polly Das freut mich ungemein, Herr ...

Galy Gay Galy Gay.

Polly Ja, Sie haben dort eine Hütte, nicht?

Galy Gay Kennen Sie mich denn, weil Sie das wissen, oder vielleicht meine Frau?

Polly Ihr Name, ja, Ihr Name ist, einen Augenblick, Galy Gay.

Galy Gay Ganz richtig. So heiße ich.

Polly Ja, das wusste ich gleich. Sehen Sie, so bin ich nun einmal, ich wette zum Beispiel, dass Sie verheiratet sind. Aber warum stehen wir hier

herum, Herr Galy Gay? Da sind meine Freunde Jesse and Uria. Kommen Sie doch in unsere Kantine, eine Pfeife mit uns rauchen.

Galy Gay Vielen Dank. Leider erwartet mich meine Frau in Kilkoa. Auch habe ich selber keine Pfeife, was Ihnen lächerlich erscheinen mag.

Polly Dann also eine Zigarre. Was, das können Sie nicht abschlagen, es ist ein so schöner Abend?

Galy Gay Nun, da kann ich allerdings nicht nein sagen.

Polly Und Sie sollen auch Ihre Zigarre haben.
(Alle vier ab.) (MiM 23-24)⁸

Although up till now a non-smoker who has been proud of the fact, Galy Gay's conformism and "Grossspurigkeit" make him eager to play the role of a man of the world and accept the cigar which the soldiers have offered him. So keen is he to establish himself as their equal, that he actively participates in beating down the price demanded by Begbick for a uniform, by complaining that the clothes are too tight and the boots too small (MiM 30). His first, symbolic assumption of Jip's identity is made with the characteristic politeness of a man whose natural tendency is to come to terms with the world:

Jesse (zu Galy Gay) Sie brauchen nur den Namen unseres Kameraden zu rufen. Möglichst laut und sehr deutlich. Es ist eine Kleinigkeit!

Polly Der Name unseres verlorenen Kameraden ist nämlich Jeriah Jip.

Galy Gay (höflich) Jeriah Jip.

Polly Es ist angenehm, gebildete Leute zu treffen, die sich in jeder Lage zu benehmen wissen.

(Die vier gehen unter gegenseitigen Verbeugungen nach hinten ab.) (MiM 31-32)

After the roll-call has passed off successfully, the normally temperate Galy Gay gets drunk in the process of showing off to his new companions and boasting about the favour he has done them:

Polly Ein Glas auf Ihr Wohl, Herr!

Galy Gay Oh, eine kleine Gefälligkeit unter Männern kann nie schaden. Sehen Sie, ich trinke jetzt ein

Glas Whisky wie Wasser und sage mir: diesen Herren war damit genützt. Und es kommt ja auch nur darauf an in der Welt, dass man auch einmal einen kleinen Ballon steigen lässt und "Jeriah Jip" sagt wie ein anderer "guten Abend" und so ist, wie die Leute einen haben wollen, denn es ist ja so leicht. (MiM 34)

His inability to say "no" is evident not only in his becoming drunk, but also in his offer of further help to the soldiers, which they now feel to be unwelcome meddling in their affairs:

Polly Leider haben wir grosse Eile. Es geht ein gefährlicher Regenwind. Wir müssen nämlich noch einen Herrn kahl scheren.

Galy Gay Könnte ich Ihnen nicht auch da behilflich sein?

Uria Es gibt Leute, die ihre Nase in gar alle Angelegenheiten hineinstecken müssen. Wenn man solchen Leuten den kleinen Finger reicht, nehmen sie gleich die ganze Hand. (MiM 34-35)

Thus, Frau Galy Gay's fears about her husband running out of control because he simply does not know when to stop, are proving to be well founded. While he is developing his own momentum, outside events are doing the same. When these two developments come into interaction, a dialectic of increasing unfreedom resulting from the effects of past actions begins to unfold. Having come to the canteen to deny his identity just "einmal", he is immediately obliged to deny it a further three times - with obvious symbolic implications - in order to ward off the unwelcome interest of a recent new acquaintance, the widow Begbick:

Leokadja (bringt einen Cocktail für Galy Gay.) Haben wir uns heute nicht schon gesehen?

Galy Gay (schüttelt den Kopf.)

Leokadja Heissen Sie nicht Galy Gay?

Galy Gay (schüttelt den Kopf.)

Leokadja Sind Sie nicht der Mann, der mir den Gurkenkorb getragen hat?

Galy Gay Nein, ich bin es nicht. (MiM 35)⁹

The scene closes after this thrice repeated denial of identity with the stevedore Galy Gay left incongruously perched on a wooden chair in an army mess.

When the three soldiers return from their unsuccessful foray to recover Jip, they are astonished to find Galy Gay still asleep on the chair. His remaining there is partly a consequence of his having drunk too much, and partly a symbolic expression of his natural passivity and adaptability: rather than say "no" to the situation in which he has found himself, by returning home to his wife, he simply remains there, and, so adaptable is he, is able to sleep soundly on a wooden bar chair without falling off and without being disturbed when customers come in to play billiards. Galy Gay's behaviour, although consistent, is made to overstep the limits of naturalistic probability for the sake of parabolic clarity (and for the sake of farcical effect - an aspect of the work which is discussed below). By the use of this kind of exaggeration Brecht brings out clear contrasts between the behaviour of different characters and thus underlines the thematic significance, in terms of the conflicts between activity and passivity, freedom and determinism, of their respective fates. Having discovered that there is little likelihood of rescuing Jip, the three soldiers decide to exploit Galy Gay's passivity and adaptability further by requiring him to assume Jip's identity permanently:

(Die drei betrachten den schlafenden Galy Gay.)

Polly Aber wie soll denn das gehen, Uria? Wir haben nichts als Jips Pass.

Jesse Das genügt. Das muss einen neuen Jip geben. Man macht zuviel Aufhebens mit Leuten. Einer ist keiner. Über weniger als 200 zusammen kann man gar nichts sagen. Eine andere Meinung kann natürlich jeder haben. Eine Meinung ist ganz gleichgültig.

Ein ruhiger Mann kann ruhig noch zwei oder drei andere Meinungen übernehmen. Mich kann man am Arsch lecken mit Charakterköpfen.

Polly Was wird er aber sagen, wenn wir ihn in den Soldaten Jeriah Jip verwandeln?

Jesse So einer verwandelt sich ganz von selber. Wenn ihr den in einen Tümpel schmeisst, dann wachsen ihm in zwei Tagen zwischen den Fingern Schwimmhäute.

Uria Wie es immer für ihn ist, wir müssen einen vierten Mann haben. Weckt ihn auf! (MiM 49-50)

Galy Gay's sleep and reawakening, a fairy-tale motif which is repeated in the experiences of Jip and Blody Five, symbolises man's passive exposure to momentous changes in his life; Galy Gay's later terrified faint and reawakening to find himself addressed as Jeriah Jip is foreshadowed in this detail.

At first it seems as if the soldiers have been wrong in judging Galy Gay to be "einer, der nicht nein sagen kann", for he initially rejects their invitation to join the army under the name of Jeriah Jip, saying that he would prefer to go home, "Weil ich Galy Gay bin" (MiM 52). However, when they mention the word "Geschäft" (MiM 53), his "nicht nein sagen" does break through in the form of eager opportunism. Having been thus set in motion again, he once more begins to develop his own momentum: because he is so keen to make the most of the situation, he misunderstands a chance mention of the word "elephant", and he proceeds to wax enthusiastic about the advantages of owning an elephant:

Galy Gay Ich kann natürlich immer noch umkehren, Ich gehe dann einfach heim. (Setzt sich.)

(...)

Polly Er ist der reinste Elefant.

Galy Gay Elefant? Ein Elefant, das ist selbstverständlich eine Goldgrube. Wenn Sie einen Elefanten haben, da verrecken Sie nicht im Spital.

Uria Elefant!?! Und ob wir einen Elefanten haben!

Galy Gay Wäre der Elefant so, dass man ihn gleich an der Hand hätte?

Polly Ein Elefant! Darauf ist er, scheint's, ganz scharf.

Galy Gay Sie haben also einen Elefanten an der Hand?

Polly Hat man schon jemals gehört, dass man ein Geschäft gemacht hat mit einem Elefanten, den man nicht an der Hand hat? (MiM 54)

The contradiction in Galy Gay between his slight capacity for saying "no" and his dominant tendency to yield himself up to his every situation is expressed by having him sit down just after saying "Ich gehe dann einfach heim". This absurd little dialogue also illustrates the enslaving effects of something as passive as Galy Gay's habitual adaptability, by making it actively engender the circumstances in which he is later trapped: it is his opportunistic reaction to the chance word "Elefant" that gives the soldiers the idea of how to ensnare him.

The next manifestation of Galy Gay's gathering momentum in his new role as prospective businessman comes when he seizes the opportunity, which is created when Blody Five enters with Frau Galy Gay, of proving that he is a man "der einen Kopf hat" (MiM 55). Blody Five's intention is to unmask the fraud perpetrated by the soldiers and Galy Gay on the parade ground, but the latter frustrates this by denying to his own wife that he is Galy Gay. He then boasts to his companions, "Verlassen Sie sich auf mich! Jetzt hat Galy Gay Blut geleck" (MiM 57), words which are later repeated when, as "die menschliche Kampfmaschine", he sets about the destruction of the fortress Sir el Dschowr: "Das ist ungeheuer! Lass mich, jetzt habe ich Blut geleck" (MiM 125). The function of this verbal echo is to stress the underlying connexion between business dealing and military aggression. Not only are both forms of activity founded on violence (in one guise

or another), but both also aim at material gain. Galy Gay's entry into the army is presented as a consequence of his making a business deal in order to show how the attitudes of mind required by life in a competitive economic system can be adapted easily to military affairs, if the demands of the business world make a war such as the queen's invasion of the Asian "gold-countries" desirable. Years later Brecht had Mutter Courage sum all this up in the lines "Der Krieg ist nix als die Geschäfte / Und statt mit Käse ists mit Blei" (GW 4, 1409). That Galy Gay should also be exploited both in his business deal and as a soldier, anticipates the "moral" of the later play, namely that "Die kleinen Leute bezahlen die Niederlagen und die Siege".¹⁰

The "Geschäft" with which the soldiers trap Galy Gay involves his selling an "elephant" which does not belong to him, allegedly an army surplus elephant, which is not a real elephant at all, but a very obviously artificial mock-up. Just as Galy Gay overcame his fear of Bloody Five when it stood in the way of business, so now he suppresses his doubts about the elephant in order to proceed with the transaction:

<u>Soldaten</u>	(kommen herein mit Uria) Hast du noch einen Zweifel in bezug auf den Elefanten?
<u>Galy Gay</u>	Da er gekauft wird, habe ich keinen Zweifel.
<u>Uria</u>	Nicht wahr, wenn er gekauft wird, ist er richtig?
<u>Galy Gay</u>	Da kann ich nicht nein sagen. Elefant ist Elefant, besonders wenn er gekauft wird. (MiM 70-71)

The absurdity of this whole transaction is clearly another piece of Brechtian "Verfremdung" through grotesque exaggeration, and, as such, a satirical comment on the fraudulence of much business-dealing, perhaps also on the discrepancy between "Gebrauchswert" and

"Tauschwert" in an economy ruled by the whimsies of demand and supply.¹¹

As soon as he has sold the elephant to Begbick Galy Gay is accused of the double crime of selling an elephant which was false and of selling an elephant which did not belong to him. His silly hope of avoiding arrest by dealing anonymously is disappointed. To save himself from execution he is prepared once more to deny being Galy Gay and even to confess to being Jeriah Jip, but the soldiers feel that he can best be persuaded to accept the name of Jip permanently if he is made to experience the terrors of standing before an execution squad. When the order is given for his pretended execution he faints. On waking up out of this faint he is addressed as Jip and asked to hold a funeral oration for his allegedly dead old self. Like the real Jip and Blody Five, Galy Gay is now confronted with a conflict between his appetitive self and his public persona. Unlike them, he decides to accept the new persona which circumstances appear to want to bestow on him. The soliloquy, in which he decides to acquiesce under the pressures of the situation is such an important speech, that it is here quoted in full:

Ich könnt nicht ansehen ohne sofortigen Tod
In einer Kist ein entleertes Gesicht
Eines gewissen, mir einst bekannt, von Wasserfläch her,
In die einer sah, der, wie ich weiss, verstarb.
Drum kann ich nicht aufmachen diese Kist.
Weil diese Furcht da ist in mir beiden, denn vielleicht
Bin ich der Beide, der eben erst entstand
Auf der Erde veränderlicher Oberfläch
Ein abgenabelt fledermäusig Ding, hangend
Zwischen Gummibäumen und Hütt, nächtlich
Ein Ding, das gern heiter wär.
Einer ist keiner. Es muss ihn einer anrufen,
Drum
Hätt ich doch gern hineingesehn in diesen Trog,
Dieweil das Herz an seinen Eltern hängt, doch
Ist der Unterschied zwischen ja und nein nicht so gross
Und hab ich nicht angesehen diesen Elefanten,

Drück ich ein Auge zu, was mich betrifft, und
Lege ab, was unbeliebt an mir, und bin
Angenehm.

(Er steht auf und geht zu den Gummibäumen hinter.)

Und ich der eine und der andere ich,
Wir sehen nach Wetter und Wind,
Das uns zusammen nässt und trocknet, und
Stärken uns am Essen. (MiM 99-100)

The conformism which up till now has led him to accept his situation in life now helps him accept a change in his situation.¹² The conclusion of the speech indicates the firm foundation of a determination to satisfy his physical needs at all costs, on which his conformism rests. Whereas Jip and Blody Five use such freedom as they have (in Blody Five's case this is almost certainly illusory) to decide in favour of their accustomed public persona and against their appetitive selves, Galy Gay chooses to make the satisfaction of his physical needs his first priority.

In his simple-minded acceptance of his new identity as Jeriah Jip alias Galy Gay in all its contradictory absurdity lies not only prudence but also, although he does not know it, a kind of philosophical wisdom.¹³ Galy Gay recognises that in practice human freedom is restricted to a choice between different compulsions, that the self is contingent, on the one hand, on the arbitrary, physical basis of its existence, and, on the other, on the equally arbitrary public persona which it receives from the social context of its existence ("Einer ist keiner. Es muss ihn einer anrufen"). For him the problem of free choice is reduced to a question of prudence, of yielding to the compulsion which best serves his physical appetites. When Galy Gay's pragmatic acquiescence in his transformation is thus seen in relation to the theme of freedom, one can understand Brecht's claim that the play was intended for an audience which was "weniger ästhetisch als primitiv philosophisch interessiert".¹⁴

Throughout the rest of the action Galy Gay alias Jeriah Jip is shown to profit from his absurd double identity as "ich der eine und der andere ich", for he is able not only to draw Jip's army rations but also to force the three soldiers to give him theirs by holding over them the threat of his reversion to his true identity.¹⁵ The fact that he emerges as victor from the escapade shows that physical survival is best ensured by "nicht nein sagen", that is, by simply accepting change and learning to live even with contradictions if these are created in the process of change. The prudence of Galy Gay's attitude is underlined by contrast with the damage sustained by all those who are unable to acquiesce in change and contradiction. Yet the prudence of Galy Gay's attitude, although positively contrasted with the senseless self-mutilation of Blody Five, is not unequivocally condoned by the play as a whole. Sympathy for Galy Gay as the eventual winner of his unequal struggle with the soldiers, is counterbalanced on the one hand by sympathy for the lonely Jip, who suffers for his misguided loyalty, and on the other hand by an awareness of the terrible consequences of Galy Gay's success as a "menschliche Kampfmaschine" who delights in blowing up a whole fortress with just five shells.

This tension between contradictory evaluations of Galy Gay's survival is typical of the ambivalence which pervades Brecht's early writings. The tension arises in Mann ist Mann for the same reasons as underly its appearance in Baal, Trommeln in der Nacht, Im Dickicht, and Leben Eduards des Zweiten. In all of these plays tragedy is avoided by the principal characters through their adoption either of a heroic, sado-masochistic attitude to life or of a resigned, cynical, sometimes passive attitude which seeks merely to extract whatever pleasure it can from the passing moment. Eduard and Shlink

adopt a sado-masochistic attitude, Kragler and Galy Gay a cynically resigned one, while Baal and Garga waver between these alternatives. But in each of these plays a moral protest is made against the behaviour of the principal characters.¹⁶ The loneliness of Jip's eventual fate is one of the most important expressions of opposition to the amoral opportunism of Galy Gay and the other soldiers in Mann ist Mann; other manifestations of such opposition will be dealt with during the discussion of the play's formal characteristics.

ooo000ooo

In Mann ist Mann Brecht continued the practice established in Trommeln in der Nacht, Im Dickicht, and Leben Eduards des Zweiten of using a popular dramatic form ironically as a vehicle for his view of certain existential and social problems. In this case the form chosen was that of farce. The critic Alfred Kerr was quick to notice that the theme of changing identities was a "Schwankthema",¹⁷ but he did not remark on the fact that the style of the farce in Mann ist Mann, which Brecht himself described as a "geradezu leinwandgerechte Komödie" (GW 17, 973), owes more to Charlie Chaplin than to Hans Sachs.¹⁸ The exaggerated visual effects of silent comedy must have had a strong appeal to Brecht who was seeking at the time to establish a "naive" form of theatrical expression. In an unpublished note on the play he stated:

Mann ist Mann ist der repräsentative erste Versuch der jüngeren Generation, die neue Form des grossen Lustspiels aufzustellen. Deutlich zeigt sich die von den Anhängern des bisherigen Theaters so heftig angegriffene und von Brecht immer wieder geforderte Spezies des epischen Theaters. Jede einzelne Szene des Lustspiels ist so weit von Problematik und Psychologie entfernt, dass sie der naive Schauspieler noch aus dem Gedächtnis nachspielen können müsste.¹⁹

Farce suited Brecht's aim of writing for a public which was "weniger ästhetisch als primitiv philosophisch interessiert", because its artificiality lent itself to the task of presenting a generalised, symbolic interpretation of the contemporary situation which Brecht preferred to the "realistic" method of using a particular segment of reality as a focus for wider problems.²⁰

As has been seen, the characters in the play come into conflict with one another because of an initial conflict between three of them and British Army regulations. The theatrical "Grundgestus" chosen by Brecht to give physical expression to relationships amongst the exploited, and the effect on them of the exploiting system within which they interact, is that of "the catcher caught". All the individual characters prey on one another, but the winner of these individual struggles gains at most a short-term advantage for himself, because in the long run it is the encompassing social system which has its interests served by the individually successful hunters amongst the hunted. Any individual who dares to overstep certain limits in the pursuit of personal goals is likely to find himself at odds with the system and eventually made to suffer for his initiative.

The ironic pattern of catching-only-to-be-caught begins with the burglary of the temple, during which the soldiers become entangled in a series of booby traps from which they emerge bloody and torn. This event begins a chase (a much used pattern of action in silent film farces) with Blody Five the pursuer and the soldiers the pursued. In the scene following the burglary Blody Five hides behind a tree in order to jump out on the soldiers and surprise them with a question about the whereabouts of their fourth man. The soldiers in turn then hide in order to jump out and surprise Galy Gay. By so doing they

put Galy Gay into an analogous situation to their own: he has set out to buy a fish and is now caught by them. In Galy Gay's case the social significance of the catcher-caught "Gestus" is at its clearest, in that the situation in which he is eventually caught and robbed of his identity is an "Elefanten-Geschäft" in which he is ostensibly a seller trying to catch someone else but in fact is being manipulated into allowing himself to be caught. In this way the farcical plot of the chase is given symbolic depth as an image of the basic experience of the "kleine Leut" in an exploitative system.

The aggressiveness of the characters' behaviour to one another is barely concealed in such physical gestures as springing out of hiding or holding a person down in a chair (the soldiers do this to Galy Gay at one point when he tries to escape - MiM 60), but elsewhere it is forced into hypocritically contorted forms of expression.²¹ Violence is comically transformed in this way when the soldiers try to persuade Herr Wang, the owner of the temple, to release Jip:

Uria Wir müssen unseren vierten Mann haben. Und wenn wir dafür unsere Grossmutter abschlachten müssten.

Wang Aber der Mann, den Sie suchen, ist nicht hier. Damit Sie aber sehen, dass der Mann, von dem Sie sagen, dass er hier ist, und von dem ich nicht weiss, dass er hier ist, nicht Ihr Mann ist, erlauben Sie mir, dass ich Ihnen an der Hand einer Zeichnung alles erkläre. Gestatten Sie Ihrem unwürdigen Diener, dass er hier mit Kreide vier Verbrecher aufzeichnet. (Er zeichnet auf die Tür des Gebetskastens.) Einer von ihnen hat ein Gesicht, so dass man sieht, wer er ist, aber drei von ihnen haben keine Gesichter. Sie erkennt man nicht. Der nun mit dem Gesicht hat kein Geld, also ist er kein Dieb. Die mit dem Geld haben aber kein Gesicht, also kennt man sie nicht. Das ist so, solange sie nicht beieinander stehen. Wenn sie aber beieinander stehen, wachsen den drei kopflosen Gesichter, und man wird bei ihnen fremdes Geld finden. Niemals würde ich Ihnen glauben können, dass ein Mann, der hier sein könnte, Ihr Mann ist.

(Die drei bedrohen ihn mit ihren Waffen, aber auf Wangs Wink erscheint der Mesmer mit chinesischen Tempelgästen.)

Jesse Wir wollen Sie nicht länger in Ihrer Nachtruhe stören, Herr. Auch vertragen wir Ihren Tee nicht gut. Ihre Zeichnung allerdings ist sehr kunstvoll. Kommt!

Wang Es schmerzt mich, Sie aufbrechen zu sehen.
(...)

(Die drei gehen unter grossen Verbeugungen ab.) MiM 39-40)

Wang's distorted, oblique, excessively polite style of speech reinforces on the level of verbal symbolism the "false-bottomed" quality of their behaviour in this confrontation, where threats are disguised in the outward forms of politeness.

The physical movements which express the nature of human relations in the play also contribute to the delineation of the patterns of irony in the action. The hypocritical bows exchanged by Wang and the soldiers as the latter retire defeated from this encounter, recall the scene where similar bows signalled their initial triumph over Galy Gay (MiM 32). Another such pattern is formed by contrasting states of motion and immobility. As Galy Gay prepares to leave the mess in order to escape permanent transformation into Jeriah Jip, his interest is awakened in the promised "Geschäft", so he sits down again (MiM 54). This voluntary and temporary acceptance of immobility anticipates his subsequent lapse into involuntary immobility and passivity when he faints during his mock execution. As has been indicated already, such states of immobility and passivity also form part of the development of Jeriah Jip's and Blody Five's respective fates. Because of the urgency imposed by the imminent departure of the troop train, (the rapid, mechanical movement of which also belongs to this pattern of contrasts), the soldiers agree that Galy Gay must be transformed "im Laufschrift" (MiM 63). But in the last scene of the play it is Galy Gay, here shown charging about "unaufhaltsam wie ein Kriegs-

elefant" (MiM 118), who now forces them to move faster than they would like to in an effort to keep pace with him.

The ironic transfer of power from the three soldiers to their new recruit which is stressed by contrasts of movement with immobility, is also brought out by the repetition of a roll-call amongst the soldiers at different points in the action. When the soldiers first experience a threat to their collective identity during the raid on the temple, Uria collects their military passes for safe keeping, "Denn ein Mann kann jederzeit ersetzt werden, aber es gibt nichts Heiliges mehr, wenn es nicht ein Pass ist" (MiM 13). The passes next figure in an unseen but audible roll-call, which takes place in the background on Blody Five's orders while Blody Five is conversing with Leokadja Begbick in her mess. His disappointment when no gap occurs during the roll-call (such a gap would have allowed him to charge the marauding machine-gunners), anticipates ironically his own subsequent loss of power and identity, which is foretold during this very interview with Begbick (MiM 33). Blody Five's defeat and loss of identity is counterpointed with Galy Gay's change of identity and rise to power, a pattern which is underlined by the recurrence of the ritual of the roll-call at the end of the play, this time with Galy Gay alias Heriah Jip in charge of it (MiM 127).

As well as underlining the shifts of power between the soldiers, Blody Five and Galy Gay in the course of the action, the ritual pass inspections also have the function of symbolising the role played by a powerful, anonymous system, represented here by the army, as the determining context of their inter-personal conflicts. Regardless of the personal reality of the situation, the roll-call must take place and names given in the appropriate places. The person in

charge of the ritual may change, there may be no real connection between the men actually involved and the roles they are required to play, but at all events the military machine demands that these roles must be filled. There are several other such symbols in the play which express the relation of the characters' individual experiences to the encompassing social reality in which they occur. The ridiculous elephant sold by Galy Gay symbolises not only the prima facie absurdity of an economic system where the "Tauschwert" of objects gives them a value only tenuously related to their "Gebrauchswert", but also the fact that the "little man" Galy Gay, by participating in this commercial system, actually sells himself. There is a parallel to this symbolic incident in Blody Five's use of his army revolver to castrate himself. The system with which he identifies destroys him as a man. While Galy Gay is being transformed into the soldier Jeriah Jip, and Blody Five humiliated as "Blody Gent", the widow Begbick's mess is being dismantled for loading on to the next troop-train. The dismantling of the tent symbolises not only the destruction of identity to which these two men are being subjected, but also makes visible the unrelenting pressure of social change, here represented by the army's urgent departure, which is deeply involved in the personal changes which the characters have to sustain, and which makes its interfering presence felt in the "Aufbruchslärm einer Armee" (MiM 63) that is constantly audible in the background throughout the scenes of dismantlement and transformation. Finally, the encompassing, onward-driving action of society in its headlong pursuit of new areas of conquest, is symbolised in the scene showing the soldiers seated passively inside a troop-train carrying them to the battle-front at the inhuman speed of one hundred "Tagesmärsche" per minute (MiM 115).

Brecht's use of the visual resources of the stage ensures that the "Hintersinn" of the action is given aesthetically effective expression.²² In his use of language, too, one can see his skill in actually dramatising the problems in which he is interested, rather than simply using the stage as a platform for the explicit, abstract, direct exposition of his opinions. The title of the play makes an apodictic assertion, namely "Mann ist Mann", but when this phrase and others which are formally like it occur in the dialogue, the effect is to throw into doubt the tenability of simple apodictic statements of this kind, and to reveal the underlying, particular interest which a person may have in making such generalisations. In the Mann-ist-Mann-Song, the words of the title appear in the variant form, "ein Mann ist ein Mann" (MiM 130), and have the function here of persuading soldiers to accept an ethos of bravery which serves the interests of the army:

Refrain:

Drauf kommt's nicht an,
Denn ein Mann ist ein Mann.
Wie? warum? wann?
Aber Tom, schau, darauf kommt's ja gar nicht an!
/: Denn Mann ist Mann!
Und darauf kommt's an! :/
Die Sonne von Kilkoa scheint
Auf siebentausend Männer hin,
Die sterben alle unbeweint,
Und 's ist bei keinem schad um ihn;
Drum sagen wir: 's ist gleich, auf wen
Die rote Sonne von Kilkoa schien! (MiM 68)

Incorporated thus into the dramatic context, the phrase is robbed of its general validity by being shown to have a quite particular ideological function. Here it serves as an illustration of how an exploitative social system employs ostensibly "objective" truths to persuade men to accept their position within that system.²³ The phrase is, in effect, made to serve the play's "Grundgestus" of the-catcher-caught, for it is evidently a device with which the military

machine catches the minds of its soldiers. This "Grungestus" is reinforced when the soldiers repeat the phrase, with a changed meaning but still as an expression of a generally valid truth, in order to convince themselves that it is possible to make a man exchange one identity for another; as they prepare to catch Galy Gay, they are in fact laying a trap for themselves:

Polly Wird das wirklich gehen, Uria? Einen Mann in einen anderen Mann verwandeln?

Uria Ja, ein Mann ist wie der andere. Mann ist Mann.
(MiM 60)

The same pattern of self-injury resulting from a determination to see life in simple terms occurs when Uria, in anger, uses a phrase which is identical in form, although different in content, during the raid on the temple:

Jesse Geben wir es auf. Das ist kein gewöhnlicher Tempel, das ist eine Falle.

Uria Tempel ist Tempel. Den Helm muss ich noch herausholen. (MiM 11)

Another example of how such an apparently neutral statement can be used to particular psychological effect, and thus to reinforce the ironies of the play occurs when Galy Gay mocks the once potent and bullying, but now castrated and powerless Blody Five:

Blody Five (kommt) Johnny, pack deinen Koffer! So, da ist dieser Abschaum von Galy Gay. Komm einmal her, du! Was bist du eigentlich für ein Mann?

Galy Gay (lächelt ihm ins Gesicht) Mann ist Mann! Aber kein Mann ist kein Mann. Aber ich sage es niemand. (MiM 119)

The principle underlying the playwright's exploration of the ambiguity or unreliability of such apparently simple statements could be summed up in the phrase "meaning is (psychological) usage".

The untrustworthiness of such expressions as "Mann ist Mann", which formally are assertions of identity, reflects on a verbal level the instability of identity experienced by various characters, and directs attention to the general unreliability of life, its ubiquitous treachery, of which Jesse complains:

Wir sind in Staub und Wasser alle Strassen dieses zu langen Landes entlanggestiefelt, von dem Hindukuschmassiv bis zu den grossen Ebenen im südlichen Pandschab, aber von Benares bis Kalkutta unter Sonne und Mond haben wir nur Verrat gesehen. (MiM 104)²⁴

Consistent with this principle, no phrase of the type "Mann ist Mann" is allowed to remain unchallenged in the course of the action. For example, when Polly invites Galy Gay to assume Jip's role just once, he invokes the saying, "Einmal ist keinmal", and Galy Gay takes the bait:

Galy Gay Ist es nicht gefährlich, wenn es entdeckt wird?
Polly Gar nicht. Und für Sie ist einmal keinmal.
Galy Gay Das ist richtig. Einmal ist keinmal, so heisst es. (MiM 29)

Yet, when Galy Gay pleads, in accordance with the primitive legal principle invoked by Polly, to be allowed just one more chance, he has the same phrase, its meaning completely changed, thrown in his face with cruel irony:

Galy Gay Mindestens das: so ihr einen findet, der vergessen hat, wer er ist, das bin ich. Und den lasst, ich bitte euch, noch einmal laufen.
Uria Einmal ist keinmal! Drei! (MiM 87)

An important source of comedy in early silent films is the mechanical quality imparted to human movements, either accidentally, as a result of technical inadequacies of film-making or reproduction, or intentionally, by consciously exploiting the mechanical qualities

of the apparatus. Without wishing to claim that Brecht borrowed directly from early films the notion of having characters behave mechanically, one can see certain similar effects in Mann ist Mann, which enhance the "Chaplinesque" qualities of the play. Blody Five's exaggerated stiffness of movement at the threat of a rain shower is an isolated example of such mechanisation on a physical level. More widespread, however, is the occurrence of mechanical effects in the medium of language. Galy Gay's opening dialogue with his wife draws its comedy both from the contrast between his inflated style of speech and its banal content, and from the stiff, psychologically improbable, obviously artificial way in which the speeches lead on from one another:

Galy Gay Meinst du, ich soll einen grossen Fisch kaufen, oder benötigst du einen kleinen?

Frau Einen kleinen.

Galy Gay Von welcher Art aber soll der Fisch sein, den du benötigst?

Frau Ich denke an eine gute Flunder. Aber nimm dich, bitte, vor den Fischweibern in acht, sie sind lüstern und auf Männer aus, und du hast ein weiches Gemüt, Galy Gay.

Galy Gay Das ist wahr, aber ich hoffe, dass sie einen mittellosen Packer vom Hafen in Ruhe lassen.
(MiM 7)²⁵

The movement of the dialogue here is as jerky as the movements of marionettes. The most exaggerated example of verbal "mechanisation" is to be found in Blody Five's style of speech. The patchwork of biblical and military registers in his language helps to suggest the fragmented public persona which he has assumed, and which is now cracking open under pressure from his sexual appetites:

Blody Sie lachen. Aber ich sage Ihnen, ich möchte dies alles verbrennen sehen, dieses Sodom mit Bartisch und Schaukelstuhl und dir, die du allein ein Gomorrha bist. Schau mich nicht so verzehrend an,

du getünchtes Babylon ... Der Zusammenbruch der
Menschheit fing damit an, dass der erste dieser
Kaffern seinen Knopf nicht zumachte. Halt dein
Maul! (MiM 32-33)

Further emphasis is given to the mechanical quality of Blody Five's behaviour by his automatic repetition of the phrase "Johnny, pack deinen Koffer" whenever, like some grotesque Erinnye, he "smells" crime, or his self-assuring habit of insisting that "Das ist ganz einfach" whenever he is confronted with a worrying problem. By giving the behaviour of his figures this mechanically stylised quality, Brecht creates a verbal and physical correlate of the dehumanising effects which their social roles have had on them.

In addition to film comedy Brecht seems to have drawn on another form of popular entertainment in Mann ist Mann as a source of techniques of presentation, namely the circus. He had for long argued, in typical tongue-in-cheek manner, that the salvation of German theatre lay in its being converted from a "temple" into a circus:

Und doch befanden sie sich nur in einem Irrtum. Ganz dieselben Leute, die da Feuer spien und sich stachen, hätten sie ganz wunderbar unterhalten, wenn sie woanders aufgetreten wären, nämlich im Zirkus.

Ganz dieselben Leute wie die, welche weggingen, hätten dort die Röcke ausgezogen und Wetten abgeschlossen und mitgepiffen und sich ganz wundervoll gut unterhalten.

Aber das konnten sie nicht in der Kirche.

In der Kirche haben wir keinen Spass an so was (...)

Also: es ist nichts mit der Tempelidee!

Also, ich schlage vor, ihr seht es ein und druckt neue Plakate! Ihr ladet die Leute in den Zirkus ein! (GW 15, 48-49)

The circus elements in Mann ist Mann are mostly to be found in the long tenth scene where Galy Gay's transformation into Jip takes place. The artificial elephant used to trick Galy Gay represents

a variant on the artificial horse traditionally used by circus clowns. The division of the long scene into a series of "Nummern", each introduced by Uria is reminiscent of the ringmaster's presentation of the various attractions in a circus show:

Uria (pfeift) Nummer eins: Das Elefantengeschäft. Die M.-G.-Abteilung überreicht dem Mann, der nicht genannt sein will, einen Elefanten. (Er führt den Elefanten am Strick vor.) Billy Humph, Champion von Bengalen, Elefant im Dienst der englischen Armee usw. (MiM 68)²⁶

If Uria's announcements perform a ringmaster function for the individual "Nummern" of the tenth scene, the preceding placard, "Die Verwandlung eines lebendigen Menschen in den Militärbaracken zu Kilkoa im Jahre neunzehnhundertfünfundzwanzig" (MiM 61), and the "Zwischenspruch" spoken by widow Begbick (MiM 62) perform for the whole scene a function analogous to that of a barker who calls attention to the attractions of a sideshow at a fair or circus. In doing this, Brecht is not simply announcing ostentatiously his dislike of the "plaster of Paris"-stiffness of so-called legitimate theatre.²⁷ In fact, his use of elements of popular entertainment is not really popular at all, for his overriding purpose is an intellectual one, and the intellectual level at which the play operates is a high one. Seen in the context of the whole drama, Brecht's importation of "non-theatrical" elements into his plays merely serves to add some unusual low-brow spice to the otherwise unquestioned high-brow staple of bourgeois-intellectual theatre.

For all the intellectuality of Mann ist Mann, it cannot be said that Brecht is consistently didactic in this play. The various techniques of stylisation outlined above do help to elicit an intellectual, symbolic understanding of events, but this does not mean that they preclude an emotional response to the action. On the

contrary, the artificiality engendered by these devices is a fundamental characteristic of farce, since it is this quality of artificiality which makes it possible for our civilised sensibilities to overcome their inhibitions about indulging in the vicarious enjoyment of violence offered by farce. We are able to laugh at violence in farce and participate in its violence, both by laughing at misfortune and by taking sides with one party against another, because we know that nobody really sustains injury in these conflicts.²⁸ In Mann ist Mann we make the stock response of sympathising with the "little man" against his bullying aggressors. This sympathy, which culminates in the satisfaction of seeing Galy Gay triumph over his persecutors, works against the satirical tendency of the play, for it invites us to ignore the fact that two wrongs do not make a right. That there is a danger of the comic element in the play obscuring its serious satirical significance altogether is apparent from H. Ihering's review of the first production:

Brecht's Mann ist Mann steht zu Kriegs - und Pirandello-stücken wie Chaplins Goldrausch zum amerikanischen Abenteuerfilm. Beide überspringen das Zwischenstadium der Parodie und geben gleich den Humor (...) Solange also die Welt noch das Problem des militärischen Menschen, das Problem des Kollektiv - und Individualmenschen tragisch und philosophisch betrachtet, kann sie sich nicht auf Humor umstellen. Die Zeit steht zum Thema "Mann ist Mann" allenfalls satirisch. Bei Brecht sind, wie bei Chaplins Goldrausch, alle satirischen Nebenbeziehungen abgefallen (...)

Was ist gegen den Menschen als Maschine in Stücken und Gedichten deklamiert worden! Hier ist es Komödienmotif.²⁹

Presumably this production by Geis did not give sufficient emphasis to the satirical elements in the work, which are plainly present in the text, but disturbing if one's aim is to give a conflict-free interpretation of the play.

That it was Brecht's intention to create something more than a merely humorous play, is apparent not only from the philosophical and socially critical implications discussed already, but also from those moments in the action where the light tone of harmless farce is exchanged for one of pain or pathos.³⁰ Whereas it is possible to laugh at the injuries sustained by the soldiers during their raid on the temple because they deserve to be punished for their aggression and because this punishment matches the crime, Blody Five's self-castration is horrifying, because its extreme violence causes injury far in excess of the crimes he has committed. Whereas the soldiers will recover to fight another day, Blody Five is grotesquely maimed for life. The non-humorous effect of the castration is increased by having Galy Gay laugh at Blody Five's misfortune, and contrasting this laughter with the awed silence throughout the rest of the troop-train (MiM 114). This is just one of a number of instances where laughter at the sight of injury, the effect aimed at by farce, is itself made subject to criticism by being exposed as an attitude of cruel superiority.³¹ In this way Brecht counteracts in some measure any tendency to make a naively amused response to the comedy.

Mention has already been made of the strong emotional pull exerted against simple identification with Galy Gay's triumph by the pathos of the speech in which Jip curses his comrades for their treachery. Here, as at the moment of Fairchild's castration, Brecht increases the emotional force of the moment by having the guilty soldiers fall silent. A further parallel is created by the fact that during the castration there can be heard in the background the clatter of the troop-train, while during Jip's speech the air is filled with the sound of another symbol of advancing civilisation,

namely machine-gun fire. Whereas emotional intensity is created here by the pathos of Jip's lonely, drowned-out denunciation of treachery, and by a grotesque shock effect at the moment of Blody Five's castration, Brecht uses lyrical means in the speech where Galy Gay decides to take leave of his old persona, in order to counter-balance the unreality of the farce. In this speech, the elevated tone of the language, and the centrally placed image of lost innocence convey a mood of tender regret at all that is being sacrificed in the process of turning this peaceable man into a soldier:

Drum kann ich nicht aufmachen diese Kist.
Weil diese Furcht da ist in mir beiden, denn vielleicht
Bin ich der Beide, der eben erst entstand
Auf der Erde veränderlicher Oberfläch
Ein abgenabelt fledermausig Ding, hangend
Zwischen Gummibäumen und Hütt, nächtlich
Ein Ding, das gern heiter wär. (MIM 99)³²

Thus, the same ambivalence as was evident in Brecht's handling of the themes of freedom and personal identity can be seen to permeate also the style of the play.

ooo000ooo

Brecht's conflicting attitudes to the adventures of Galy Gay are reflected not only in action and style of the play, but also in his explicit comments on the work. An early note on the subject shows that his conception of Galy Gay's character was already quite firmly established in 1921:

Ich weiss nicht, ob die ungeheuerliche Mischung von Tragik und Komik im Galgei überhaupt zu gestalten ist, welche darin besteht, dass ein Mann ausgestellt wird, der nach solchen Manipulationen an ihm noch lebt!

(Der unsterbliche aus Unfähigkeit, der lebende Mensch ohne Herz!)

Der Vorwurf des Galgei hat etwas Barbarisches an sich. Es ist die Vision vom Fleischklotz, der masslos wuchert, der, nur weil ihm der Mittelpunkt fehlt, jede Veränderung aushält, wie Wasser in jede Form fließt. Der barbarische und schamlose Triumph des sinnlosen Lebens, das in jeder Richtung wuchert, jede Form benützt, keinen Vorbehalt macht noch duldet. Hier lebt der Esel, der gewillt ist, als Schwein weiterzuleben.

Die Frage: Lebt er denn?

Er wird gelebt. (GW 15, 57)

The main themes of the comedy are already present here: Galy Gay's amorality, his passivity, the underlying tragedy of the absence of human values which counterbalances the "triumph" of the hero's vitality. There is one important difference between this sketch and the full play, namely the shift of the tragic implications of identity-loss on to the fate of a subsidiary character, Jeriah Jip. This displacement of tragedy to the sidelines is typical of Brecht's determination not to allow a tragic perspective on life to dominate his creative writings. His later adoption of Marxism is an attempt to effectively remove the causes of tragedy by striking a compromise between the moral and amoral strains in his response to the world. That he was not altogether successful in this will become apparent when his "Lehrstücke" are discussed in the last chapter of this study. In theory, Brecht's acceptance of revolutionary success as the only way of re-establishing a long lost harmony between prudence and morality, self and society meant that he could advocate for moral reasons an amoral, purely tactical approach to particular problems encountered in the present. In practice, however, he repeatedly returned to the consideration of situations where friction arose between the individual and the collective because of the individual's inability or unwillingness to subordinate his emotional impulses or personal interests to long-term social considerations. So aware was he

of the multiplicity of possible conflicts in life that even the adoption of a paradoxical moral amorality, namely Leninism, could not prevent him from continuing to see life as he had always seen it, from an un-synthesised double perspective, as both tragic and non-tragic.

The next document of Brecht's developing conception of the play is a summary of the plot "Für Zeitungen", evidently prepared at a fairly early stage in the process of composition, since it differs from the finished version on two important points: here Galy Gay is described as helping the soldiers initially "lediglich aus Mitleid", and as failing to notice the falseness of the elephant because of having drunk too much (GW 17, 973). What is common to this sketch and the completed play is the playwright's refusal to make a clear and unambiguous moral judgement on the events, preferring to present the public with an open question:

Verhängnisvoller Spass dreier Soldaten des Worchesterregiments,
Standort Kankerdan Ostindien/Verbrechen oder Spass?/Der
Hafenarbeiter J. Galgei hält sich für einen Soldaten namens
Jerome Jip (GW 17, 973)

In 1927 Brecht wrote a "Vorrede zu Mann ist Mann" in which he sets the action of the play against a socio-historical background of the decline of the bourgeoisie and the coming of the "Weltrevolution" (GW 20, 24) which will bring to power "ein neuer Typus von Mensch" (GW 17, 977). This new type of man, he claims,

wird nicht so sein, wie ihn der alte Typus Mensch sich
gedacht hat. Ich glaube: Er wird sich nicht durch die
Maschinen verändern lassen, sondern er wird die Maschinen
verändern, und wie immer er aussehen wird, vor allem wird
er wie ein Mensch aussehen. (GW 17, 977)

While admitting that "nicht etwa alle diese Probleme in gerade diesem Stück vorkommen und geklärt werden", he does maintain that Galy Gay

represents "vielleicht eben einen Vorfahren dieses neuen Typus Mensch" (GW 17, 977). In this "vielleicht" Brecht's self-irony betrays his otherwise straight-faced reading of the play, for "vielleicht" means as much as "vielleicht nicht". On the one hand, it is true that Galy Gay remains fundamentally unchanged by his outward transformation into an energetic soldier, and that he is able to turn his situation in the machine-gun crew to his immediate personal advantage. On the other hand, he is certainly not in control of the larger situation in which he finds himself, and it is hard to imagine how someone who so willingly allows himself to be moulded by change could ever produce progeny who would want to radically change the world in which they find themselves. The element of self-irony comes strongly to the fore again at the end of the essay, where, after pointing out the gain in strength and prestige experienced by Galy Gay as a result of his transformation, Brecht closes with two sentences which throw into doubt the validity of the whole preceding argument:

Es ist eine lustige Sache. Denn dieser Galy Gay nimmt eben keinen Schaden, sondern er gewinnt. Und ein Mensch, der eine solche Haltung einnimmt, muss gewinnen. Aber vielleicht gelangen Sie zu einer ganz anderen Ansicht. Wogegen ich am wenigsten etwas einzuwenden habe. (GW 17, 978)³⁴

In contrast to the ironically optimistic interpretation of the comedy offered in the "Vorrede" of 1927, the "Dialog zu Bert Brechts Mann ist Mann", which is undated but was conceivably written in connexion with the revised version of the play produced by Brecht in 1931, presents the play as a protest against militarism. In this oversimplified interpretation, one spectator explains to another why it is necessary for ugly things such as happen in this play to be shown in the theatre:

-Warum wiederholst du immer die gleichen Worte auf alles, was ich sage von den schönen und erhebenden Dingen in den Stücken der Meister?

-Weil dich wie jenen Mann in dem Stück des Bert Brecht es fassen kann und auslöschen dein Selbst und deinen Namen und dein Haus und dein Weib und deine Erinnerung, dein Lachen und dein Mitleid, deine Lust am Weib und dein Erheben zum Gott - weil dich wie jenen Mann es einreihen kann in die Reihe der hunderttausend, zwischen Mann und Mann, zwischen Kochgeschirr und Kochgeschirr, wie es Millionen Männer eingereiht hat in der Vergangenheit und Millionen Männer einreihen wird in der Zukunft - weil dich wie jenen Mann ein glühendes Stück Eisen treffen kann und auslöschen aus der Welt und dem Leben!!!

-(aufschreiend) Oh, jetzt erkenne ich, dass es ein gutes Stück ist und ~~seine Lehre eine~~ beherzigenswerte. (GW 17, 980)

The fact that the play is also an amusing farce is not even mentioned here.

In the revised version of the play published as standard in the collected works, a number of changes have been made which increase its didactic clarity, reduce the element of farce, and emphasise the moral indictment both of the army and of the "menschliche Kampfmaschine, Galy Gay".³⁵ The rewording does not, however, reduce the ambiguous and ambivalent comedy to an unambiguous moral parable.³⁶ The substitution of the Lied vom Fluss der Dinge for the original Mann-ist-Mann-Song actually gives increased weight to the amoral, existential viewpoint which advocates adaptability as the only realistic course of action in a world of constant flux.³⁷ Similarly, a new passage of verse, in which Begbick invites Fairchild to abandon himself to his sexual appetite, exerts a counter-satirical pull by stressing the element of unfreedom and anonymity which is inherent in man's sensuous nature:

Folge doch, Blutiger Fünfer, deiner grossen Natur
Ungesehn! Denn wer erfährt es?
Und in der Höhle meiner Achsel, meinem Haar
Erfahre, wer du bist. Und in der Beuge meiner Knie vergiss
Deinen zufälligen Namen.

Kümmertliche Zucht! Ärmliche Ordnung!
So bitte ich dich jetzt, Blutiger Fünfer, komm
Zu mir in dieser Nacht des lauen Regens
Genau, wie du befürchtest: als Mensch!
Als Widerspruch. Als Muss-und will-doch-nicht.
Jetzt komm als Mensch! So wie Natur dich schuf
Ganz ohne Eisenhut! Verwirrt und wild und in dich selbst
verwickelt
Und unbewehrt gegeben deinen Trieben
Und hilflos deiner eigenen Stärke hörig.
So komm: als Mensch! (GW 1, 317)³⁸

In the essay "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke" which accompanied the publication of the revised, standard version of the play, Brecht argued that the "sympathetic" portrayal of a "sozial negativen Helden" and his "Wachstum ... im Kollektiv", recorded the seductive power exerted by Nazism:

An die Lektüre des Lustspiels Mann ist Mann machte ich mich mit besonderen Befürchtungen. Auch hier hatte ich wieder einen sozial negativen Helden, der nicht ohne Sympathie behandelt war. Das Problem des Stückes ist das falsche, schlechte Kollektiv (der "Bande") und seine Verführungskraft, jenes Kollektiv, das in diesen Jahren Hitler und seine Geldgeber rekrutierten, das unbestimmte Verlangen der Kleinbürger nach dem geschichtlich reifen, echten sozialen Kollektiv der Arbeiter ausbeutend. Es lagen zwei Fassungen vor, die 1928 in der Berliner Volksbühne und die 1931 am Berliner Staatstheater spielte. Wiederherzustellen, fand ich, war die erste Fassung, in der Galy Gay die Bergfestung Sir El Dchowr erobert. Ich hatte 1931 das Stück nach dem grossen Montageakt enden lassen, da ich keine Möglichkeit sah, dem Wachstum des Helden im Kollektiv einen negativen Charakter zu verleihen. So hatte ich lieber auf die Beschreibung des Wachstums verzichtet. (GW 17, 951)

This is another of Brecht's feeble attempts to suggest that his early works were a direct "reflection" of contemporary socio-political reality. In fact, Galy Gay is not "seduced" into becoming a soldier, but, if such a metaphor is to be used at all, is "raped" by the other soldiers.

To conclude, Mann ist Mann marks a minor change in Brecht's development, in that it gives new emphasis to the social dimension

of life, particularly to the effects this dimension has on man's existential problems. It throws important new light on the problem of violence, presenting its significance from the perspective of the "little man" who is the victim of, and unwilling participator in aggression. Yet, while sympathy is expressed for Galy Gay's resort to opportunism and adaptability as the best means of self-defence in a situation where the odds are greatly against him, there is also in the play a new emphasis on the moral evaluation of behaviour. Not only is sympathy for Galy Gay counterbalanced by sympathy for Jip, the soldier whom he has usurped, but the larger social context in which the farce of inter-personal conflicts is set, is seen from a morally critical viewpoint. On the other hand, this element of serious moral satire in the play is offset by its flippant, farcical qualities. The overall effect of these various conflicts is one of ambivalence, which is what makes this "ungeheuerliche Mischung von Tragik und Komik" a typical work of Brecht's early period. That no decisive step towards greater moral definiteness, despite the increased weight given to moral considerations, was taken by Brecht in 1926, becomes clear from the evidence of Brecht's next comedy, Die Dreigroschenoper, where the element of cynical flippancy is so strong as effectively to blunt any satirical edge which the work might otherwise have had.

NOTES

1. G. Weales has pointed out the wider social significance of the army in this play: "Although in other Brecht plays it is society in a larger sense that converts men into functioning ciphers, the army is a good metaphor to illustrate the process." "Brecht and the Drama of Ideas", in Ideas in the Drama (ed., J. Gassner), (New York and London, 1964), p. 133.
2. F. Ewen says of Mann ist Mann that "for the first time in Brecht's writings the element of change begins to play a part. Man is changeable", Bertolt Brecht. His Life, his Art, and his Times (New York, 1967), p. 136. This is simply not true. Kragler in particular is shocked by the changes he encounters on his return from the army, and is greatly distressed by the changes he himself has undergone. The similarity between the two plays on this point is expressed in a certain continuity of metaphor: Kragler had to grow "Schwimmhäute" on his hands in order to survive in a prisoner-of-war camp (T 36), and Jesse says of Galy Gay, "Wenn ihr den in einen Tümpel schmeisst, dann wachsen ihm in zwei Tagen zwischen den Fingern Schwimmhäute" (MiM 50). It is true, however, that more attention is given to large-scale historical and social change in Mann ist Mann than in the earlier plays.
3. All references are to the 1926 edition of the play published by Ullstein's "Arcadia Verlag" in Berlin. The abbreviation (MiM, page number) is used throughout.
4. R. Pohl quotes a passage from an earlier version of this dialogue in which Jesse refers to money as "kapital" and to whisky as "stoff": "obwohl ich alles kapital in stoff angelegt und dazu den schlechtesten genommen habe bleiben jetzt doch nur noch fünf flaschen". Strukturelemente und Entwicklung von Pathosformen in der Dramensprache Bertolt Brechts, p. 91.
5. Begbick's invitation to Bloody Five in the revised version of the text expresses the arbitrariness of identity beautifully: "Und in der Beuge meiner Knie vergiss/deinen zufälligen Namen." (GW 1, 317)
6. In Der Hofmeister, Läufer's self-castigation with a ruler, which anticipates his later castration, represents an adaptation of this idea to the situation of a private tutor. Brecht described as a "poetische Erfindung von Rang", "die Verwendung des Schulmeisterlineals, wenn er sich daran wie an einem Kreuzbalken fixiert, es in die Achselhöhlen klemmend, und wenn er sich selbst Tatzen gibt, sich für die sexuelle Gier bestrafend. In der vierzehnten Szene wird das Tatzengeben dem Zuschauer ankündigen, dass sich sein Geschlecht wieder gegen ihn erhoben hat!" (GW 17, 1243-1244).
7. Bentley makes this point: "The fable of brainwashing is combined, at least in the first and best version, with one that contradicts it: a fable of a sorcerer's apprentice or Frankenstein's monster. Uriah's brainwashing of Galy Gay can hardly be deemed successful

if then Galy Gay eats Uriah's rations!" "On Brecht's In the Swamp, A Man's a Man, and Saint Joan of the Stockyards, p. 55.

8. This, presumably, is an example of the type of "windschiefes Gespräch" which Hans Mayer claims Brecht learnt from Karl Valentin, Bertolt Brecht und die Tradition, (Pfullingen, 1961), p. 29.
9. By having Galy Gay deny himself three times Brecht gives him the dual role of Christ and Peter. His self-betrayal for the sake of survival contrasts starkly with the action of Eduard II in allowing himself to be betrayed by Baldock, in order to fall into the hands of Mortimer. In both cases the betrayal represents, of course, a grotesque perversion of the biblical original.
10. Materialien zu Brechts "Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder", (Frankfurt a.M., 1964), p. 9.
11. Marx's concept of "Fetischismus" also focusses attention on the discrepancy between the "sinnlich verschiedenen Gebrauchsgegenständlichkeit" of products and their "gesellschaftlich gleiche Wertgegenständlichkeit", "Der Fetischcharakter der Ware", quoted in: I. Fetscher, Der Marxismus, vol. II (München, 1964), p. 66.
12. I can see no evidence in the text for Esslin's assertion that Galy Gay "feels an overwhelming sense of guilt", Brecht. A Choice of Evils, p. 221.
13. Walter Benjamin made this comment, "Man kann weitergehen und sagen, dass der Versuch, den Denkenden, ja den Weisen zum dramatischen Helden selbst zu machen, von Brecht unternommen wurde. Und man kann gerade von hier aus sein Theater als episches definieren. Am weitesten vorgetrieben wurde dieser Versuch in der Figur Galy Gays, des Packers. Galy Gay, der Held des Stückes Mann ist Mann, ist nichts als ein Schauplatz der Widersprüche, welche unsere Gesellschaft ausmachen. Vielleicht ist es im Sinne Brechts nicht zu kühn, den Weisen als den vollkommenen Schauplatz ihrer Dialektik anzusprechen. Jedenfalls ist Galy Gay ein Weiser." Versuche über Brecht (Frankfurt a.M., 1967), p. 24.
14. BBA 348/71. Brecht's pragmatic approach to things of the spirit caused a furore in 1927, when he rejected out of hand a large number of contemporary poems submitted to him as judge in a poetry competition, on the grounds that "Sie entfernen sich einfach zu weit von der ursprünglichen Geste der Mitteilung eines Gedankens oder einer auch für Fremde vorteilhaften Empfindung" (GW 18, 55). The category of usefulness should not be understood in too narrow a sense, for Brecht's own Hauspostille, published in the same year as these remarks, contains many romantic poems, which are, however, presented as spiritual aids to help the reader come to terms with the problems of life.

15. Laboulle quotes passages from an early, unpublished version of the text, in which Galy Gay's ascendancy over the other soldiers takes the form of his physically thrashing them: Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht Ph.D.Diss. (Leicester, 1961), p.115.
16. I cannot agree with Gray's view that there appears in Mann ist Mann "for the first time a more critical attitude" in Brecht's treatment of opportunism, Brecht p.44.
17. Kerr's review is reprinted in: Günther Rühle, Theater für die Republik p.731.
18. Bentley's comment is apt: "As far as A Man's a Man is concerned, one need not stress Chaplin individually: I would judge the influence to be that of the American silent movie in general." "On Brecht's In the Swamp, A Man's a Man, and St. Joan of the Stockyards" p.53.
19. BBA 348/71.
20. Kesting sees in Mann ist Mann "ein artifizielles Moment ... das es deutlich aus der Tradition deutschen Lustspiels heraushebt." "Die Grotteske vom Verlust der Identität", in: Das Deutsche Lustspiel, vol. II, (ed. Steffen) (Göttingen, 1969), p.193. Yet, surely Büchner's Leonce und Lena, admittedly strongly influenced by a foreign dramatic tradition, also has a strong element of artificiality. For examples nearer to Brecht's own time, one might cite the works of Wedekind or Sternheim, whose Bürger Schippel bears some resemblance to the plot of Mann ist Mann.
21. According to Laboulle, there was much more crudely physical farce in the sketches made before the preparation of the final text: "The later versions of the play which preserve the implausible way in which the soldiers lose Jip and the extraordinary elephant auction-sale, unreal and unconvincing in every particular, unconvincing even as to the characters, contain but vestiges of the painfully ridiculous episodes which cram the Hauptmanuskripte. 'Pie-throwing', sitting on chairs which collapse, a flight on a billiard table ... are but a few examples of the slap-stick comedy of the original". Laboulle, Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht, p.101.
22. J. Geis, who first produced the play in Darmstadt said that his main aim was: "Den Hintersinn dieses Stückes aufzuzeigen, indem der Vordersinn möglichst deutlich vor Augen gestellt wurde", "Meine Inszenierung von Bertolt Brechts Mann ist Mann, Darmstadt, Landestheater", in: Die Szene (1926), p.300.
23. The adaptability of apparently general statements to particular situations in life is a constantly recurring theme throughout Brecht's dramatic writings. A later example of this is the Lied von der grossen Kapitulation sung by Mutter Courage (GW 4, 1395).

24. Brecht's constitution of "Verrat" as a metaphysical category was discussed in the chapter on Eduard II (see above, p. 149 et seq.)
25. Klotz comments thus: "Brecht arbeitet nicht nur sprachlich mit dem verfremdenden Widerspruch von Inhalt und Form, auch dramaturgisch. Besonders deutlich wird der Kontrast zwischen archaischen Theatermitteln und moderner Thematik. Zu diesen Archaismen gehört das primitive Selbstvorstellen der Personen an der Rampe. Ebenso die kunstvoll primitive Expositionsszene zwischen Gay und seiner Frau: Was im herkömmlichen Drama unauffällig, indirekt, 'organisch' sich ergibt: der Charakter der Personen; das, was ist, und das, was kommt, wird hier explicite, holzhammerartig, mit gesprochenem Deutestock dargeboten." "Engagierte Komik", in: Kurze Kommentare zu Stücken und Gedichten (Darmstadt, 1962), p. 33.
26. Klotz comments: "Die Ummontage des Galy Gay geschieht in fünf Abteilungen, die dem Publikum deutlich voneinander abgesetzt serviert und jeweils wie Zirkusattraktionen angekündigt werden." Kurze Kommentare, p. 30.
27. Brecht described his 1924 production of Leben Eduards des Zweiten as an attempt to break away from "jenem gipsig monumentalen Stil, der den Spiessbürgern so teuer ist" (GW 17, 951).
28. Bentley discusses this aspect of farce in his study The Life of the Drama (New York, 1964), p. 222.
29. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1959), pp. 230-231.
30. Spalter makes the general comment, "In Brecht's work, the temptation to caricature will always yield at significant junctures to the temptation to articulate existential despair", Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore, 1967), p. 173. To this it must be added that the tendency to caricature is also counterbalanced by moods of relaxed humour.
31. Characters smile or laugh frequently throughout the action (pp. 13, 28, 29, 65, 73, 87, 88, 113, 114, 116, 117, 119, 122). The significance of these gestures is as labile as everything else in the play, for they can express cruelty, fear, hypocrisy, foolishness, self-assurance or superiority.
32. Pohl has analysed the verbal elements which give this speech its "poetische Aura", Strukturelemente in der Dramensprache Bertolt Brechts, p. 95.
33. Brecht's rejection of tragedy after his adoption of Marxism has frequently been commented on. Two treatments of this topic which rise above the norm are to be found in William's Modern Tragedy (Stanford, 1966), and the article by Steer on "Brecht's Epic Theatre", Modern Language Review (1968), pp. 636-649.
34. The following interpretations suffer from a failure to give full weight to these closing sentences: H. Mayer, Bertolt Brecht und die Tradition, p. 38; F.N. Mennemeier, Modernes Deutsches

Drama, vol. I (München, 1973), p. 289 et. seq.; W. Weideli, The Art of Bertolt Brecht (London, 1963), p. 21; L. Shaw, The Playwright and Historical Change (Wisconsin, 1970), p. 131, et. seq.

35. For detailed discussions of differences between the original and subsequent versions, see: M. Kesting's essay in Das Deutsche Lustspiel II, p. 180, et. seq; H. Rischbieter, Bertolt Brecht I, p. 57, et. seq; J. Onderdelinden, "Brechts Mann ist Mann: Lustspiel oder Lehrstück?", Neophilologus (1970), pp. 149-166.
36. This is argued by Onderdelinden in the essay, "Brechts Mann ist Mann: Lustspiel oder Lehrstück?", p. 149, et. seq.
37. H. Lethen has pointed out the convergence of "Amerikanismus" and "Lebensphilosophie" in the image of a production line seen as a mighty river, Neue Sachlichkeit 1924-1932 (Stuttgart, 1970) p. 21. In Brecht's case there is also a continuity between the river image as a life-metaphor and its application to the flow of change in contemporary society, but this does not obscure his critical attitude to the flow of history: see the speech by Begbick on p. 97 of Mann ist Mann, "Heute nacht marschieren sechzigtausend in einer Richtung. Diese Richtung deutet von Kilkoa nach Tibet und nicht umgekehrt. Wenn ein Mann in einen solchen Strom gerät, schaut er, dass er zwei findet, die neben ihm marschieren, rechts einen und links einen, und ein Gewehr und einen Brotbeutel und eine Blechmarke um den Hals und eine Nummer auf der Blechmarke, dass man weiss, zu wem er gehört hat, wenn man ihn findet, damit er seinen Platz bekommt in einem Massengrab!"
38. Rischbieter points out that "auch die Poesie des Stückes wird in der neuen Fassung vertieft", Bertolt Brecht I, p. 68.

CHAPTER SIX

Die Dreigroschenoper

Compared to Mann ist Mann, Die Dreigroschenoper is a disappointingly lightweight work. Whereas in Mann ist Mann the farcical treatment of the theme of the precariousness of personal identity was nicely balanced by a sharply satirical focus on the tendency of contemporary society to aggravate this personal problem, the dimension of immediate contemporary relevance is largely absent from Die Dreigroschenoper, with the result that its farcical view of human conflict remains generalised and lacking in those powerful tensions between fantasy and reality which gave emotional depth to the grotesqueries of the earlier play. The predominance of an amoral, cynically amused attitude to life over moral considerations in the text of the opera, may be a reflection in art of a decision taken by Brecht in reality: the financial success of the Dreigroschenoper may have been no accident, but rather the conscious goal of the author.¹ Just before writing the opera Brecht had tasted material success in the shape of a Steyr automobile which was given to him by the firm as a reward for his poem Singende Steyrwagen (GW 8, 318), and after the Dreigroschenoper had indeed proved a box-office success Brecht tried to repeat the experiment with the even more lighthearted musical, Happy End. The general suspicion that Brecht was primarily motivated by plain financial considerations in writing the opera is strengthened by the internal evidence of the Ballade vom angenehmen Leben, one of a number of lyrics in the opera based on originals by François Villon:

Ich selber könnte mich durchaus begreifen,
Wenn ich mich lieber gross und einsam sähe,
Doch sah ich solche Leute aus der Nähe,

Da sag ich mir: Das musst du dir verkneifen,
Armut bringt ausser Weisheit auch Verdruss
Und Kühnheit ausser Ruhm auch bitt're Müh'n.
Jetzt warst du arm und einsam, weis und kühn,
Jetzt machst du mit der Grösse aber Schluss.

Dann löst sich ganz von selbst das Glücksproblem:
Nur wer im Wohlstand lebt, lebt angenehm! (DGO 53)²

Whatever his motives were, it will be seen from the following brief comparison of the adaptation with John Gay's original, The Beggar's Opera, that the Dreigroschenoper articulates a politically fairly harmless, because generalised, view of life as a comic, unceasing struggle for survival.³ Its immediate success in Berlin in 1928, as a contemporary observer noted, derived in considerable measure from precisely this characteristic blend of cynicism with comic harmlessness.⁴

The Beggar's Opera employed both parody and satire to attack contemporary society. Its travesty of the sentimental opera in the Italian style, cultivated in England by Handel, attacked the aesthetic taste of society, particularly that of the aristocracy, while its satire exposed the corruption of political life in general and of Prime Minister Walpole in particular. In place of the vague settings of the mythological or pastoral types of opera, Gay set his piece amongst the rogues and whores of a precisely observed London underworld as it was in his day.⁵ Not that he offered a naturalistic portrayal of "low life", in fact he "preserves a comic tone throughout",⁶ and only depicts enough of the sensual, violent, hypocritical and corrupt ways of life amongst the criminal classes as he needs in order to create, on the one hand, a contrasting milieu to the artificial world of conventional opera, and, on the other, a sufficiently crass behavioural correlate of the immorality of "high life"

which is much more the object of his criticism than the underworld itself. He has his characters speak the language of respectable people (with "low" idioms interspersed for comic effect), and constantly draws explicit parallels between the criminal activities on stage and the behaviour of the better-off classes. He also makes clear allusions to Walpole personally in his characterisation of Peachum, Macheath, "but also through names like 'Bluff Bob', 'Bob Booty' and 'Robin of Bagshot'".⁷

Yet, just as the realistic portrayal of low life is limited by Gay's desire to mirror in the underworld the evils of high life, this satirical impulse is in turn held in check by the author's desire to make a name for himself as a popular composer who could please and entertain his public. Although in the course of the action many aspects of political corruption are exposed, the action itself is a comic version of the love story around which opera conventionally revolved. For all that Polly lacks some of the good breeding and high idealism of the conventional heroine, she is still basically a charming young girl whose ardent love deserves to be, and is, rewarded with the hand of her lover. And although Macheath is in part a satire on Walpole's thievery, he is also a dashing and bold young man with an infectious love of life; it would be churlish indeed to condemn such a fine, although admittedly rakish, operatic hero to the gallows. Because the plot centres on a love story, and because the satire is delivered in the form of witty asides, the overall impression left by the work is a mixture of gaiety and sharpness, not one of outrage or bitterness. That this is not a false impression engendered by historical and emotional distance from the events and figures satirised, is borne out by the complaints

of contemporary critics that Gay had "given up his moral for a joke".⁸ That Gay should have ended the opera by almost, but not in fact, having Macheath-Walpole hanged, itself testifies to the mixed attitudes he had to his work and characters. The conflict in his mind is acted out as a debate in the last scene of the opera between his Beggar (the ostensible author of the piece) and a player:

Player But, honest friend, I hope you don't intend that Macheath shall be really executed.

Beggar Most certainly, sir. To make the piece perfect, I was for doing strict poetical justice. Macheath is to be hanged; and for the other personages of the drama, the audience must have supposed they were all either hanged or transported.

Player Why then, friend, this is a downright deep tragedy. The catastrophe is manifestly wrong, for an opera must end happily.

Beggar Your objection, sir, is very just and is easily removed. For you must allow that in this kind of drama 'tis no matter how absurdly things are brought about. - So, you rabble there, run and cry a reprieve. Let the prisoner be brought back to his wives in triumph.

(Cries of "Reprieve!")

Player All this we must do, to comply with the taste of the town.

Beggar Through the whole piece you may observe such a similitude of manners in high and low life, that it is difficult to determine whether (in the fashionable vices) the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen. Had the play remained as I at first intended, it would have carried a most excellent moral. 'Twould have shown that the lower sort of people have their vices in a degree as well as the rich, and that they are punished for them. (B082)

Having given the beggar-moralist this last opportunity to restate the satire of the work, Gay does justice to the humorist in himself by allowing the opera to move on to the comic-picaresque variant of

the conventional happy ending in marriage (Macheath winks to the other girls as he takes Polly's hand) which is demanded not only by the "taste of the town" but above all by the general tone of the work and the character of its plot. The opera closes with the chorus singing the lines, "But think of this maxim, and put off your sorrow:/The wretch of today may be happy tomorrow". (BO 83) In the ambiguity of these lines, which may be an amoral expression of sympathy with the all-too-human highwayman or, equally, an encouragement to hope for political change, the overall ambiguity of the opera is recapitulated for the last time.

In January 1929 Brecht published an essay entitled "Über die Dreigroschenoper" in order to introduce the public of his home town Augsburg to his latest work. In this essay there is expressed a conflict between different attitudes to the subject matter of the work itself. On the one hand, Brecht takes a moral, socially critical view of the behaviour depicted in the opera, but on the other hand also sees his characters' use of "morality" as a weapon in their struggle for existence as being simply part of human nature:

Nicht fehlen uns Heutigen die soziologischen Anlässe von The Beggar's Opera: Wie vor zweihundert Jahren haben wir eine Gesellschaftsordnung, in der so ziemlich alle Schichten der Bevölkerung, allerdings auf die allerverschiedenste Weise, moralische Grundsätze berücksichtigen, indem sie nicht in Moral, sondern natürlich von Moral leben. (GW 17, 990)

Whereas the first part of this sentence seems to imply that the adaptation was prompted by specific, historically changeable, although not yet changed, "soziologischen Anlässe", the word "natürlich" in the last part suggests rather that behaviour is being viewed from the "timeless" perspective of human nature.

In the synopsis of the plot given by Brecht in this essay, the coexistence of a moral and an amoral perspective results in criticism of the social "Elend" created by the wealthy being expressed side by side with amusement at the various strategies adopted by members of the underworld to maintain or gain power in this (naturally?) unequal society:

Herr Jonathan Peachum schlägt aus dem Elend auf seine originelle Weise Kapital, indem er gesunde Menschen künstlich zu Krüppeln herausstaffiert und sie betteln schickt, um aus dem Mitleid der wohlhabenden Stände seinen Profit zu ziehen. Er tut das keineswegs aus angeborener Schlechtigkeit. "Ich befinde mich auf der Welt in Notwehr", das ist sein Grundsatz, der ihn in allen seinen Handlungen zur schärfsten Entschiedenheit zwingt. Er hat in der Londoner Verbrecherwelt nur einen ernsthaften Gegner, und das ist der junge, von den Dämchen vergötterte Gentleman Macheath. Dieser hat Peachums Tochter Polly entführt und auf eine ganz groteske Weise in einem Pferdestall geheiratet. Als Peachum von der Heirat seiner Tochter erfährt - die ihn nicht so sehr aus moralischen Gründen schmerzt wie aus sozialen -, beginnt er einen Krieg auf Tod und Leben mit Macheath und seiner Gaunerplatte, dessen Hin und Her den Inhalt der Dreigroschenoper bildet. (GW17, 989)

The tensions between a moral and an amoral, between a socially critical and a cynically amused view of life, which can be detected in this self-commentary, also permeate the whole opera.⁹ To demonstrate this, it is proposed to analyse first the action, and then the songs. The songs can be dealt with separately like this because they are for the most part only tenuously connected with the plot; where a song does have particular dramatic significance it will, of course, be examined in relation to the action.

ooo000ooo

While the overture is being played, the audience is shown the following projection:

Sie werden heute abend eine Oper für Bettler sehen. Weil diese Oper so prunkvoll gedacht war, wie nur Bettler sie erträumen, und weil sie doch so billig sein sollte, dass Bettler sie bezahlen können, heisst sie Die Dreigroschenoper. (DGO 5)

As a guide to the understanding of the opera that follows, this text, which replaces the prefatory dialogue between Beggar and Player in Gay's original, is rather misleading. The opera does not consistently remain within the limits of a fictional "opera for beggars".¹⁰ Such an ironic presentation of society from the particular and limited standpoint of beggars could conceivably have provided a fascinating double alienation-effect: both of society and of the alienated viewpoint from which it is being observed. However, this is idle speculation, since Brecht did not in fact put this principle into practice in his composition of the Dreigroschenoper. That the opera is addressed directly to the normal theatre-going public is made quite clear by the addresses to the audience in the second and third Dreigroschenfinale:

Mac (vor dem Vorhang)
Ihr Herrn, die ihr uns lehrt, wie man brav leben
Und Sünd' und Missetat vermeiden kann,
Zuerst müsst ihr uns was zu fressen geben,
Dann könnt ihr reden: Damit fängt es an.
Ihr, die ihr euren Wanst und uns're Bravheit liebt,
Das eine wisset ein für allemal:
Wie ihr es immer dreht und wie ihr's immer schiebt,
Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral. (DGO 59)

Alle (singen zur Orgel, nach vorn gehend)
Verfolgt das Unrecht nicht so sehr, in Bälde
Erfriert es schon von selbst, denn es ist kalt.
Bedenkt das Dunkel und die grosse Kälte
In diesem Tale, das von Jammer schallt. (DGO 80)

Such lines presuppose an audience drawn from the ruling classes, not a gathering of beggars. The contradiction between the preface and these finales suggests that Brecht did not invest much artistic care in the composition.

Brecht follows Gay in having the action proper begin in Peachum's place of business. Gay used Peachum's profession of receiver of stolen goods and organiser of a band of thieves to satirise the malpractices of lawyers and of the politicians who make the laws:

Peachum Through all the employments of life
Each neighbour abuses his brother;
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife;
All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat;
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade as honest as mine.

A lawyer is an honest employment; so is mine. Like me too he acts in a double capacity, both against rogues and for 'em; for 'tis but fitting that we should protect and encourage cheats, since we live by them. (BO 6-7)

For Gay's audience this technique of paralleling the practices of criminals and men in high position was realistic in two ways: it drew on a real background of organised crime in certain areas of London, and on an equally authentic background of corruption in high places. Brecht attempted to bring the satire closer to his own times by taking the action out of the eighteenth century and setting it in a milieu which is basically nineteenth century in atmosphere but with anachronisms of dress and style of life (for example, Mac's loot is driven to his temporary hide-out in motor lorries).¹¹ Brecht made this choice of a Victorian milieu in order to emphasize hypocrisy as the dominant feature of a society which, although purporting to be Christian, was really materialistic and hard-hearted. The nineteenth century setting acts as a bridge from the original eighteenth century setting to the present, by exemplifying a historical trend taking place within developing capitalist society, namely the "zunehmenden Verhärtung der Menschen" (DGO 6), that is, the disappearance of Christian charity from a society which claims to

be progressing towards greater humanity. Thus to expose as hypocritical the Christian pretensions of the Victorian world was a fortiori to attack as illusory the notion that capitalist society in the twentieth century was moving towards anything other than increased materialism and inhumanity.

Brecht decided to change Peachum's line of business from receiver of stolen goods to organiser of a gang of fraudulent beggars as part of his strategy of focussing on the increasing hypocrisy and lack of charity in life. The declining moral standards of society are reflected in the increasing difficulties experienced by Peachum in conducting his business, which lies in exploiting the charitable urges of the rich, and in the decreasing effectiveness of the Bible verses he employs for business purposes:

Peachum Ja, es muss etwas Neues geschehen. Mein Geschäft ist zu schwierig, denn mein Geschäft ist es, das menschliche Mitleid zu erwecken. Es gibt einige wenige Dinge, die den Menschen erschüttern, einige wenige, aber das Schlimme ist, dass sie, mehrmals angewendet, schon nicht mehr wirken. Dennder Mensch hat die furchtbare Fähigkeit, sich gleichsam nach eigenem Belieben gefühllos zu machen (...)
Ebenso ist es mit den geistigen Hilfsmitteln. (Eine grosse Tafel mit "Geben ist seliger als Nehmen" kommt vom Schnürboden herunter.) Was nützen die schönsten und dringendsten Sprüche, aufgemalt auf die verlockendsten Tüfelchen, wenn sie sich so rasch verbrauchen. In der Bibel gibt es etwa vier, fünf Sprüche, die das Herz rühren, wenn man sie verbraucht hat, ist man glatt brotlos. Wie hat sich zum Beispiel dieses "Gib, so wird dir gegeben" in knapp drei Wochen, wo es hier hängt, abgenützt. Es muss eben immer Neues geboten werden. Da muss eben die Bibel wieder herhalten, aber wie oft wird sie es noch? (DGO 7-8)

Through his change of Peachum's profession Brecht exposes not only the hypocrisy of the owning classes in the field of charity, but, by making him a rogue who operates within the law, also approximates

his manner of conducting business more closely to the patterns of exploitation followed by the bourgeois entrepreneur. Peachum's openly self-seeking approach to moral dicta is, further, an "alienated" variant of the practice adopted, in Brecht's view, by all businessmen, who live "von Moral" rather than "in Moral", in as much as they profit from the law-abiding and hard-working qualities of the mass of the exploited in society.¹²

Yet this attempt to give increased contemporary relevance to Gay's technique of mirroring high-life in low-life remains feeble and fragmentary, and the Dreigroschenoper achieves nothing like the same level of satirical penetration as the original. Brecht neither gives any realistic depth to the picaresque method of exposing the true nature of society by viewing it from the standpoint of the lower orders, since his "poor" are clearly fictional characters, cunning tricksters whose way of life represents nothing of the real sufferings of the industrial proletariat in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; nor does he give an accurate portrayal of life in the modern underworld, an approach which could undoubtedly throw critical light on the society which creates such deprivations as any underworld thrives on; nor does he write new speeches to pinpoint specific social abuses, which was Gay's principal means of giving his comic opera an uncomfortably sharp satirical edge. Instead, he chooses, on the one hand, to exploit the merely comic potential of his underworld characters' attempts to emulate the social manners and business methods of the bourgeois, and, on the other, to generalise his satire by presenting violence, hypocrisy and selfish materialism as fundamental human characteristics rather than as remediable ills created by the historically contingent conditions of life in a specific form of social organisation.

This tendency to generic rather than social satire is evident already in the transition from the scene heading which spoke of the "zunehmenden Verhärtung der Menschen", to Peachum's opening speech itself, which speaks not of bourgeois vices, but of "das menschliche Mitleid" in general. Connected with this cynical view of human nature is a tendency to abandon satire proper for pure comedy, a tendency which was already present in Gay's original, although held in balance there by the strength of the author's determination to make quite specific socio-satirical points. When, in Die Dreigroschenoper, a young beggar named Filch meets the beggar-king Peachum for the first time, after having been caught poaching on Peachum's territory, the exchange has the quality of verbalised farce:

Peachum Ihr Name?

Filch Sehen Sie, Herr Peachum, ich habe von Jugend an Unglück gehabt. Meine Mutter war eine Säuferin, mein Vater ein Spieler. Von früh an auf mich selber angewiesen, ohne die liebende Hand einer Mutter, geriet ich immer tiefer in den Sumpf der Grossstadt. Väterliche Fürsorge und die Wohltat eines traulichen Heims habe ich nie gekannt. Und so sehen Sie mich denn...

Peachum Ich sehe.

Filch (verwirrt) Aller Mittel entblösst, eine Beute meiner Triebe.

Peachum Wie ein Wrack auf hoher See und so weiter. Nun sagen Sie mir mal, Sie Wrack, in welchem Distrikt sagen Sie dieses Kindergedicht auf?

Filch Wieso, Herr Peachum?

Peachum Den Vortrag halten Sie doch öffentlich?

Filch Ja, sehen Sie, Herr Peachum, da war gestern so ein kleiner peinlicher Zwischenfall in der Highland Street. Ich stehe da still und unglücklich an der Ecke, Hut in der Hand, ohne was Böses zu ahnen...

Peachum (blättert in einem Notizbuch.) Highland Street. Ja, ja, stimmt. Du bist der Dreckkerl, den Honey und Sam gestern erwischt haben. Du hattest die Frechheit, im Distrikt 10 die Passanten zu belästigen. Wir haben es bei einer Tracht Prügel bewenden lassen, weil wir annehmen konnten, du weisst nicht, wo Gott

wohnt. Wenn du dich aber noch einmal blicken lässt, dann wird die Säge angewendet, verstehst du? (DGO 8-9)

While Peachum's business is modelled on capitalist lines, his "Sprüche" being his "Kapital" (DGO 8), Brecht stresses the differences between his methods and normal middle-class behaviour - the overtly materialistic use of the Bible, the use of violence against competitors - to create a comic contrast with life "above stairs". The scene cannot be taken seriously as a satirical mirror of bourgeois life, nor as a portrait of the real effects on the lower classes of having to live in a society which is Christian only in name. Lacking any direct reference to specific social realities, the scene degenerates to the level of a farcical representation of the dog-eat-dog struggle which the dramatist evidently sees as the essence of human existence. What is more, the fact that no-one really is hurt in the action (Peachum's gruesome reference to the "Säge" is too incidental to have much effect), means that the farce does not even have any bite as a grotesque vision of life. The whole scene is, in short, harmless in every respect. This sliding-off into farce is the expression on the dramatic level of the dissipation of the satire into cynical generalisations about human nature. Although such cynicisms do represent an attack on society's facade of concern for humane values, their natural tendency is to promote cynicism rather than humane change, since they assert that pity is "unnatürlich" for man. If one considers that such convenient views about human nature were also represented in the "culinary" form of harmless farce, it is hardly surprising that the work was an immediate success with audiences in Berlin in 1928.

Brecht follows Gay in making his characters act out of materialistic considerations. As in the original, Peachum determines to have Macheath hanged because the latter, by marrying his daughter Polly, may learn the secrets of the beggar organisation, and thus threaten Peachum's security. Where Brecht deviates from the original is in changing Polly's attitude to Macheath from one which, despite an admixture of honest materialism, is basically the conventional operatic one of romantic love, to a thoroughly self-seeking, materialistic one.¹³ To establish this important change in the girl's character, Brecht interpolates between Peachum's first conversation with his wife, in which he learns of the affair between Polly and Macheath, and the scene where Polly tells her parents of her marriage, a whole new scene in which he shows Macheath and Polly celebrating their marriage in a stable.

Just as in the opening scene Brecht made Peachum's adoption of certain bourgeois business methods the basis for a comic contrast and mildly satirical parallel between his fictional underworld and the real world of business, he achieves the same farcical effect here by giving Macheath certain pretensions to respectability and fine ideas, which clash with his surroundings and with his own coarse and violent nature. He affects a connoisseurship of antique furniture, but is unable to distinguish Chippendale from Quatorze (DGO 20) and is quite happy to see a "Rosenholz Cembalo" sawn up to provide a makeshift table (DGO 17); he tries to talk in an elevated style ("Meine Frau ist ausser sich" - DGO 17), but lapses into vulgarities ("Polly, darf ich dich bitten, dass du dich um die Fresskörbe kümmerst?" - DGO 18); he dresses elegantly and makes his gang wear evening-dress for the festivities, but holds the reception

in someone else's stable; he insists on table etiquette, but knocks down one of the guests for making a crude joke (DGO 19). All this is as farcical as a man slipping on a banana skin, and is so evidently an implausible fiction aiming at a comic travesty of gangster clichés, that it cannot be taken seriously as a satire of the way people really behave.

The role played by the bride is as much a parody of the demure manner of the conventional operatic bride, as the behaviour of the drunken, roguish "Hochwürden Kimball" represents a travesty of any notion of a divine sanction for marriage. At first Polly tries to act the part of a well brought-up young girl who is shocked by the improprieties in the situation, but when there is a lull in the conversation, she offers to regale the company with a song. This proves to be anything but the coy air that might be expected of a young bride, for it is a tale of bloody revenge, a pirate ballad which throws important light on Polly's attitude to Macheath. In this song an "Abwaschmädchen" dreams of taking revenge on all the men for whom she is merely a skivvy by one day revealing herself to be "Seeräuber-Jenny", captain of a crew of pirates who capture the town where she works and execute whoever she condemns to death (DGO 25). Apart from revealing a talent for play-acting which justifiably disturbs Macheath ("Übrigens, ich mag das gar nicht bei dir, diese Verstellerei, lass das gefälligst in Zukunft" - DGO 27), Polly exhibits in her assumed role as Jenny a capacity for treachery and violence which she subsequently exercises in reality by betraying Macheath in order to take over the leadership of the gang from him.

Polly begins to put her plans for a takeover into effect on the day after the wedding, when she returns to her parents' home,

ostensibly to collect her clothes. Although she pretends that her love for Macheath is genuine and idealistic ("Die Liebe ist aber doch das Höchste auf der Welt" - DGO 36), she is careful to inform her parents of Mac's friendship with the police-chief Brown, and thus suggest to her father, in the disguised form of a boast about her husband's good social connections, that pressure must be put on Brown if he is to be persuaded to arrest Macheath at the Turnbridge brothel. Polly's next step is to warn Macheath that he must disappear for a while because of the imminent danger of arrest. Macheath then plays into her hands by encharging her, despite her hypocritical sentimental protests that material concerns are unimportant at this moment, with the running of the gang during his absence. The only concession Polly makes to her own affection for Mac is a veiled warning to ride straight away and to have nothing to do with any other women:

Polly Und du, Mac, versprichst mir, dass du keine Frau mehr ansehen willst, und gleich wegreisest, Glaube mir, dass deine kleine Polly das nicht aus Eifersucht sagt, sondern das ist sehr wichtig, Mac. (DGO 45)

Yet her desire to have full control over the gang ensures that she does not explicitly warn Mac of the trap that has been laid for him in Turnbridge. In an earlier version of this scene Polly's hypocritical rationalisation of her unwillingness to warn him is made clearer:

(Alle ausser Polly ab)
Polly (allein) Er kommt doch nicht wieder. Wenn ich ihn fortlasse, kommt er nicht wieder. Das muss ich wissen. Das ist doch ganz klar. Das merke ich doch. Er sagt: Adieu Polly. Ich komme ja wieder. Aber natürlich nicht wieder.

(singt)

Hübsch, als es währte, und nun ists vorüber.
Reiss aus dein Herz, sag: good bye, mein Lieber!
Was nützt all dein Jammer (leihe, Maria, dein Ohr mir!)
Wenn meine Mutter selber wüsste all das von mir.

Ach, jetzt sind wohl schon ganz Turnbridge hinter ihm her.
Meine Mutter muss ja schon lang dort gewesen sein. Ob ich ihm
noch sagen soll, dass er sich wenigstens mit diesen Weibern
nicht mehr einlässt? Aber er ist so stolz, O, wie ich seinen
Stolz liebe, und er würde es mir übelnehmen, wenn ich an ihm
zweifelte. Mann muss mit ihm umgehen, wie mit einem rohen
Ei. O, wie ich ihn liebe! Ich will ihn lieber nur bitten,
mir zu versprechen, dass er mit keiner Frau mehr spricht in
London, ehe er wegreetet. Wenn ers mir verspricht, muss ich
ihm gar nichts sagen von all dem. - Aber er kommt ja doch
nicht wieder.

(singt)

Was nützt all dein Klagen, leihe Maria dein Ohr ihr.
Wenn meine Mutter selber wüsste all das von dir?
Schlaf ein auf seinem Versprechen, erwache mit deinen
Sorgen.
Leihe, Maria, dein Ohr ihr, er vergisst sich morgen.¹⁴

Polly's betrayal of Macheath, like so many acts of this kind in Brecht's early plays, takes place on Thursday, and is followed later that evening by another such action when the whore Jenny, who once had Mac as her pimp, betrays him to the police for a "Judaslohn" (DGO 62). When Mac subsequently escapes from prison and Frau Peachum refuses to pay Jenny for her treachery, she again betrays him, although now disguising the fact by letting slip his whereabouts apparently casually. Her hypocrisy here resembles Polly's assurances to her parents of her love for Mac:

Peachum Was ist denn los, du hast ihnen doch hoffentlich kein Geld gegeben, na, wie ist's, meine Damen? Sitzt der Herr Macheath oder sitzt er nicht?

Jenny Lassen Sie mich mit Ihrem Herrn Macheath in Ruhe. Dem können Sie nicht das Wasser reichen. Ich habe heute nacht einen Herrn weggehen lassen müssen, weil ich in die Kissen weinte, als ich daran denken musste, dass ich diesen Gentleman an Sie verkauft habe. Ja, meine Damen, und was glauben Sie, was heute morgen geschah? Vor noch nicht einer Stunde, ich hatte mich eben in den

Schlaf geweint, pfiff es, und auf der Strasse stand eben dieser Herr, um den ich geweint hatte und wünschte, dass ich ihm den Schlüssel herunterwerfe. In meinen Armen wollte er mich die Unbill vergessen machen, die ich ihm zugefügt habe. Das ist der letzte Gentleman in London, meine Damen. Und wenn unsere Kollegin Suky Tawdry jetzt hier nicht mitgekommen ist, dann ist es, weil er von mir noch zu ihr ging, um auch sie zu trösten. (DGO 62-63)

The similarity in the attitudes of Polly and Jenny to Mac matches the similarity in his treatment of them: he marries Polly only to gain control over Peachum's business, and had once lived with Jenny for the sake of her immoral earnings. Thus his materialistic betrayal of love meets with a poetically just retribution in their seeking to profit from his downfall.

The theme of the betrayal of higher values for the sake of material gain, which underlies the relations between Macheath and his women, is reinforced by the fact that it also shapes Mac's relations with male colleagues and friends. The hypocritical nature of friendship in this milieu is pointed out in the very first scene of the opera when we learn that Peachum's protection racket operates under the name "Bettlers Freund" (DGO 8). The theme then reappears frequently throughout the action. When Mac and his henchman Matthias come to blows during the wedding scene, Mac, who was actually responsible for starting the fight, complains to Polly:

Mac Schöne Hochzeit, was, Polly? Diese Dreckhaufen musst du um dich sehen am Tag deiner Eheschliessung. Das hättest du dir auch nicht gedacht, dass dein Mann so von seinen Freunden in Stich gelassen würde! Kannst du was lernen. (DGO 19)

Like Peachum, Mac only uses the word "friend" as a euphemism for an exploitative relationship. Unlike Peachum, Mac is later repaid in

kind for his hypocrisy when his friends find themselves quite unable to produce the sum of money required for a bribe to free him from prison (DGO 76). Just as the theme of treachery in love was articulated in two betrayals, one of which, Jenny's, was a double betrayal, the theme of treachery in friendship follows the same pattern, Mac being betrayed once by his gang and twice by his closest friend, the police-chief Tigerbrown. The similarity between the Macheath-Jenny relationship and that between Mac and Brown is further underlined by the duets sung by these two pairs, the Kanonen-Song (DGO 29) in which the two men recall their period of closest friendship in the army, and the Zuhälterballade (DGO 49) in which Mac and Jenny reminisce about their past love. The content of these songs reinforces the message of the action, namely that violence and exploitation are the essential characteristics of human relationships, and that "love" or "friendship" are merely convenient facades for the practice of such exploitation: Georgie, the friend who becomes a sergeant takes his comrades Jim and Johnny by the arm, but only to remind them that "Die Armee kann nicht verrecken" (DGO 29); and the line "Ich liebte sie und sie ernährte mich" (DGO 49) expresses the pimp's twofold exploitation, sexual and economic, of his whore.

In this series of betrayals and counterbetrayals lies the greatest similarity between the original and Brecht's adaptation of it, for the theme of treachery led Gay on to a generalised satire on human nature and away from the more narrowly political or social satire which he pursues elsewhere in his work. Gay puts into the mouth of the jailor Lockit, who corresponds in function to Tigerbrown in Brecht's version, the following broad comments on human nature:

Lockit Peachum then intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him. The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lions, wolves and vultures don't live together in herds, droves, or flocks. Of all animals of prey, man is the only sociable one. Every one of us preys upon his neighbor, and yet we herd together. Peachum is my companion, my friend. According to the custom of the world, indeed, he may quote thousands of precedents for cheating me. And shall I not make use of the privilege of friendship to make him a return?

(BO 61)

Similarly, if Tigerbrown's corrupt co-operation with the underworld is so clichéd as to carry little satirical weight, his readiness to betray Mac and Mac's readiness to do the same to him point to a fundamental selfishness in human nature. The Dreigroschenoper, lacking the counterweight of an element of particular social satire, operates throughout at this level of generality. The behaviour of Mac, Brown, Polly or Jenny does not suggest that they are basically good people who are forced unwillingly into evil by their social circumstances, but that it is in human nature to be selfish and actually to enjoy violence and betrayal.¹⁵ Thus, paradoxically, Gay's work, which might have been expected to lead Brecht further along the road towards a more socially and politically specific kind of satire, leads him, on the contrary, back towards a more generalised view of human behaviour because he is either unable or unwilling to update the specific attacks on contemporary society in the original.

Gay's Beggar's Opera, it has been suggested, is not consistently satirical. Its satire is softened on the one hand by the genuinely comic tenor of the work and on the other by an element of conventional operatic sentimentality.¹⁶ The political-satirical significance of Macheath's villainy is counterbalanced by his

aesthetic and emotional attractiveness as a dashing young lover and daredevil, who can still be witty even in the face of imminent death:

Macheath My dear Lucy, my dear Polly, whatsoever hath passed between us is now at an end. If you are fond of marrying again, the best advice I can give you is to ship yourselves off for the West Indies, where you'll have a fair chance of getting a husband apiece, or by good luck two or three, as you like best.

(BO 80-81)

Although, as has been seen, Brecht eliminates almost all traces of sentimental love from the opera by making Polly as much of a hypocrite as the rest, he was still sufficiently sympathetic to a "Baalian" view of life to retain the element of admiration for Macheath's womanising and love of danger which was present in Gay's original. As part of his attempt to update Gay's satire, he does slightly change the style of Macheath's behaviour by making him more of a rogue with aspirations to bourgeois manners than the rollicking freebooter created by Gay in order to satirize the aristocracy. But despite the change of style it is nevertheless sheer bravado that makes him insist on visiting the brothel despite the warrant out for his arrest:

(Auftritt Macheath, hängt Hut an Nagel, setzt sich auf Sofa hinter Tisch)

Mac Meinen Kaffee!

Jakob (entsetzt) Wieso bist du nicht in Highgate?

Mac Heute ist mein Donnerstag. Ich kann mich doch von meinen Gewohnheiten nicht durch solche Lappalien abhalten lassen. (Wirft die Anklageschrift auf den Boden.) Ausserdem regnet es. (DGO 46)

As in the wedding scene, Mac's assumed bourgeois manners cannot conceal the quite un-bourgeois character of the man beneath the skin, indeed their effect is to heighten the contrast between Mac's

picaresque qualities and the characteristics of the normal, prudent and staid middle-class man. He is attractive precisely because he is not hidebound by the prudential considerations which have made Peachum into a successful but emotionally arid businessman.¹⁷

The characterisation of Macheath as a personally attractive seducer is anti-satirical in several respects. Firstly, the emphasis on the daredevil quality in his character and the prudent, cautious character of Peachum is a restatement of a recurrent conflict in Brecht's early plays, which, by focussing on a basic existential choice (between prudence and recklessness), diverts attention from the social determinants and dimensions of behaviour; secondly, Mac's personal charm arouses sympathy which works against the creation of critical distance; furthermore, the fact that his near demise is brought about by two of his ladies, casts him in the "timeless" role of the man whose tragedy is caused by female treachery and his own sexual hunger. Thus, the sexual motif tends to obscure any particular socially critical significance the action might otherwise have.

ooo000ooo

The analysis of the action of the Dreigroschenoper has sought to show that the main tendency of Brecht's adaptation was to diminish the specifically socio-satirical significance of the original, and to emphasize the elements which point towards a general, "comédie humaine" view of life. The overall effect is to create an entertaining farce set in a picaresque milieu and spiced with cynical observations about human nature, which, precisely because they are so generalised and wittily formulated, tend to add to the "culinary" character of the opera. Having seen how the

initial socially critical impetus underlying the historical notion of the "zunehmenden Verhärtung der Menschen" was quickly dissipated in a comic action too distinctly picaresque to serve either as a convincing satirical model of ruling-class behaviour, or as a socially critical portrait of society from the view-point of the exploited, it must now be considered what contribution the songs make to the overall significance of the opera. In the following it will be argued that they do not provide the kind of corrective to the merely amusing quality of the action which might have restored to the work the specific socio-satirical content which enlivened the original. These songs do something to redress the balance between moral responsibility and amoral amusement which is upset by the farcical action with its happy ending, but even here the immoral tendencies of the work successfully prevent the moral impulse reasserting itself decisively.

The conflict between moral seriousness and amoral cynicism which is characteristic of the opera as a whole makes it possible to group the songs roughly into three distinct classes: there are songs which are merely comic expressions of a picaresque outlook on life; there is one song which makes a direct, overt moral plea to the conscience of the audience; and there is a third group of songs which individually embody the conflict between a moral and an amoral perspective on life. The following songs can be classed as comic picaresque: Die Moritat von Mackie Messer (DGO 5), the Morgenchoral des Peachum (DGO 7), the Anstatt Dass-Song (DGO 14), the Hochzeitslied (DGO 17), the Barbara-Song (DGO 32), the Zuhälterballade (DGO 49), the Eifersuchtsduett (DGO 55). At the opposite end of the scale of moral seriousness to these comic songs stands a single

song clearly expressing moral pathos, the third Dreigroschen-Finale, which, although an isolated example, is given considerable weight by its position at the end of the whole work:

Peachum Drum bleibt alle stehen, wo ihr steht, und singt
den Choral der Ärmsten der Armen, deren
schwieriges Leben ihr heut'dargestellt habt,
denn in Wirklichkeit ist gerade ihr Ende
schlimm. Die reitenden Boten des Königs
kommen sehr selten, und die getreten werden,
treten wieder. Darum sollte man das Unrecht
nicht zu sehr verfolgen.

(Projektion: Text der nachfolgenden Strophe.)

Alle (singen zur Orgel, nach vorn gehend)

Verfolgt das Unrecht nicht zu sehr, in Bälde
Erfriert es schon von selbst, denn es ist kalt.
Bedenkt das Dunkel und die grosse Kälte
In diesem Tale, das von Jammer schallt. (DGO 80)

It is symptomatic of the general weakness of the moral impulse in the opera, that it should eventually express itself in an appeal, couched in biblical language, to Christian charity, the very virtue which has been cynically mocked and spurned throughout the action, and which allegedly is fast disappearing from the "increasingly hard" hearts of men. In this finale there emerges with curious naïveté a desire for transcendence, in morality if nowhere else, which is otherwise expressed negatively in Brecht's early plays, namely in the wilful cultivation of evil, to which his metaphysically disappointed heroes have recourse.

The third Dreigroschen-Finale does represent an extreme of naive moral pathos, but it is by no means the only song in which an ethical or idealistic impulse can be detected. Sometimes the element of moral seriousness or the longing for a more ideal way of life expresses itself in an abrupt change of tone in a song which is otherwise flippant in tenor. One example of this is the Liebeslied

sung by Mac and Polly, which begins as a simple parody of a sentimental love song, but then shifts into a different mood to express a bitter experience of the transience of life and love; implicit in the bitterness is a feeling that things ought to be better than this:

Mac Siehst du den Mond über Soho?

Polly Ich sehe ihn Lieber,
Fühlst du mein Herz schlagen, Geliebter?

Mac Ich fühle es, Geliebte.

Polly Wo du hingehst, da will ich auch hingehen.

Mac Und wo du bleibst, da will ich auch sein.

Beide Und gibt's auch kein Schriftstück vom Standesamt.
Und keine Blumen auf dem Altar,
Und weiss ich auch nicht, woher dein Brautkleid stammt,
Und ist keine Myrthe im Haar,
Der Teller, von welchem du isst dein Brot,
Schau ihn nicht lange an, wirf ihn fort.
Die Liebe dauert oder dauert nicht
An dem oder jenem Ort. (DGO 31-32)

Macheath's Ruf aus der Gruft and Grabschrift share to a certain extent the comic harmlessness of the picaresque action, but also contain moments in which the distance created by this fictional context is suddenly broken down and emotional contact is made with real problems of the present. In the second verse of the Ruf aus der Gruft, ostensibly an ironic appeal for help made by a condemned man to his creditors, there can be felt an edge of moral attack directed against the audience, which also cares more about its "schmierige Gelder" than about anything else:

Mac (singt die zweite Strophe der Epistel)
Jetzt kommt und seht, wie es ihm dreckig geht,
Jetzt ist er wirklich, was man pleite nennt.
Die ihr als oberste Autorität
Nur eure schmierigen Gelder anerkennt,
Seht, dass er euch nicht in die Grube fährt!
Ihr müsstet gleich zur Königin und in Haufen
Und müsstet mit ihr über ihn was sprechen.
Wie Schweine eines hinterm andern laufen,

Ach, seine Zähne sind schon lang wie Rechen.
Wollt ihr, dass seine Marter ewig währt? (DGO 73)

Similarly, the closing stanzas of the "Grabschrift" go beyond the comic, picaresque limits of the song to express violent anger against policemen, in which there can be felt a revolutionary resentment against all oppressive authority:

Nicht so die Polizistenhunde,
Die jeden Abend, jeden Morgen
Nur Rinde gaben meinem Munde,
Auch sonst verursacht Mühen und Sorgen,
Ich könnte sie ja jetzt verfluchen,
Doch will ich heute nicht so sein,
Um weitere Händel nicht zu suchen,
Bitt' ich auch sie, mir zu verzeihen.

Man schlage ihnen ihre Fressen
Mit schweren Eisenhämmern ein.
Im Übrigen will ich vergessen
Und bitte sie, mir zu verzeihen. (DGO 78)¹⁸

A group of three songs gives philosophical support to the tendency of the work to take a cynically amused view of the farce of human existence; these are the Ballade vom angenehmen Leben, (DGO 52), the Lied von der Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Strebens (DGO 66), and the Salomon-Song (DGO 68). It has already been pointed out that the rejection of literary idealism in favour of material prosperity in the Ballade vom angenehmen Leben may well be a direct expression of Brecht's own cynicism in writing the Dreigroschenoper. The other two songs reinforce the advocacy of cynical materialism by pointing out that the human situation is in any case absurd. The Lied von der Unzulänglichkeit expresses this thus:

Ja, renn' nur nach dem Glück,
Doch renne nicht zu sehr,
Denn alle rennen nach dem Glück
Das Glück rennt hinterher.

Denn für dieses Leben
Ist der Mensch nicht anspruchslos genug,
Drum ist all sein Streben
Nur ein Selbstbetrug. (DGO 67)

A contrary pull to this resigned deprecation of having "Ansprüche" in life is exerted by the ballad of "Seeratüber-Jenny" (DGO 25). Considered in its dramatic context, this ballad expresses Polly's capacity for treachery and violence. But in the situation in which Polly supposedly first heard the song, it was a working-class girl's expression in romanticised form of a revolutionary desire for retribution for her exploitation and degradation.¹⁹ The ambiguity in the song - its violence may express justified revolutionary anger or personal sadism - is just one more expression of the conflict between a moral and an amoral perspective which runs through the whole opera. In the Kanonen-Song this clash of attitudes takes the form of a regular alternation of perspective between stanza and refrain. Whereas the three stanzas portray army life, as seen from the critical perspective of an outside observer and narrator, as a process of exploitation and destruction affecting the soldiers who are foolish enough to enlist, the refrain expresses the brutal humour of the soldiers who take pleasure in practising violence towards others:

John ist gestorben und Jim ist tot,
Und Georgie ist vermisst und verdorben,
Aber Blut ist immer noch rot,
Und für die Armee wird jetzt wieder geworben!
(Indem sie sitzend mit den Füßen marschieren)

Soldaten wohnen
Auf den Kanonen
Von Kap bis Couch-Behar,
Wenn es mal regnete
Und es begegnete
Ihnen 'ne neue Rasse,
'ne braune oder blasse,
Da machen sie vielleicht daraus ihr Beefsteak Tartar.
(DGO 29)

Criticism is implied also in their refrain, of course, and is heightened by Weill's setting, which makes the accompaniment fall "out of step" and run away with the foolishly boastful soldiers, but the element of amused sympathy with their black humour is equally as strong as this moral critical impulse.

The most thoroughly ambivalent songs of the opera are the first and second Dreigroschen-Finale (DGO 39, 59). The first of these finales, a trio sung by Polly Peachum and her parents, expresses a nihilistic view of life. The desires of men for justice, peace and goodness may be very admirable, but the poverty of the world and the badness of men make such dreams impossible to realise:

Polly und Frau Peachum

Ja, das ist eben schade,
Das ist das riesig Fade.
Die Welt ist arm, der Mensch ist schlecht.
Da hat er eben leider recht.

Peachum Natürlich habe ich leider recht,
Die Welt ist arm, der Mensch ist schlecht.
Wir wären gut - anstatt so roh,
Doch die Verhältnisse, sie sind nicht so. (DGO 40)

The "Verhältnisse" mentioned here are not only the socially controllable conditions of life, but also the "Verhältnisse dieses Planeten", the fundamental limitations of existence. This image from Im Dickicht is recalled particularly in one line of this song: "Doch leider sind auf diesem Sterne eben / Die Mittel kärglich und die Menschen roh". The world is seen here as poor not simply in terms of its available material resources, but from the perspective of the existential self for whom life is always too short and the world too poor to satisfy its needs. And it is because the world is poor in this sense that man is bad, for his knowledge that he has only one short life to live leads him to put the pursuit of his own happiness

above all other considerations, regardless of the cost in terms of suffering caused to others:

Peachum Wer wollt auf Erden nicht ein Paradies?
Doch die Verhältnisse, gestatten sie's?
Nein, sie gestatten's eben nicht.
Dein Bruder, der doch an dir hängt,
Wenn halt für zwei das Fleisch nicht langt,
Tritt er dir eben ins Gesicht.
Ja, dankbar sein, wer wollt'es nicht?
Und deine Frau, die an dir hängt,
Wenn deine Liebe ihr nicht langt,
Tritt sie dir eben ins Gesicht. (DGO 40)

The selfishness of the human animal is as evident with regard to his emotional and sexual needs as it is in acquiring food. Thus, although social change might solve the problem of the distribution of material resources, the problems of individual emotional and material dissatisfaction would still exist to generate evil and suffering. What prevents this viewpoint being accepted as the dramatist's last word on the subject, however, is the ironic way in which it is presented. The song is sung by characters who take full advantage of its cynical philosophy to act in an evil way: Polly and her parents are all presently engaged in bringing about the downfall of Macheath for quite selfish reasons. The hypocritical and self-indulgent nature of their philosophy is brought out during the performance of the song by having mother and daughter do an "albernen Step" while singing the refrain, "Da hat er eben leider recht./ Die Welt ist arm, der Mensch ist schlecht" (DGO 39). Set against the background of the characters' behaviour, the all-embracing pessimism of the text is relativised and made to appear as cynical self-justification, as an argument which conveniently permits those who profit from the badness of men to leave things just as they are. In this exposure of the selfish roots of cynicism the moral impulse in the opera is at work.

The second Dreigroschen-Finale is the mirror image of the first, in that it is aggressively socially critical, but has the validity of its criticism relativised by the fact that it is sung by a group of hardened criminals, not by truly poor and exploited characters. The song is also ambiguous. The verses argue that evil is caused by the inequalities in society and asserts that the first priority must be to see to the material needs of the poor:

Mac (vor dem Vorhang)

Ihr Herrn, die ihr uns lehrt, wie man brav leben
Und Stünd' und Missetat vermeiden kann,
Zuerst müsst ihr uns was zu fressen geben,
Dann könnt ihr reden: Damit fängt es an. (DGO 59)

The refrain, on the other hand, speaks in general terms about human life and seems to imply that "Missetat" is endemic to man's condition:

Mac Denn wovon lebt der Mensch? In dem er stündlich
Den Menschen peinigt, auszieht, anfällt, abwürgt und
frisst.
Nur dadurch lebt der Mensch, dass er so gründlich
Vergessen kann, dass er ein Mensch doch ist.

Chor Ihr Herren, bildet euch nur da nichts ein,
Der Mensch lebt nur von Missetat allein. (DGO 60)

These lines sum up the conflict which underlies the whole opera: they assert angrily that that man "ein Mensch doch ist", but have to admit that this capacity for humane behaviour is in reality constantly swamped by his even stronger tendency to "forget" his humanity and to destroy and exploit others for selfish reasons.

In most of the dramas examined so far, a tension has been observed between the tendency of the style of the language to promote aesthetic, ironic distance to the events, and the tendency

of the characters' behaviour to invite emotional sympathy. Where the style did not perform this function, as in Baal, Brecht created distance in other ways, by making Baal's landlady, for example, pour scorn on his poetic style of speech and conduct, or by having Baal himself suddenly switch from an ecstatic, lyrical manner of speech to one of coarseness and cynicism. The Dreigroschenoper also lacks any tension between style and content, and no effort is made to create serious critical distance from the events on stage. The artificial gangster slang spoken by the characters is wholly of a piece with the unreality of this picaresque world. When Mac's accomplices are amused at his adoption of a high-falutin style of speech, the effect is merely to underline the comic contrast between his character and his pretensions.²⁰

A certain critical counterpoise on a stylistic level to Brecht's flippant enjoyment of his own picaresque farce is provided by the polemic, implied mainly by the songs, against the light musicals and sentimental films based on old operettas from the end of the nineteenth century which were enjoying a vogue in the second half of the 1920's. On the 30th of November, 1928, shortly after the Dreigroschenoper had received its premiere, Siegfried Kracauer published a critical article on the subject of "Der heutige Film und sein Publikum", which throws interesting light on the cultural background to the new opera:

Je abgetakelter die Operetten sind, desto mehr eignen sie sich offenbar für Verfilmung. Der Bettelstudent, (...), Die Geliebte seiner Hoheit, in Schwärmen fallen sie über die Zuschauer her, mit ihren lebenswürdigen Prinzen, ihren Feenschlössern und faden Couplets. Der Plunder, der nach der Revolution zu verfallen schien, gebärdet sich wie lebendig. Seine Darbietung ist gewöhnlich eine günstige Gelegenheit, auf Wien zurückzugreifen, das die Berliner Fabrikanten ins Herz

geschossen haben, weil es zu den sichersten Opiaten gehört. Das K.u.K. Wien wenigstens, das nichts vom 7. Oktober weiss. Es träumt und musiziert, es kennt keine Wohnungsnot, sondern nur Biedermeierstuben; der Strauss spielt immer noch in ihm - und was seine Mädchen betrifft - "So küsst nur eine hübsche Wienerin".²¹

The critic Ihering saw the opera as an attack, not on Handel, but on popular works of the musical stage:

Die Bettleroper, die heute Erfolg haben wollte, musste eine ganz andere Angriffsrichtung haben, zu ganz anderen Werken den Gegentypus schaffen. Die Dreigroschenoper von Brecht und Weill bringt den Gegentypus zu Schiffer-Spoliansky's Es liegt in der Luft und zu Reinhardts Artisten.²²

Weill was pleased at the success of the Dreigroschenoper in "breaking into" the popular entertainment industry, and so establishing contact with a public which normally had no access to works of even this level of seriousness:

Wichtiger für uns alle ist die Tatsache, dass hier der Einbruch in eine Verbrauchsindustrie gelungen ist, die bisher einer völlig anderen Art von Musikern, von Schriftstellern reserviert war. Wir kommen mit der Dreigroschenoper an ein Publikum heran, das uns entweder gar nicht kannte, oder das uns jedenfalls die Fähigkeit absprach, einen Hörerkreis zu interessieren, der weit über den Rahmen des Musik - und Opernpublikums ausgeht.²³

Adorno has described the critical significance of Weill's music in die Dreigroschenoper thus:

In der Opern-und Operettenform seiner kompositorischen Oberfläche fasst das Werk die kleinen Gespenster jener Bürgerwelt und lässt sie zu Asche werden, indem es sie dem grellen Licht der wachen Erinnerung aussetzt. Die Sprünge der Musik von 1890, daraus deren Gehalt floh; die Falschheit der Gefühle darin; was immer Zeit an Bruchstellen in die gewesene Oberfläche schlägt - Weill, der es von heute und hier, von drüben also und in dreidimensionaler Perspektive schaut, auf dem Hintergrund der verlorenen Zeit, Weill muss gleichsam real auskomponieren, was an jenen Dingen die Zeit fürs Bewusstsein vorkomponiert hat. Die Melodien von damals sind brüchig, und ihre metrische Kasernenordnung hören wir als Aneinandergefügtsein von Bruchstücken; darum komponiert Weill seine neuen Melodien, die alten zu deuten, selber schon in Brüchen, fügt die

Trümmer der Floskeln aneinander, die die Zeit zerschlagen hat. Die Harmonien, die fatalen verminderten Septimaakkorde, die chromatischen Alterationen von diatonisch getragenen Melodieschritten, das Espressivo, das nichts ausdrückt, sie klingen uns falsch - also muss Weill die Akkorde selber, die er da herholt, falsch machen, zu den Dreiklängen einen Ton hinzusetzen, der so falsch klingt, wie uns eben die reinen Dreiklänge aus leichter Musik von 1890 klingen. ²⁴

ooo000ooo

In 1931 Brecht published an amended version of the Dreigroschenoper, which has subsequently become the basis for the standard edition of the work, along with a set of "Anmerkungen zur Dreigroschenoper". The aim of this exercise was evidently to obscure the significance of his original conception of the text. So successful was this manoeuvre that many subsequent critics and interpreters have been misled or confused by it. It is convenient to deal first with the changes in the text which attempt to obscure its original meaning, and then to comment on the "Anmerkungen".

The most important changes are in the role of Macheath. These alterations, mostly additions, seek to present him as a bourgeois in robber's disguise, rather than as a robber who gives himself bourgeois airs and graces. The first of these new passages occurs during the wedding-scene when Macheath is made to criticise his henchmen's unnecessary use of violence:

Jakob (genannt Hakenfinger-Jakob) Glückwunsch! Ginger Street 14 waren Leute im ersten Stock. Wir mussten sie erst ausräuchern.

Robert (genannt Säge-Robert) Glückwunsch. Am Strand ging ein Konstabler hops.

Mac Dilettanten.

Ede Wir haben getan, was wir konnten, aber drei Leute im Westend waren nicht zu retten. Glückwunsch.

Mac Dilettanten und Pfuscher.

Jimmy Ein älterer Herr hat etwas abbekommen. Ich glaube aber nicht, dass es etwas Ernstes ist. Glückwunsch.

Mac Meine Direktive lautete: Blutvergiessen ist zu vermeiden. Mir wird wieder ganz schlecht, wenn ich daran denke. Ihr werdet nie Geschäftsleute werden! Kannibalen, aber keine Geschäftsleute!
(GW 2, 406-407)

Mac is cast in the role of the ambitious businessman-robber who insists on taking the credit for any violence that is done by his gang, since he sees this as the rational cultivation of a useful romantic aura:²⁵

Mac Übrigens, du trinkst zuviel, Matthias. Du hast vorige Woche wieder durchblicken lassen, dass die Inbrandsteckung des Kinderhospitals in Greenwich von dir gemacht wurde. Wenn so etwas noch einmal vorkommt, bist du entlassen. Wer hat das Kinderhospital in Brand gesteckt?

Matthias Ich doch.

Mac (zu den andern) Wer hat es in Brand gesteckt?

Die Andern Sie, Herr Macheath.

Mac Also wer?

Matthias (mürrisch) Sie, Herr Macheath. Auf diese Weise kann unsereiner natürlich nie hochkommen.

Mac (deutet mit einer Geste das Aufknüpfen an)
Du kommst schon hoch, wenn du meinst, du kannst mit mir konkurrieren. Hat man je gehört, dass ein Oxfordprofessor seine wissenschaftlichen Irrtümer von irgendeinem Assistenten zeichnen lässt? Er zeichnet selbst. (GW 2, 437)

Towards the end of the wedding scene Brecht has Mac talk to Polly in a way which suggests that he is a clumsy philistine rather than a charming seducer:

Mac Und jetzt muss das Gefühl auf seine Rechnung kommen. Der Mensch wird ja sonst zum Berufstier. Setz dich, Polly! (Musik) (GW 2, 422)

To complement this change in Mac's character, Polly is given a new speech which suggests that she is a bourgeoisie rather than a cunning

vixen in her attitude to Mac:

Polly Bitte, schau ihn dir an, ist er etwa schön? Nein. Aber er hat sein Auskommen. Er bietet mir eine Existenz! Er ist ein ausgezeichneter Einbrecher, dabei ein weitschauender und erfahrener Strassenraßber. Ich weiss ganz genau, ich könnte dir die Zahl nennen, wieviel seine Ersparnisse heute schon betragen. Einige glückliche Unternehmungen, und wir können uns auf ein kleines Landhaus zurückziehen, ebenso gut wie Herr Shakespeare, den unser Vater so schätzt. (GW 2, 427)

That this speech conflicts with the Barbara-Song in which Polly sings of having married for love, not for money, does not appear to have troubled Brecht. During the scene where Mac takes leave of Polly she is given more new lines which emphasize her bourgeoisie qualities:

Polly Du hast ganz recht, ich muss die Zähne zusammenbeissen und auf das Geschäft aufpassen. Was dein ist, das ist jetzt auch mein, nicht wahr, Mackie? Wie ist das denn mit deinen Zimmern, Mac? Soll ich die nicht aufgeben? Um die Miete ist es mir direkt leid!

Mac Nein, die brauch ich noch.

Polly Aber wozu, das kostet doch nur unser Geld!

Mac Du scheinst zu meinen, ich komme überhaupt nicht mehr zurück.

Polly Wieso? Dann kannst du doch wieder mieten! (GW 2, 435)

The most frequently quoted of the new insertions occurs in Mac's speech before his execution:

Mac Meine Damen und Herren. Sie sehen den untergehenden Vertreter eines untergehenden Standes. Wir kleinen bürgerlichen Handwerker, die wir mit dem biedereren Brecheisen an den Nickelkassen der kleinen Ladenbesitzer arbeiten, werden von den Grossunternehmern verschlungen, hinter denen die Banken stehen. Was ist ein Dietrich gegen eine Aktie? Was ist ein Einbruch in eine Bank gegen die Gründung einer Bank? Was ist die Ermordung eines Mannes gegen die Anstellung eines Mannes? Mitbürger, hiermit verabschiede ich mich von euch. (GW 2, 482)

Again, no thought appears to have been given to the fact that Mac's fate has nothing to do with being taken over by a larger organisa-

tion, nor to the fact that he is presented earlier in the action as "der grösste Verbrecher Londons" (GW 2, 429), and not as the equivalent of a petit bourgeois in his line of business. The strictures of Schumacher, who was unaware of the changes which had been made to produce the text on which his interpretation was based, are nevertheless a fair comment on this confused new version:

Aber Gays Satire war offensichtlich viel wirklichkeitsbezogener, konkreter als die von Brecht. In jeder Figur der Beggar's Opera ist das feudalistisch-kapitalische "Urbild" zu erkennen; darüber hinaus war die Organisation der Bettler und das organisierte Ganovenium eine grausige Realität des London um 1720/1730. Hinter den Gestalten der Dreigroschenoper sind dagegen keine Zeitgenossen zu erkennen (wie etwa Walpole hinter Peachum und Lockit bei Gay). Die Welt der Bettler und Ganoven ist ganz anders organisiert, als es in der Dreigroschenoper dargestellt wurde. Die Ankündigung Mackies, er werde in das Bankfach überwechseln, und seine Abschiedsrede stellen eine mehr allgemeine als direkte Bezüglichkeit zur gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit von 1928 her. Brecht aktualisierte die Beggar's Opera nur schematisch, nicht dialektisch.²⁶

The "Anmerkungen zur Dreigroschenoper" are chiefly concerned with the formulation of Brecht's developing ideas on epic theatre, but the relation of these reflections to their ostensible occasion, the opera itself, is extremely tenuous. This is hardly surprising, because Die Dreigroschenoper was not originally conceived as an analysis of the large-scale social processes which Brecht defined as the proper subject matter of a new epic-materialistic form of theatre.²⁷ To complement this function of the "Anmerkungen" as an exposition of the theory of epic theatre, Brecht also attempts in them to reinterpret the opera as an example of the new type of theatre by asserting that the work is "eine Darstellung der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft (und nicht nur 'lumpenproletarischer Elemente')" (GW 17, 999). He claims that the opera presents "Räuber" as "Bürger" in order to expose the robber in every bourgeois

(GW 17, 994). Basing his argument wholly on the new insertions which he had just made in the text, Brecht stresses that Mac is a "bürgerliche Erscheinung" for whom "Rationalisierung ist Geschäftsprinzip" (GW 17, 994). His insistence that Mac is about forty years old and "weniger der schöne Mann, weit mehr der gutsituierte Mann" (GW 17, 995) in the eyes of the ladies, rests on the new speech given to Polly in her first conversation with her parents, but it flatly contradicts the characterisation of him in the earlier essay "Über die Dreigroschenoper" (1929), as "der junge, von den Dämchen vergötterte Gentleman Macheath" (GW 17, 989).²⁸ To explain why this allegedly solid citizen visits the Turnbridge brothel, Brecht has to invent the excuse that he goes there principally to conduct business - presumably as the owner of the brothel, although there is nothing in the text to support this other than a vague passing reference to "seinen Huren" (GW 2, 429). Brecht then goes on to contradict himself by describing the visit to the brothel as "einer der nicht seltenen, dennoch unverständlichen Fälle bürgerlicher Dämonie" (GW 17, 995). The height of absurdity is reached when Brecht (surely with his tongue in his cheek) makes this comment about the whores of Turnbridge:

Diese Damen sind im ungestörten Besitz ihrer Produktionsmittel. Gerade deshalb aber dürfen sie nicht den Eindruck erwecken, als wären sie frei. Für sie hat die Demokratie nicht die Freiheit, die sie für alle hat, denen die Produktionsmittel genommen werden können. (GW 2, 489)

In describing the Dreigroschenoper as a light "Nebenwerk", Jhering gave a much fairer assessment of the opera than the many later critics, whose solemnity can partly be excused by the bowdlerised text they read.²⁹ As a polemic against contemporary society,

its positive merit lies in its having exposed to ridicule the sentimentality of much of the popular entertainment being peddled at the time it was written. But its weaknesses lie in its focus on general, human frailties rather than on particular social evils, and in its presentation of its disillusioned insights into human nature in a witty and entertaining manner which more than compensates for its attacks on false sentimentality and hypocrisy. To use Brecht's own metaphor of a "culinary" theatre, the Dreigroschenoper simply offered something refreshingly bitter after an excess of sweetness, but did nothing seriously to upset the digestive processes of its audiences. As if its aim were to compensate for the self-indulgence of the Dreigroschenoper, Brecht's next major experiment with opera, Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, is penetrating in its analysis of contemporary society and pungent in its attack on the evils of alienation.

NOTES

1. W. Haas, one of the spectators who saw the first version performed, is also of this opinion: Bert Brecht (Berlin, 1958), p. 46.
2. The edition on which this interpretation is based is that published by Universal Edition (Wien) in 1929. This is the first published version of the opera. The "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" also possesses a version which was used during the first production, to which reference will also be made in the course of the following discussion. This is in the form of a "Bühnenmanuskript" (BBA 2106) printed by Felix Bloch Erben, which is incomplete and which contains handwritten emendations and interleaved typewritten sheets. In a number of respects it is much closer to Gay's original, e.g. in retaining the dispute between actor and author in the final scene, and seems to be an early working-version, which, in the course of a hectic period of rehearsal and constant rewriting, was eventually transformed into the text printed by Universal Edition after the successful launching of the opera. The differences between the 1929 edition examined here and the "standard" text in the collected works, which is a slightly revised form of the emended version of the text published in Heft 3 of the Versuche in 1931, are discussed later in this chapter. These differences are significant, and mean that there is little point in close argument with the studies of most other critics, since these are based on the 1931 text. Brecht's development up to 1929 makes much more sense if one does not have to struggle with contradictions imported into his works after the turning point in his career.
3. Raymond Williams, Modern Tragedy (Stanford, 1966) goes further and argues that the opera works towards the "protection of conventional moral attitudes" (ibid p.192) because "The thieves and whores are the licensed types, on to whom a repressed immorality can very easily be projected, and through whom a repressed conscience can be safely controlled. There is no real shock, when respectable playgoers confront them, because they are seen, precisely, as a special class, a district." (ibid., p. 192). Although much of this is justified, I think Williams, misled like so many by Brecht's "Anmerkungen" of 1931, misses two important points. Firstly, he fails to do justice to the moments of moral sanity and emotional power in the opera (in some of the songs), where the figures momentarily lose their picaresque harmlessness and express violent opposition to an oppressive society, opposition which is immediately felt to be spoken in the name of the real oppressed and exploited. Secondly, he does not recognise the extent to which the opera expresses Brecht's views about the fundamental nature of life and not simply his "feelings about modern capitalism" (ibid., p. 194). These whores and thieves are not only inadequate symbols of social injustice, they are also personifications of what Brecht still regarded as basic human attributes: greed, selfishness, hypocrisy, boldness, caution, cowardice.

4. Kurt Tucholsky summed up the weakness of the opera with the memorable verdict, "Es ist stilisiertes Bayern", Die Weltbühne, (3rd April, 1930), p. 538. Schumacher quotes a number of interesting contemporary reactions which show that audiences in the provinces were not all as sophisticated as the Berliners, and that the opera did arouse protest and indignation. See Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts p. 253. Perhaps Brecht always remained more of a provincial, to whom blasphemy still really meant something, than a Berliner.
5. Swift had once suggested to Gay in a letter that he write a "Newgate pastoral, among the whores and thieves there"-quoted by E.V. Roberts in the introduction to his edition of the Beggar's Opera (London, 1969) p. xviii. References to this edition in the following will be abbreviated to the form (BO page number).
6. Roberts' Introduction to the Beggar's Opera, p. xix.
7. *ibid.*, pp. xix-xx.
8. *ibid.*, p. xxv.
9. George Salomon writes of the "fundamental ambiguity of the play" in his essay "Happy Ending, Nice and Tidy", Kenyon Review (1962), p. 546.
10. H. Mayer simply asserts, without adducing any evidence, that "Die Gesellschaft wird vom Blickpunkt und mit der eisernen Logik des Bettlers gesehen", Anmerkungen zu Brecht (Frankfurt a.M., 1967), p. 15. Surely there is too much light comedy in the opera for one to be able to speak of "iron logic".
11. Contemporary reviewers were evidently puzzled by the mixture of historical periods in this fictional milieu. Paul Wiegler noted: "Alle Kleider in seinem Trüdeladen und die Kleider, die das Gesindel trägt, sind anachronistisch." Alfred Kerr: "Inhalte von 1728, Kleidung von vielleicht 1880". Franz Servaes: "Im grossen und ganzen gab man sich alle Mühe, die Erinnerung an 1728 tunlichst zu verwischen und dafür die Beziehungen auf 1928 um so kräftiger hervortreten zu lassen. Auch in Kostüm und Dekoration (von dem begabten Caspar Neher) drückte sich das aus: man konnte beinahe an Piscators Räuber-Inszenierung denken". These reviews are all reprinted in: Günther Rühle, Theater für die Republik pp. 883-887.
12. The stress on Peachum's "bourgeois" respectability was even clearer in an early sketch of his opening speech, which includes the lines: "Geschäftsleute wie ich, Robert Jeremiah Peachum u. Co., die gezwungen sind, unter Dieben, Huren und Staatsanwälten zu leben, können ohne Gott nicht auskommen. Sagen wir: ohne Gott und Buchführung. Fügen wir hinzu: ohne Fleiss, Ernst, Umsicht, Genie und Sparsamkeit. Vergessen wir nicht Fröhlichstehen und: Menschlichkeit und Treue, Treue und Menschlichkeit" (BBA 2106/07).

13. The materialism of the original Polly is comparatively trivial: "I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, Papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch and other visible marks of his favour to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and will soon be thrown upon the common" (BO 17).
14. BBA 2106/71.
15. Salomon remarks aptly: "While the songs ironically comment on the plight of man caught in the net of necessity and guilt, the plot - essentially unchanged from that of the Beggar's Opera - is a fable of rascals whose motives are low, but whose will is free", "Happy Ending, Nice and Tidy", p. 547.
16. The article on The Beggar's Opera in The Oxford Companion to Music (London, 1970) comments thus: "All the music of The Beggar's Opera is charming, and its subject-matter, piquant at the date it was written (as bringing on to the stage phases of life not before represented there), has become still more so after these phases have passed away" (p. 94). W.E. Schultz writes of the opera's "merry drollery and waggishness", Gay's "Beggar's Opera": its Content, History and Influence (Newhaven/Conn., 1923), p. 137.
17. The clearest expression of this side of Peachum's character is the Anstatt Dass-Song (DGO 14).
18. One imagines it was lines like these which made right-wing critics feel in the opera the "Siedehitze bolschewistischer Besessenheit": Dr. E. Scharrer in the Rheinisch-West-phälische Fundschau, 25.7.1929, quoted by Schumacher (p. 253)
19. Ernst Bloch's well-known "revolutionary" interpretation of the song is reprinted in Bertolt Brechts Dreigroschenbuch (ed. Uhseld), (Frankfurt a.M., 1960) p. 196.
20. Pohl comments on the effect of Brecht's "juggling" with different registers thus: "Indessen trägt gerade Brechts souveränes Jonglieren mit den Sprachbereichen zum kulinarischen Missverständnis der "Oper" bei. Das (bürgerliche) Publikum glaubt den rohen Gestalten ihre rhetorischen Eskapaden ebensowenig wie es die Brutalität von dermassen höflichen Räubern ganz ernst nehmen kann. So bleibt als sichere Wirkung das Vergnügen am ständigen Auf und Nieder innerhalb einer reichen Tonskala", Strukturelemente und Entwicklung von Pathosformen in der Dramensprache Bertolt Brechts, p. 42. Here Pohl makes the common error of believing that the amusing quality of the work gave rise to a "Missverständnis" as to its satirical significance.
21. Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt, (30th November, 1928).

22. Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, vol. II, p. 349.
23. Anbruch (Musikblätter) (January, 1929), p. 24.
24. "Zur Musik der Dreigroschenoper", in Bertolt Brechts Dreigroschenbuch, p. 184.
25. Brecht comments on this passage in his "Anmerkungen": "Er weiss, was er seinem Rufe schuldig ist: eine gewisse Romantik dient, wenn gesorgt wird, dass sie sich herumspricht, dieser obenerwähnten Rationalisierung" (GW.17, 994).
26. Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, pp. 231-232.
27. Williams comments aptly, "Brecht had found his theory, in the idea of complex seeing, but its practice was not there, in the actual play" Modern Tragedy, p. 193.
28. Erich Engel recalls how Macheath was presented as a "bezaubernden Ladykiller und Bonvivant" in the original production, Über Theater und Film, (Berlin, 1971), p. 104.
29. Jhering's comment is reproduced in Von Reinhardt bis Brecht, p. 350. According to Ernst Robert Aufricht, in whose theatre the opera was first performed, Brecht himself described the opera to him as a "Nebenwerk", Erzähle damit du dein Recht erweist (Berlin, 1966), p. 64.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny

Like Kafka's Karl Rossmann when he responds to the call, "Auf nach Clayton",¹ the men who answer the invitation, "Auf nach Mahagonny" (M 10)² believe that Utopia is situated in America. But, whereas the "Naturtheater von Oklahoma" does look like a possible answer to Karl's problems, the last view we are given of life in Mahagonny is a scene of conflict and discontent, with "Demonstrationen gegen die ungeheuere Teuerung" (M 57) taking place against the background of the burning city. While Kafka's novel leaves the question of finding Utopia open, Brecht's fantasy leads him to create a "negative Utopie"³ in which he is able to expose the evil in contemporary society and punish symbolically the wrongdoings under which he has to suffer in reality. Mahagonny is, on the one hand, a series of "Sittenbilder aus unserer Zeit"⁴ which relates the dreams and aspirations of his contemporaries to the socio-economic realities of the system in which they live, and, on the other hand, a "projective" work in which the poet rearranges the elements of reality in such a way as to be able to make society, in the imagination at least, suffer the fate which he believes it deserves. The complexity of the work is further increased by the fact that it also exposes the desires which the author projects into his fiction to the same kind of critical scrutiny as it applies to the dreams of his contemporaries. In creating this fantastic model of his times Brecht brought together images from the most improbably different spheres of life - biblical stories, newspaper reports on the building of Miami, the Wild West and his own lyrical inspiration. The following examination of the stages by which the work developed

will serve to introduce gradually the various streams of thought and imagery which eventually flow together to form the completed opera. Because the earliest stages in the work's evolution reach back several years before the date of the opera's completion, this approach also serves to recapitulate on the nature and extent of Brecht's development in the Twenties.

According to Arnolt Bronnen, Brecht first used the word "Mahagonny" in a satirical sense while watching a Nazi parade in Munich in 1923:

Brecht hatte damals zuerst das Wort "Mahagonny" gefunden. Es war in ihm aufgetaucht, als er diese Massen braunbehemdeter Kleinbürger gesehen hatte, hölzerne Gestalten mit ihrer falsch eingefärbten, durchlöcherten roten Fahne. Der Begriff wuchs ihm aus dem Wort, wandelte sich mit ihm; doch in jenem Sommer mochte er ihm zunächst Spiessers Utopia bedeuten, jenen zynisch - dummen Stammtisch-Staat, der aus Anarchie und Alkohol die bis dahin gefährlichste Mixtur für Europas Hexenkessel zusammenbraute.
"Wenn Mahagonny kommt, geh' ich", sagte Brecht zum Abschied.⁵

It is unfortunately not possible to know how reliable this recollection is, but if it were correct, it would indicate that Brecht's conception of a negatively viewed philistine's paradise was already well developed at this early stage.

The first extended, although fragmentary, attempt to develop his idea of a satire which attacked the ideals of his own society took the form of a "Sendespiel", entitled Die Sintflut.⁶ As its title suggests, the work was to be based on biblical material. Brecht's assistant, Elisabeth Hauptmann, jotted down the following sketchy plan of some of its scenes:

I. Akt Schluss: der Prophet sagt den Untergang der Städte an.

II. Akt Es erfolgt nicht. Der Prophet wird ausgewiesen.
Wiedererbaut ist die Stadt Gomorrha.
Die Städte sind unzerstörbar.

III. Akt Zu Noah im Lande Kanaan kommt ein Mann, auf den
alte Beschreibungen passen und erkundigt sich
nach dem Stande der Flüsse und der Höhe der
Berge.

Prophet: Als ich jung war...

III Sz. Noah baut eine Arche. Alle spotten.

Schluss: Regen.

IV. Akt Während die Städter in die Gebirge laufen, läuft
Nahaia den Städten zu. Er ertrinkt. (BBA 214/10)⁷

In another jotting Brecht thought of having the cities converse
boastfully amongst themselves before introducing the prophet who
foretells their destruction:

Sintflut

- 1) Gespräch der wiedererbauten Städte. Sie sind
unzerstörbar.
- 2) Der Prophet Nahaiah in der Stadt Nineve beklagt sich
über die Städte. (BBA 214/06)

The examples of divine retribution on a grand scale which, according
to his sketched plan, Brecht intended to draw together into a single
complex of closely related events are taken from widely separated
periods in biblical history. The prophet who wrongly foretells the
destruction of a city is, of course, Jonah, who at God's behest
reluctantly prophesied that the wrath of the Lord would strike Nineveh.
In the Bible, the Flood has no connection, other than the fact that
both stories are told in Genesis, with the fate of Gomorrha. There
is no prophet by the name of Nahaia mentioned in the Bible although
one called Nahum does prophesy a flood as part of the "burden of
Nineveh".⁸ Brecht's free play with his biblical sources here, and
their rearrangement in a sequence which suits his own particular
purposes, prefigures his fantastic juggling with biblical allusions

in the opera Mahagonny. More importantly, the Sintflut fragment also anticipates the imaginative play with contemporary material which is to be found in the later work: the "wiedererbauten Städte" would seem to be an allusion to the "Wiederaufbau" of society after the havoc of the first World War.

Using as a guide the plan jotted down by Hauptmann, it is possible to piece together the fragments of the work to form the following picture: The first act shows the cities in the process of reconstruction and introduces a voice of protest against the "Lärm" they are making:

Die Städte machen einen grossen Lärm mit Bauen. In der Stadt Nineve erhebt ein Mann eine Stimme gegen die Städte.

Stimme des Mannes Job

Was für ein Lärm ist das.
Man könnte meinen, sie bauen einen Himmel
Oder tragen das Meer ab
Mit ihren Kränen und Lehmziegeln
Seit dreissig Jahren
Und seit sieben Jahren
Sogar die Nacht durch.
Ich zum Beispiel
Habe seit meiner Geburt, die schon
In ihre unruhige Zeit fiel
Nicht gehört die Stimme Gottes, auf die ich warte,
Wiewohl sie
Sicher nicht aufgehört haben kann,
Nur in dem Lärm
Hört man nichts.
Freilich die Stimme ist
Sicher sehr leis, für diese Städte
Zu klein, auch nüchtern.
Da denke ich, diese Städte müssen untergehen.
Ich will eine Holztrommel nehmen, damit sie hören,
Und ihnen sagen, sie sollen
Abreissen ihre Häuser und das Eisen
Verbergen im Wasser
Und in die Löcher des Bodens säen Disteln
Zu ihrem Gedächtnis, damit Gott,
Wenn er vorbeikommt,
Erkennt ihre Einkehr und nicht sehen muss
Aus seinem alten Boden
Einen frechen Auswuchs. (BBA 214/04)⁹

However, the cities have no intention of repenting their ways, and do not even believe in the wrathful god on whose voice Job has been faithfully waiting:

Stimme Sodoms

Städte, das ist die Stimme Sodoms.
Heute ist wiedererbaut die Stadt Sodom,
Welche umgeworfen wurde durch ein Erdbeben
Und zugedeckt mit einem Ascheregen,
Unbewohnbar für siebenzig Jahre,
Aber jetzt
Ist sie wiedererbaut siebenmal so gross,
Nicht aus Kalk, der verbrennen kann,
Sondern
Aus unverbrennbarem Stahl,
Und
Mit einer ungeheuren Stimme
Aus einem Rohr dick wie ein Flussbett,
Die ihr jetzt da hört, Städte,
Und die um Hilfe rufen kann, wenn das Feuer kommt,
Dass ihr alle mit Wagen herläuft,
Und wir nicht einzeln
Untergehen wie einst.
Aber wir glauben,
Das Feuer kommt nicht mehr, denn es ist verbraucht
Worden durch dieses Erdbeben vor siebzig Jahren.
Es kann nicht mehr kommen.

Stimme Nineves

Städte, das ist die Stimme der Stadt Nineve.
Unsere Meinung ist,
Dass der Gott, der euch zerstört hat, müde ist
Oder gestorben an der Anstrengung, euren Kalk unzubringen,
Oder er treibt kein Feuer mehr auf, oder
Er war nie da,
Denn bei uns
Wurde niemals gesehn irgend ein Gott,
Und bei euch hat man nie wieder etwas gehört von einem
Und es lebt kein Mensch mehr, der ihn bei euch gehört hätte.
Es ist geraume Zeit her. (BBA 214/05)

The phrase, "aus seinem alten Boden einen frechen Auswuchs" is a pointer to the real concerns of the poet which underlie the surface conflict between faith and unbelief. In this work, as in Baal, and particularly in the version entitled Lebenslauf des Mannes Baal which he wrote at about the same time as he was working on the Sintflut, Brecht is expressing concern about the fact that nature,

the "old earth", is gradually being obliterated by the growth of cities of concrete and steel. Such is his sardonic pessimism on this point that he pursues the poetic justice of having the cities destroyed in an inundation for their "Frechheit" to the ruthless conclusion of making the flood remain to cover the earth for ever. Even the survivors of God's wrath are left with only a desolate future afloat, permanently separated by the floodwaters from the earth which is their proper home. In this final twist of his fantasy he thus denies himself the satisfaction of redeeming nature after revenging her rape by the cities.

The conflict between the faithful and the faithless which begins with Job's criticism of the cities is repeated when a prophet, as yet nameless, foretells the downfall of the cities:

Ach, was holt ihr da mit euren Baggern heraus?
Ach, Kies?!
Ist es nicht Kies?!
So, da will ich euch sagen, dass eure ganze Stadt
Untergehen wird vor ihr gestorben seid.
(Später:)
War da nicht ein Mann?
Der sagte etwas über den Untergang der Städte,
Aber er wurde nicht gehört.
Was sagte er?
Dass ein Untergang sein wird,
Wie die Welt ihn nicht gesehen.
Und wie lange wird das dauern?
Lange.
Und wie viele werden untergehen?
Alle. (BBA 214/15)

Presumably this nameless prophet is identical with the one called Nahaiia who appears in this role elsewhere in the fragment. Another source of criticism is the voice of a commentator, who also supplies introductory headlines for a number of scenes:

Aber die Städte bepackt mit Fleisch für sechs Menschenalter
Und mit Getränken versorgt und mit Metall für die Becher
Assen mit Gleichmut das Fleisch und tranken das Wasser mit
Lässigkeit.

So aber wurde der Wein, der reichliche,
Kräftig durch riesige Pumpwerk
Hochgetrieben durch Röhren von der Sohle des Feldes
Voll zum Scheitel der Städte und so
Auf schaurigem Umweg unaufhaltsam geleitet
In fälschliche Bäume.
So aber wurde das Fleisch vergeudet an Esser. (BBA 214/07)

The emphasis on over-consumption here could well be part of the theme of the destruction of nature (through exhaustion of resources); the problem of unlimited consumption reappears in Mahagonny, where it is related to the socio-economic pressures which bring it about.

When it seems to the prophet that God has let him down by not destroying the cities as he had foretold, he complains to God, just as Jonah had once done in a similar situation:

Der Profet zu Gott

Als ich jung war, du, meinete ich, tust was du ansagst,
Denn ich sah überall, dass kein Verlassen war.
Aber jetzt, da ich alt werde, weiss ich,
Du tust nichts.
Wenn einer die Hand aufhebt, und sagt, meine Sünde reut mich,
Dann bist du schon zufrieden, und freust dich gleich.
Aber es ist nicht wichtig, dass sie nicht Sünde tun, sondern
Dass sie ausgerottet werden.
Du weisst, was gut ist, aber du bist einmal so und einmal so,
Und setzt eine Kommission ein, dass du sie untersuchst.
Anstatt dass
Du sie ausrottest,
Immer hoffst du. (BBA 214/13)

The prophet's concern for destruction, regardless of the sinfulness or otherwise of the townspeople, may be seen as an expression of Brecht's own desire to revenge himself on a civilisation which he hates and fears. Nahai's hopes then rise again when it begins to rain, for he takes this to be a sign that his prophecy is yet to be fulfilled:

Jetzt ist die Zeit angebrochen, wo Er sie vernichten wird.
Er ist gekommen mit Seinem Wasser. Ich aber will hinuntergehen in die Städte, denn auch ich will

untergehen und vernichtet werden, damit nichts mehr bleibe. (BBA 214/12)

Because of his obsessive desire for total annihilation, the prophet can only be partly identified with the author, who viewed death as at best a spur to more intensive living, but in itself abominable. Brecht's characteristic love of life finds expression elsewhere in this work, namely in his admiration for the desperate fight for survival of the men who stay in the cities to fight the flood waters. In Mahagonny greater emotional depth is achieved by combining both tendencies, the destructive impulse and the self-protective one, in a single figure, Jim Mahoney.

The men who stay in the cities do so because a "Philosoph" advises them that the best way to escape the flood-waters is to build higher and faster than before:

Philosoph

Etliche werden fliehen auf die Gebirge,
Aber ich warne euch,
Die Gebirge so hoch oder so,
Aber höher werden sie nicht.
Ihr aber bleibt hier und baut
Eure Stadt, die höher wird. (BBA 214/09)

Several scenes depict the struggle to build higher than the waters can reach. A major problem for the builders is the diminishing supply of natural materials as the flood progressively covers more and more of the earth's surface:

In dieser Woche bauten sie drei Meter. Auch das Wasser stieg um drei Meter. Sie verwendeten den grössten Teil ihrer Eisenschienen, aber nur wenig Mörtel und Gestein.

In der folgenden, 18., Woche der Flut bauten sie, da dass Wasser rascher zu steigen begann, ganze 7 Meter in die Höhe. Sie konnten nur mehr ein Drittel bisheriger Breite hochführen und verbrauchten die letzten Eisenteile. Dieses Stockwerk errichteten sie ganz ohne Stein. (BBA 214/14)

It is, of course, an act of poetic justice that a civilisation which had exploited nature ruthlessly should now be deprived by nature - or the God who controls it - of the natural resources it requires to survive. In addition to the flood, these men are also plagued by a severe drop in temperature. This at first hinders building progress, but when the waters freeze over, some men believe that they may be saved by the ice:

Ein Wolkenkratzer bricht nur durch Menschenbelastung zusammen. Eine Nacht kommt grosse Kälte und das ganze Wasser erstarrt. "Jetzt sind wir gerettet. Kälte hilft uns. Jammer nicht, bald gehen wir auf dem Wasser wie auf Stein." (BBA 214/20)

The philosopher, less trustful of God or nature, is killed when he warns them against such optimism:

Sie hoffen wieder.

Der Philosoph erschlagen, der von Wärme redet. (BBA 214/08)

Conflicting attitudes to the voice of reason are typical of Brecht's early works: on the one hand it can help men survive, but on the other hand it does not give men a reason for living. Brecht's early heroes live by impulse, committing themselves to the excitement of the moment. Brecht's tribute to excitement as something which makes life worth living is expressed in this work through his sympathetic presentation of the city-dwellers' growth in emotional stature as they fight what may well be a hopeless struggle against the elements:

In den Jahren der Flut verändern sich die Menschentypen. "Das ist die grösste Zeit, die die Menschheit erlebt hat." (Die Typen werden stärker, grösser, finsterer. Sie lachen.) In den letzten Jahren verbreiten sich Seuchen von ungeheuren Erfindungen. Flugmenschen treten auf. Sie gelangen zu grösserem Ruhm als je zuvor Menschen. Sie fallen ins Wasser. Gelächter. Der Atheismus nimmt zu.¹⁰
(BBA 214/17)

The negative aspect of such an attitude is revealed in their senseless killing of the man who has guided them and helped them so far simply because he warns them not to allow their emotions to rule their behaviour. In Mahagonny this conflict of values is deepened: on the one hand, Brecht sympathises with Jim Mahoney's anarchic love of destruction simply for the pleasure it offers at a time when life appears to have no other values to offer; but, on the other hand, he also criticises such impulsiveness as one-sided and short-sighted, because it ignores Jim's equally strong need for positive values, such as love and friendship. Yet, presumably because of his scepticism about the possibility of such positive needs ever finding satisfaction in a world where each individual is isolated by his existential and social worries, Brecht still hesitates, even as late as Mahagonny, to commit himself unreservedly to a rational approach to life.

If Brecht's rationalism condemns the murder of the prophet, his irrationalism reasserts itself in his ironic play with the fate of Noah, a man who is determined to survive the flood and whose reason enables him to do so. One isolated line suggests that Noah and family were very much left to their own resources in devising a means of surviving the flood: "Gott hat nicht Schiffbau studiert" (BBA 214/16). Some fragments of scenes show them in the process of building the ark and of saving the animals:

Glaubst du auch, Hamm,
Dass der Stamm da hält?
Der hält, der Stamm!
Das war der dickste. (BBA 214/13)

Noah kämpft 3 Tage lang um jedes Tier. Gott strahlt
immer mehr. (BBA 214/20)

It is not clear whether God is pleased at Noah's difficulties or at his fighting spirit in confronting them. Another scene suggests that it is his aim to tease Noah by not giving the order to board the ark despite the threatening rise of the floodwaters:

Die Familie Noahs wartet auf Gott:

Sollen wir nicht einsteigen?
Hört nur wie die Städten Gomorrha und Nineve schon
voll Wasser sind.

Nein, denn Gott wird uns sagen, wann wir einsteigen
sollen.

Aber vielleicht hat er nicht Zeit zu kommen, und
ist drunten beschäftigt mit den Städten. (BBA 214/20)

Brecht's final blow against Noah, the prudent technician, takes the form of having God abandon this man to the fate of having to live permanently aboard the ark with no prospect of returning to a natural way of life, represented, typically for Brecht, by the symbol of a tree:

Landkarte

Noah Aber hier will ich meine Arche hinstellen,
wegen dieser schönen Kiefer da.

Gott Die Kiefer wird nicht mehr da sein. (BBA 214/20)¹¹

God, like the men in whose image he is made, evidently enjoys his own treachery:

Als er ihn nun verraten hatte,
Ging er, seine Hände zu waschen,
Und gedachte,
Ruhig zu essen. (BBA 214/121)

This god is both the agent of Brecht's vengeful desires and the epitome of the world as it is experienced under the aspect of pessimism, namely as a source of false hopes and eventual disappointment. Read thus, the work represents a pessimistic counterpoise to Baal's self-commitment to the pleasures of the moment. The pessimism is,

however, forced; by deciding that the flood shall remain forever, the poet wilfully denies to Noah and his family the possibility of a return to normality after the catastrophe. He thus obliterates that whole middle range of experience with its positive values of love and friendship, which represents human reality to the vast majority of people, and which helps them survive the onslaught of the feeling of Vanitas to which the poet has succumbed here. The work lacks the complexity of conflict that gives the best of Brecht's earlier works their vitality. Mahagonny, precisely because it does give at least some scope to the poet's need to hope that a better life might emerge "after the deluge", as it were, is a more humane work.

Among the cities destroyed in the Sintflut were two which do not figure anywhere in the Bible, namely, "der Grosse Hafen Jokohama" and "die Paradiesstadt Miami" (BBA 214/18). The history of Miami was to be the basis of another project dealing with the Sodom-and-Gomorrha-theme, for which Brecht started gathering material in the mid-twenties. In this work, to be entitled Der Untergang der Stadt Miami, the madness of modern civilisation was to be symbolised by one of its more fantastic manifestations, namely the building of Miami. That the same misanthropic, anti-civilisatory impulse as found expression in Die Sintflut, was also to be the driving force behind this work, is made clear by the following remarks, presumably intended as a prologue:

Beinahe jeder von uns erinnert sich an den Untergang der römischen Städte Herculanium, Pompeji und Stabäa, der nunmehr vor 2000 Jahren stattgefunden hat. Es ist dies ein Beweis für die Lebenskraft des römischen Volkes, das, sein Unglück dem Ruhm überliefernd, anrufend die Solidarität der Menschheit, das Entsetzen zweier Jahrtausende für sich beanspruchte. Weniger auf Ruhm bedacht,

die Solidarität der Menschheit verwünschend, am ehesten noch ihrem Entsetzen Beistand wünschend, also aus einem ganz anderen Gefühl heraus werden wir es unternehmen, der Erinnerung an den zu unserer Zeit stattgefundenen Untergang der Paradiesstadt Miami einige Dauer zu verleihen. Sind doch seit dem Erdbeben von San Francisco erst wenige Jahre, kaum ein Menschenalter verflossen, und schon ist es im Gedächtnis der Menschen zum Triumph der Dummköpfe und zum Schaden der Klügeren beinahe völlig ausgetilgt. (BBA 214/23)

Brecht may have been prompted to take up this subject matter by a series of newspaper reports on the hurricanes which devastated parts of the southern states of America in the years 1924, '25, and '26, copies of which he had begun to keep in a folder. Here was an example of the destruction of a "city of vice" in modern times which might be more strikingly relevant than a parable based on biblical events. The building of Miami was clearly a symbol of the spirit of modern commercial enterprise and of the element of "hard-sell" involved in this:

Die Stadt Miami, ebenso wie das berühmte Palm Beach, wurde vor etwa zehn Jahren in unglaublich kurzer Zeit auf den Stümpfen von Florida gebaut. Einige wenige Leute von Weitblick legten durch furchtbare, aber grundlose Niederungen eine riesige Automobilstrasse und fingen an, die Grundstücke auf beiden Seiten der Strasse zu hohen Preisen auszubieten. Sie hatten noch keinen Bewohner. Dennoch teilten sie den Grund, den sie nach und nach, aber in sehr kurzer Zeit entwässerten, in Städte, Stadtviertel, und Strassen ein. In New York und den grössten Städten des Landes verkündeten sie, der beste Strand der Welt sei der von Florida, und die besten Leute der Welt würden sich dort finden. (BBA 214/23)

In Mahagonny the implied criticism of capitalist methods is made even harsher and more direct by characterising the founders of the city as criminals wanted on charges of fraud. One curious detail in the opera which has its origin in the materials collected for the Miami work, is the moment when the hurricane bearing down on Mahagonny suddenly veers off a straight path and goes around the

perimeter of the town without causing any damage. One of the newspaper reports collected by Brecht does in fact deal with an incident of this kind which actually took place in Florida during a hurricane:

Ein Teil Floridas wurde vom Hurrikan verschont, Einwohner eines Streifens an der Westküste, eine Erhöhung von 300 Fuss, um die der Sturm herumging. Man ahnte nichts von dem Unglück, das Florida betroffen hatte, bis die Zeitungen Sonntag früh ausblieben und man als Grund den Sturm an der Ostküste angab. (BBA 214/27)

The importance of this fragment for the development of Mahagonny lies in the choice of America as the location of the action, and of the machinations of capitalist enterprise as a central theme.

A third experiment with the theme of a false paradise is represented by the "Mahagonny-gesänge" which were first published as part of the Hauspostille in 1927. When Kurt Weill, who was looking for material to set to music for the Baden-Baden music festival, met Brecht, the idea of using the "Mahagonny-gesänge" as his libretto presented itself:

Schon bei meiner ersten Begegnung mit Brecht im Frühjahr 1927 tauchte in einem Gespräch über Möglichkeiten der Oper das Wort "Mahagonny" auf und mit ihm die Vorstellung einer "Paradiesstadt". Um diese Idee, die mich sofort gefangen nahm, weiterzutreiben, und um den musikalischen Stil, der mir dafür vorschwebte, einmal auszuprobieren, komponierte ich zunächst die fünf Mahagonny-Gesänge aus Brechts Hauspostille und fasste sie zu einer kleinen dramatischen Form zusammen, einem "Songspiel", das im Sommer 1927 in Baden-Baden aufgeführt wurde. Dieses Baden-Badener Mahagonny ist also nichts anderes als eine Stil-Studie zu dem Opernwerk.¹²

The scenario provided by Brecht for this work, which is usually referred to as Das kleine Mahagonny, indicates that a number of the basic dramatic ideas which he was later to develop in the full opera were already in his mind, although as yet without their significance being quite clear. For example, the work begins with a

pistol shot:

Bevor die Musik beginnt, betritt ein Mann, von einer Seite her, die Bühne und überquert sie. Mit dem Rücken zum Publikum bleibt er, dem Podium gegenüber, stehen. Er kramt in seiner hinteren Hosentasche, zieht einen Revolver heraus und feuert ihn in die Luft ab. Unmittelbar nach dem Schuss setzt die Musik ein. (KM viii)¹³

As it stands, this gesture might be nothing more than a sensational, ringmaster-like opening of the performance. In the context of the full opera, by contrast, the firing of the shot is a sign of Jim Mahoney's frustration with life in Mahagonny. The shot in the "Songspiel" may be meant to have some such significance, possibly to serve as an indication of the violence of the context in which Mahagonny is situated, but such a meaning is not yet readily apparent. The same could be said of the "Podium in der Art eines Boxrings" which forms the stage-setting for the "Songspiel" (KM vi)¹⁴. In the full opera it is made clear that people visit Mahagonny to escape social conflicts, but, when they arrive there, are merely subjected to the same conflicts in a different guise. The boxing ring in the early version is at best only a vague indication that life in Mahagonny is somehow connected with conflict.

The action of Das kleine Mahagonny begins with the departure of four men for Mahagonny. They hope to find there the satisfaction of their every desire; in particular they believe they will be cured there of the sickness of "Zivilis":

Auf nach Mahagonny
Das Schiff wird losgeseilt
Die Zi-zi-zi-zi-zivilis
Die wird uns dort geheilt.
Schöner grüner Mond von Alabama leuchte uns!
Denn wir haben heute hier
Unterm Hemde Geldpapier
Für ein grosses Lachen deines grossen dummen Munds. (KM 7-8)

The prospects of their finding a cure in Mahagonny for the ills of civilisation seem remote, since even the moon there takes its colour from the dollars which the men proffer for her smile.

Mahagonny, where the currency of their civilisation is entirely acceptable, belongs, of course, entirely to this very civilisation. The big-city character of Mahagonny is stressed by repeated projections of scenes showing "Mahagonny in Bau" (KM viii-ix). This detail incorporates the motif of constant building which figured centrally in Die Sintflut.

The men are followed to Mahagonny by girls who hope that whisky, pretty boys and dollars will help to make them forget their nostalgia for a lost sense of security:

Oh moon of Alabama,
We now must say good-bye,
We've lost our good old mamma
And must have whisky,
Oh you know why. (KM 12-13)

Neither the men nor the women find, however, that the pleasures of Mahagonny make them happy. In an effort to find an outlet for their frustrated need to believe in the possibility of a fuller, more satisfying existence, the men contrast Mahagonny as it is now with Mahagonny as they imagine it to have been in its heyday. Disappointed in their search for a Utopia in the future ("Auf nach Mahagonny"), they project their dream back into the past where, although inaccessible, paradise is, for this very reason, unassailable:

Wer in Mahagonny blieb,
Brauchte jeden Tag fünf Dollar
Und wenn ers besonders trieb,
Brauchte er vielleicht noch extra.
Aber damals sassen alle
In Mahagonnys Pokerdrinksalon.
Sie verloren in jedem Falle,

Doch sie hatten was davon.
(...)
Wer in seinem Kober bleibt
Braucht nicht jeden Tag fünf Dollar
Und falls er nicht unbeweibt,
Braucht er auch vielleicht nicht extra.
Aber heute sitzen alle
In des lieben Gottes billigem Salon,
Sie gewinnen in jedem Falle,
Doch sie haben nichts davon. (KM 22-36)

The saloon in Mahagonny is "billig" because it professes to be fair - indeed, God is the proprietor - but also because its fairness is really cheap, i.e. worthless. "Des lieben Gottes billiger Salon", which is the centre of life in Mahagonny, is the symbol of a society which claims to be just but in fact cheats its members of any satisfaction in life.¹⁵

If the men's paradise seems irrevocably lost in the past, the girls' dream of escape to Benares, the next Utopia, is shattered by the announcement that, "Benares is said to have been punished in an earthquake" (KM 54). God, it appears, is determined to frustrate the hopes of these people by destroying all rival paradises. Yet, when this apparently all-powerful God comes to Mahagonny, his true nature is unmasked. When the men of Mahagonny admit to having drunk all his "guten Weizen", to having laughed at the death of Mary Weeman, (presumably one of the bar's prostitutes) and to having shot God's "guten Missionar" (the barman), God orders them off to Hell. This unleashes "Aufbruch in Mahagonny", as the men not only refuse to obey, but actually attack God:

Geht alle zur Hölle!
Steckt jetzt die Virginien in den Sack!
Marsch mit euch in meine Hölle, Burschen!
In die schwarze Hölle mit euch Pack!
Ansahen sich die Männer von Mahagonny.
Nein, sagten die Männer von Mahagonny.

An einem grauen Nachmittag
Mitten im Whisky
Kommst du nach Mahagonny
Kommst du nach Mahagonny.
Mitten im Whisky
Fängst du an in Mahagonny..

Rühre keiner den Fuss jetzt!
Jedermann streikt! An den Haaren
Kannst du uns nicht in die Hölle ziehen:
W e i l w i r i m m e r i n d e r H ö l l e w a r e n .
Ansahen Gott die Männer von Mahagonny.
N e i n , sagten die Männer von Mahagonny. (KM 67-72)

This "Spiel von Gott in Mahagonny" develops the motif introduced in the earlier song of "des lieben Gottes billigen Salon", which, it was argued, is a symbol of an unjust society that invokes divine authority to justify the present order of things. The rebellion against "God" is the onset of a "Revolution in Mahagonny" (KM x). The men's action is a consequence of their looking hard at "God" and realising that he is only a man masquerading as God in order to protect his property with spurious sanctions of Heaven and Hell.¹⁶ A production note makes the wider social significance of these events in Mahagonny explicit:

Protestmärsche werden in Mahagonny abgehalten und die Stadt geht in Flammen auf: die Plünderer werden geplündert. (KM vii)

Das kleine Mahagonny is important for the development of the full opera in a number of respects. Firstly, in its introduction of a humane perspective, implied in the girl's longing for their "good old mamma": although themselves "Haifische", they long to be released from this alienated condition of brutalisation. Secondly, in the turn towards social revolution to replace the admittedly ironic invocation of divine wrath or the chance occurrence of a natural catastrophe as instruments of the author's revenge on

society. Finally, in its ambiguous presentation of revolution: the men who rebel are of no great intelligence and love violence for its own sake. While Brecht would certainly endorse such anti-religious sentiments as, "Für irdischen Lohn" or even (with regret) "Für die Sterblichkeit der Seele", and the rebellion against exploitation which they herald, his sympathy with the pathetic plea, "Für die wahre Liebe", would prevent him from fully endorsing the demand "Für die natürliche Unzucht", and his knowledge that the weak must be protected from the strong would hold his sympathy for the slogan, "Gegen die Zivilis" in check (KMx). The complexities of Brecht's attitudes to the men of Mahagonny and their revolution, although already implied here in the conflicting values proclaimed by the revolutionaries, do not become fully clear until the significance of the social context and origin of their actions is developed in the full opera.

ooo000ooo

The various streams of ideas and imagery which have been examined separately up will now, flow together in the opera Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny. This work incorporates the idea of presenting a "Paradiesstadt" as a capitalist undertaking, which was to be the main focus of the Miami project; it deepens the technique used in Die Sintflut of drawing on the Bible for symbolic patterns of action; it builds further on the foundation, laid in the "Songspiel", of criticising contemporary civilisation by focussing on the effects it has on the spiritual life of those who live in it. This confluence of ideas and imagery produces an ironic model of a philistines' dream of Utopia which, by virtue of its inherent

contradictions, develops into a nightmare.¹⁷ The following analysis of the work begins with a consideration of these very conflicts.

The "Gründung der Stadt Mahagonny" (M 5) forges a link in an already existing chain of conflict. Its founders, who are wanted on charges of "Kuppelei und betrügerischen Bankrott" (M 5), and are thus already in conflict with the forces of law, conceive of the city as a "Netzstadt" (M 6) in which to ensnare men and rob them of their gold.¹⁸ To be effective, of course, those who are caught in the net must remain unaware of the conflict of their interests with those of their captors:

Begbick Sie soll sein wie ein Netz,
Das für die essbaren Vögel gestellt wird.
Überall gibt es Mühe und Arbeit,
Aber hier gibt es Spass. (M 6)

The men who are to be caught in the town must believe that its chief end is to give them pleasure. Apart from "Gin und Whisky, Mädchen und Knaben" (M 7), the principal attraction of Mahagonny is to be the restful and peaceful way of life there:

Und eine Woche ist hier: Sieben Tage ohne Arbeit
Und die grossen Taifune kommen nicht bis hierher.
Aber die Männer ohne Zank
Erwarten rauchend das Heraufkommen das Abends. (M 7)

The only conflicts to be allowed to appear here will form part of the programme of entertainment:

An jedem dritten Tag gibt es Kämpfe
Mit Gebrüll und Roheit, doch die Kämpfe sind fair. (M 7)

Mahagonny is thus an undertaking which aims to profit by appearing to transfigure the problems of reality with the magic wand of "Spass". The social struggles in which men have "ihre Häute abgezogen" (M 38)

are to be exchanged for boxing matches where they are the unscathed spectators. Even their existential worries, including the problem of transience, are to be submerged with the help of opiates, so that they can "erwarten rauchend das Heraufkommen des Abends" (M 7).

Certain features of Mahagonny suggest that it is a satirical symbol of the Weimar republic. It is, for example, presumably not without significance that boxing as a sport first made its appearance in Germany in the immediate post-war years and quickly established itself as a very popular spectator sport. The reformist social programme of the Republic, with its aim of balancing conflicting interests, is possibly being mocked as a misleading ideology by the vision of a town "ohne Zank" which is, nevertheless, founded on exploitation. This possibility is strengthened by the fact that the founders of Mahagonny raise a red flag over the town, a detail which, as has been noted already, takes on a particularly menacing aspect, if it is remembered that the Munich Nazis also carried a "false red flag"; the implication may be that one half-hearted form of socialism (that of Weimar) quickly gives birth to even more degenerate offspring.

Just why Mahagonny must appear to solve even men's existential problems, becomes clear from the complaints of the men who live in the great cities and who will be the town's clients:

(Die Gardine öffnet sich. Auf dem Hintergrunde erscheint eine Projektion, darstellend die Ansicht einer Millionenstadt, sowie die Photographien vieler Männer.)

Männerchor (hinter der Szene)

Wir wohnen in den Städten.
Unter ihnen sind Gossen,
In ihnen ist nichts,
Über ihnen ist Rauch.
Wir sind noch drin,

Wir haben nichts genossen.
Wir vergehen rasch
Und langsam vergehen sie auch. (M 9)

Because life is so empty and unsatisfying in this society, its members are constantly being reminded of the rapidly shortening span of life still remaining to them in which to give their lives some meaning. The apparent solution of their existential problems in Mahagonny, or, more precisely, the dulling of these worries with opiates, will serve to distract attention from the social causes which make these problems as acute as they are, and from the need for social change as at least a first step towards easing the existential burden. In short, the purpose of the town is to create an ideological screen, behind which to hide the conflict of interest on which capitalist society is founded.¹⁹ Of course, should this ideological curtain become transparent for any reason, the founders of the town will be the first to suffer from a scrutiny of the social realities which they, as exploiters, have attempted to obscure. The ease with which Brecht makes connections between social and existential problems in this work argues against the notion that Brecht's development took the form of a rash, violent and basically irrational swing from an extreme of anarchic concern with the needs of the individual soul to the opposite extreme of fanatical social commitment. The moral force at work in his activist plays is not an entirely new element in his work, as any close examination of the reputedly amoral early works will demonstrate. The transition to committed revolutionary writing is therefore only a development of an element already present in his work. It is a matter of a shift in balance, a deliberate decision to turn to the pragmatic consideration of how to remove at least those causes of human suffering which are amenable to remedy. The transition, more-

over, was one which arose from a growing awareness of the extent to which social factors aggravate existential problems. In Mahagonny, Brecht has not yet adopted an exclusively pragmatic stance, but the work's focus on the fundamental antagonisms underlying capitalist society and influencing, without their being fully aware of the fact, even the spiritual life of individuals in it, shows that he is already close to such a position.

Knowing that one of the major problems of the city-dweller is the fear that he is of no importance as an individual, the founders of Mahagonny try to create the illusion that there is a special place prepared for each person who is "called" to Mahagonny. They approach potential customers with the words, "Dort wurde gestern erst nach euch gefragt" (M 9). When the customers arrive in Mahagonny, however, they find that, although a list is kept of their names, they are not thought of as individuals. Just as Galy Gay could become Jeriah Jip without too much trouble, so Jimmy Mahoney is just one more example of the "Jimmys Jimmys, Jimmys aus Alaska" (M 14) of whom the prostitute Jenny has had such wide experience. The lack of any real warmth in their relationship is evident, not only from the mechanical manner in which she addresses him - "Mein Bein ist nur für dich da, Jimmy,/ Ach, Jimmy, setz dich auf mein Knie,/ Ach Jimmy, ach, ich liebte nie,/ Ach, trink' aus meinem Glase, Jimmy! - (M 14) - but also from the impersonal "Sie"-form into which she habitually lapses, despite his request that they use the "du"-form (M 16). Jimmy's relationship with Jenny, that of client and prostitute, is a symbol of the alienated state of even intimate inter-personal relations under conditions of advanced capitalism; as such, it is a typical example of Brecht's technique

of employing fantastic exaggeration as a means of bringing out the significance in human terms of tendencies which are at work in reality, but which, because of the deadening effect of habituation, do not reveal their meaning to those who are affected by them. The loss of individuality experienced and feared by Jimmy is shown to be caused by the dominance of the monetary measure of value over all human concepts of worth. Jimmy only comes into consideration as a possible "lover" for Jenny because his pockets are "voll Banknoten" (M 14). But Jimmy is himself party to his own and Jenny's depersonalisation by his acceptance of the client role which his money gives him. Just as he is objectified in terms of dollars in her eyes, so he reduces her to the status of an object by his gesture of purchase, "Gut, ich nehme dich" (M 14). The reified nature of their relationship is further underlined by their only being able to talk about "love" in reified terms, with reference to such things as "Knie", "Bein", "Haare", "Wäsche". Despite the claims to the contrary of its founders, Mahagonny is clearly not going to resolve the conflict between the individual's need to be treated

as a person and the depersonalising tendencies of capitalist society, nor the conflict between man's need for spiritual values and the reified condition of life in this society. Yet, having attracted by such claims the "Unzufriedenen aller Kontinente" (M 10), Mahagonny is in greater danger than any other capitalist society of drawing attention to its failure to offer a humanly satisfying way of life. The ideology of reform within a capitalist system ought, Brecht imagines, to lead to the unmasking of that very system. This, at any rate, is what happens in Mahagonny.

A number of conflicts are present in Mahagonny at the outset of the action. The first of these is the conflict of interest

between girls and men, i.e. prostitutes and clients. The men exploit the girls, and the girls, dubbed "Die Haifische" (M 7), exploit the men. Parallelling the conflict between men (customers) and founders (proprietors), is a conflict between the girls (as employees) and the founders (as employers). The relationships between these three groups symbolise starkly and simply the mechanism of exploitation on which capitalism rests: not only do the few exploit the many, they do so by forcing the exploited to exploit one another. The men and girls are also subject to inner conflicts. As has been noted already, the men's spiritual conflict with their accustomed way of life is expressed in their feeling that they have been made sick with "Zivilis". The same conflict underlies the girls' longing for the "dear old mamma" they have lost. All these conflicts, both within persons and between persons, are allowed to persist in an unrealised form because of the existence of yet another conflict, namely that between "Sein" and "Bewusstsein", between the individual's objective situation and his consciousness of that situation. Objectively, both customers and prostitutes (and, for that matter, the founders of the town, although less is made of this fact) are exploited and alienated objects of the economic system in which they live; subjectively, they are unaware of this and even believe in the healing power of the fetish objects, as Marx called them, which really only make their sufferings worse, namely money and commodities.²⁰ The founders of the town want "Gold", the girls want dollars, whisky and pretty boys, the men believe they can buy happiness with their dollars. The alienation of these characters' consciousness must be borne in mind in order to understand properly the course of the action which develops out of

the initial complex of conflicts; in particular, it is important for the evaluation of Jim Mahoney's revolt against the system.

The first signs that the fundamental conflict of interests is beginning to make itself felt occur before Jim Mahoney and his companions even reach the town. Begbick's offer to reduce prices, "Um uns Ihnen gefällig zu erweisen" (M 12), indicates that the seller is not in a strong position at present, and the hasty departure from the town of the earlier arrivals shows why: the town does not operate in the interests of the customers. The proliferation of "Preistafeln" in the seventh scene of the opera indicates that the whole undertaking is on the verge of collapse because of its failure to serve the interests of either group, proprietors or customers. While the founders lament, "Ach, dieses Mahagonny ist kein Geschäft geworden" (M 17), the customers lounge about in a state of torpor and show no interest in consuming the town's commodities.

How the transition comes about from a static situation of apathy for the majority of men in Mahagonny and of ruin for its founders, to a period of economic boom which destroys the last real hopes of happiness for the majority while promoting the financial interests of the few, is a central irony of the work. Some change must certainly occur. The spurious contentment which the men have been enjoying apparently outside the normal workings of the capitalist system has in fact rested on the foundations of that system. Not only have the men earned the money to support them here by working in the great cities, but the town has been established with the principal aim of making profits and must collapse if it fails to do so. Thus, two changes are possible: either the town fails, in which

case the men must return to the harsh realities of exploitation which they believe they have escaped here; or the town flourishes, in which case it will put into operation the same process of exploitation as exists elsewhere, albeit in a different guise. The short period of stasis and shallow contentment only serves to adumbrate the possibility of an alternative way of life. The effective realisation of such a possibility would require the whole social and economic system to be rethought. But in Mahagonny change, when it does occur, works to the advantage of the town's proprietors, and is brought about, ironically enough, by the man who is the hero of the work, both in the sense that it is his story that the opera tells and in the sense that he is the character with whom the author most clearly identifies.

Jim Mahoney senses that "etwas fehlt" (M 20) in the tranquility of Mahagonny. And of course he is quite right in thinking this. The idyll the men have been enjoying is a false one, dependent entirely on the very reality which it purports to offer a refuge from. The artificiality of this idyll is symbolised in the little white cloud which is made to move mechanically back and forth across the sky above the town (M 21). This is no true return to nature, but a necessarily abortive flight into a spurious Arcadia. Reality is bound to overtake such a sham, and it does so in the person of Jim Mahoney. When Jim is prevented from leaving the town, his frustrations grow until they explode in an act of violence: he fires a shot into the air and challenges the founders of the town to give an account of themselves:

(Jim springt auf.)

Ja, was fällt euch denn ein? Das könnt ihr doch mit uns nicht machen! Da seid ihr an die Falschen gekommen.

(Er schießt seinen Revolver ab.) Komm' heraus! Du
Hier-darfst-du-Schlampe! Hier ist Jimmy Mahoney! Aus
Alaska! Dem gefällt's hier nicht! (M 22).

At this, the white cloud scuttles away and, as if summoned up by the pistol-shot, a typhoon begins to bear down on Mahagonny.²¹ Just as the forces of nature threaten to sweep away the falsely idyllic atmosphere of Mahagonny, so the truth about reality which the town has tried to suppress now thrusts itself into the open. Yet it is not the case that Jim's revolt, as he himself believes, is simply another expression of the force of nature which is at work in the hurricane. Whereas the hurricane is a "natural" event, human nature is by definition perverted when men live in a condition of alienation.²² In proclaiming the violent and anarchic pursuit of "Spas" to be man's natural inclination, Jim is merely re-establishing in a sublimated form, as "fun", the same patterns of behaviour as he has acquired as an exploited exploiter of nature, "Tief in Alaskas schneeweissen Wäldern" (M 21):²³

Jim Siehst du, so ist die Welt:
Ruhe und Eintracht, das gibt es nicht,
Aber Hurrikane, die gibt es
Und Taifune, wo sie nicht auslangen.
Und gerade so ist der Mensch:
Er muss zerstören, was da ist.
Wozu braucht's da einen Hurrikan?
Was ist der Taifun an Schrecken
Gegen den Menschen, wenn er seinen Spas will? (M 26)

His consciousness has been so moulded by the forms and norms it has absorbed from the capitalist system, that the anarchy he proposes is modelled exactly on his previous experience, with no law being recognised other than the rule of money:

Begbick (winkt Jim zu sich und geht mit ihm in eine Ecke)
Du meinst also, es war falsch, dass ich etwas
verboten habe!?

Jim Ja, denn ich, der ich lustig bin, zerschlage lieber deine Tafeln und deine Gesetze, und deine Mauern müssen hin sein. Wie der Hurrikan es auch macht, so mache ich es. Du bekommst Geld dafür. (M 28)

Because of Jim's intervention, the founders' enterprise is saved and Mahagonny is able to function as what it really is: a mechanism of exploitation in which the mass of men destroy themselves in order to create profits for the few. Jim's philosophy of "Spas" is the ultimate form of accommodation to the system, and his proclamation of a "return to nature" proves to be nothing less than a return to alienation in its fullest form.²⁴

In the hurricane scene a conflict of values emerges which ultimately prevents the work advocating, consistently and wholeheartedly, organised opposition to the capitalist system. During the hurricane Jim shows personal qualities of composure, courage and hunger for the complete and immediate satisfaction of his vital appetites, which give him greater stature than the mass of people in Mahagonny. Because Brecht's own sympathies with the absolute and amoral claims of the existential self make themselves felt in his heroic presentation of Jim's behaviour, his critical presentation of this behaviour as the product of alienation is seriously undermined. Even in the unvarnished brutality of the song which closes the scene, a certain ambivalence can be detected:

(Jim springt auf die Mauer.)

Jim Denn wie man sich bettet, so liegt man,
Es deckt einen keiner da zu,
Und wenn einer tritt, dann bin ich es,
Und wird einer getreten, dann bist du's! (M 29)

This conflict, a typical feature of all Brecht's works in his first period, remains unresolved in the remainder of the opera.

Under Jim's new "Leitspruch" "Du darfst" (M 30), business booms in Mahagonny in a way it had failed to do as long as the inclinations of the customers determined the rate and extent of consumption - after the exertions of the struggle for existence they wanted only to rest and "forget" (M 19). The ambiguity of the phrase, "Hochbetrieb in Mahagonny" (M 31) which characterises the newest phase in the history of the town, alludes to the extent to which Jim's new law is one which enables intense exploitation to pass undetected behind the screen of "Spas" which is its outward form. At the height of the season in Mahagonny it is the consumers and not only the staff who are "working" at full pressure as they are driven on to ever greater peaks of consumption. The element of coercion underlying the consumers' hectic fun-chasing is suggested by the list of regulations they must observe:

Chor Erstens vergesst nicht, kommt das Fressen,
Zweitens kommt die Liebe dran,
Drittens das Boxen nicht vergessen,
Viertens saufen, solange man kann,
Vor allem aber achtet scharf,
Dass man hier alles dürfen darf. (M 31)

The paradox of being driven to do what one is "permitted" to do reads like an ironic inversion of Nathan's dictum, "Kein Mensch muss müssen".

A succession of scenes headed "Fressen", "Lieben", "Kämpfen", "Saufen", illustrate symbolically how men are persuaded to act against their own interests by those who profit from the capitalist system. Here, class conflict is illustrated in its effects on the exploited class. Jack, "der Vielfrass" (M 31) is urged on to eat himself to death in a grotesque parody of Faust's insatiable striving:

Einige Männer

Herr Schmidt! Sie sind schon dick:
Essen Sie noch ein Kalb.

Jack Brüder, bitt'ich, sehet mir zu,
Sehet mir zu, wie ich ess'.
Ist es weg, dann hab'ich Ruh',
Weil ich es vergess, weil ich es vergess.
Brüder gebt mir noch!
(Er fällt tot um.)

Männerchor (hinter ihm im Halbkreis, die Hüte abnehmend)
Sehet, Schmidt ist gestorben!
Sehet, welch ein glückseliger,
Sehet, welch unersättlicher,
Ausdruck auf seinem Gesicht ist!
Weil er sich gefüllt hat,
Weil er nicht beendet hat.
Ein Mann ohne Furcht! (M 31-32)

If the "Fressen" scene illustrates the madness of limitless consumption pursued as an end in itself, the scene entitled "Lieben" is a fantastic symbol of the tendency of the capitalist system to force the mass of people to accept the minimum quality of life so that the few can enjoy the maximum profits. Begbick's iron rule over the conduct of the brothel forces the customers to compete against one another and so minimise each other's share of the goods on sale here:

Die Männer Rasch, Jungens, he,

Stimmt ihn an den Song von Mandelay:
Liebe die ist doch an Zeit nicht gebunden.
Jungens, macht rasch, denn hier geht's um Sekunden.
Ewig nicht stehet der Mond über dir, Mandelay.

(M 32)

In their role as the force which makes the consumer industry function, the customers of the brothel are imagined as carrying out Begbick's orders like factory workers who are forced into conformity by the unspoken commands of the conveyor-belt:

Begbick (wendet sich zu dem Mann neben ihr)

Spucke den Kaugummi aus.
Wasche zuerst deine Hände.
Lasse ihr Zeit
Und sprich ein paar Worte mit ihr.

Die Männer (ohne hinaufzusehen)

Spucke den Kaugummi aus.
Wasche zuerst deine Hände.
Lasse ihr Zeit
Und sprich ein paar Worte mit ihr. (M 32)

The idea that the worker, as consumer, ultimately has control over the system within which he works, is exposed as illusory by presenting consumption as a form of activity which is as completely regulated by the mechanism it serves as work is.²⁵

The scenes "Fressen" and "Liebe" both take up again the theme of the interrelatedness of existential and social problems, and seek to demonstrate the worsening of the existential problems which has been brought about by the worsened social situation in the "new" Mahagonny. Driven to consume more and more until he dies of it, Jack's fate symbolises the impossibility of finding any real satisfaction in life by pursuing merely material goals. A system which urges men to do this is literally wasting their time. Men are by nature the creatures of time, but their painful awareness of this fact can be aggravated if their already short span is regulated by mechanical measures of time which lie beyond their control. The chant which accompanies each man's brief stay in the brothel expresses the awareness of transience which is heightened by experiencing life in a great, bustling society where the individual is objectively an anonymous and replaceable unit:

Jungens, macht rasch, denn hier geht's um Sekunden.
Ewig nicht stehet der Mond über dir, Mandelay. (M 32)

The central section of the brothel scene is a love-duet sung by Jim, the client, and Jenny, the whore, as they sit at some physical distance from each other, each self-absorbed and each longing for an ideal experience of love:

(Vor dem inneren Vorhang, auf dem immer noch das Wort "LIEBEN" steht, sitzen Jim und Jenny auf zwei Stühlen in einem Abstand nebeneinander. Er raucht, sie schminkt sich.)

Jenny Sieh' jene Kraniche in grossem Bogen,

Jim Die Wolken, welche ihnen beigegeben,

Jenny Zogen mit ihnen schon, als sie entflohen,

Jim Aus einem Leben in ein anderes Leben,

Jenny In gleicher Höhe und mit gleicher Eile,

Beide Scheinen sie alle beide nur daneben. (M 33)

Here again an existential problem is seen as aggravated by social conditions. Perfect love could make the lovers, in their complete absorption one in the other, unaware of the problem of transience for as long as they could stay together. In grotesque conflict with this vision of timelessness within time is the setting in which it is sung. Jim and Jenny cannot be such perfect lovers because their social existence has transformed them from individuals into the bearers of roles and functions. The extreme of alienation represented by the prostitute-client roles of the two lovers is a pointedly grotesque illustration of the tendency of the social world to bring even the individual personality under its sway. The socialised, alienated individual can no longer call his self his own and therefore cannot give himself completely in love. Adorno summed up the significance of the scene perfectly when he wrote "Die Verdinglichung der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen wird ins Bild der Prostitution geschlagen".²⁶

The scene headed "Lieben" is followed by one entitled "Kämpfen" which also has as its theme the worsening of the individual's existential situation by his having to live in a ruthlessly competitive society. Here the conflict between individuals and interest-groups

on which capitalism is founded, is allegorised as a boxing match between one of the city fathers, Dreieinigkeitsmoses, and Alaska-wolfjoe, one of Jim Mahoney's friends from Alaska. It is a foregone conclusion that Moses, by far the heavier, more powerful and more brutal of the two, will defeat Joe whose only weapon is his "List" (M 35). The allegory is transparent: the power of capital will inevitably defeat even the most intelligent individual's attempts to enter into the lists with it. The moral of Mutter Courage is already implied in Mahagonny: capitalism thrives on crushing the "little people" who hope to profit by accepting the competitive ethos of the system.

Joe's death at the hands of Moses foreshadows and leads to the death of his companion Jim Mahoney. Jim was foolish enough to bet all his money on Joe for the sake of his sentimental memory of their friendship in Alaska, and is thus left moneyless and so defenceless in Mahagonny when Joe is killed. In the case of Jim's death, the allegory of the lethal power of capitalism is rather more drawn out. After Joe's death Jim indulges in a bout of heavy drinking (in the scene "Trinken") for which he cannot now pay. In a drunken fantasy he tries to sail back to Alaska, which his nostalgia has transfigured into a kind of lost paradise, but he is eventually forced to face Begbick's demand for payment for the drinks. His inability to meet this demand leads to his public execution. By the maliciously ironic workings of poetic justice Jim thus falls victim to the basic conflict of interests in Mahagonny which his reformist zeal was instrumental in obscuring and intensifying. His fate rounds off the series of grotesque demonstrations of how capitalism not only operates against the masses, but in fact does so by virtue

of their misguided acquiescence in their own exploitation.²⁷

In the third and final act of the opera the main conflict, that between the exploiters and the exploited, is again shown to generate subsidiary conflicts amongst the exploited and within the exploited individual. Jenny, who has stood in the ambiguous relation of whore and lover to Jim, refuses to help him by paying the bill for his drinks and later testifies against him in court. In so doing she takes revenge on him for having degraded her by buying her services as a prostitute. Such an act of revenge is demanded of her by the logic of an antagonistic form of social organisation. Yet, after he has been condemned to death, she takes leave of him as one lover from another:

Jenny Lieber Jimmy,
Auch ich habe meine gute Zeit gehabt
Mit dir,
Und ich weiss nicht,
Wie es jetzt mit mir wird.

Jim Glaube mir,
Solche wie ich gibt es noch mehr.

Jenny Das ist nicht wahr.
Ich weiss, solche Zeit kommt niemals wieder.

Jim (gesprochen, leise und einfach)
Hast du nicht sogar ein weisses Kleid an
Wie eine Witwe?

Jenny (ebenso) Ja, ich bin deine Witwe.
Und nie werde ich dich vergessen,
Wenn ich jetzt zurückkehre
Zu den Mädchen.

Jim Küsse mich, Jenny.

Jenny Küsse mich, Jimmy.

Jim Denk' an mich.

Jenny Sicherlich. (M 53)

The contradictions between their personal feelings and the alienated form of relationship in which these feelings exist, is reflected in the finely ambiguous tone of the dialogue. At times, their clichéd

phrases would appear to suggest that they are merely using conventional expressions of affection cynically; the pat rhyme, "Denk an mich./ Sicherlich", only serves to strengthen this impression. Yet elsewhere real depths of emotion are hinted at, either by their tone of voice ("leise und einfach") or by the simplicity and unsentimentality of Jenny's words ("Ich weiss, solche Zeit kommt niemals wieder"²⁸). The contradiction in Jenny's situation is further underlined by the paradox of her being dressed in white, "wie eine Witwe". Whereas her social function as a prostitute demands that she appear virginally fresh and ready to begin anew with her next customer, her personal feelings are those of a widow, not those of the spurious bride she must pretend to be to each new, lonely client.

The conflict between personal feelings and objective social relationships is further demonstrated in the case of Bill's behaviour towards his friend Jimmy. On the one hand he refuses to help Jim by bribing the judge on his behalf; such selfishness is demanded by the logic of a system where the individual's relation to other men is founded on money and where the sacrifice of money must inevitably work against the individual's interests. But on the other hand, Bill shows that he still regards Jim as his friend by raising points in his favour during the trial. The same contradiction is evident in the responses of the crowd of onlookers at the trial. When Bill points out that Jim has come to be in his present predicament because of friendship towards Joe, the onlookers waver between the desire to free him for his feelings towards Joe, and the demand that he be executed for an action which, by the logic of the system, must ultimately be self-destructive:

Chor (abwechselnd)

Darum muss hingerichtet werden Jimmy Mahoney,
Darum muss freigesprochen werden Jimmy Mahoney,
Der Holzfäller aus Alaska. (M 49)

The conflict experienced by various characters in the play between their feelings and the logic of their social situation, is also reflected in the overall ambivalence of the play's presentation of emotionally based behaviour.²⁹ As has been indicated already, in the discussion of the typhoon scene, the attractions of Jim's enthusiasm for anarchy conflict with the clear recognition that this version of anarchy will only play into the hands of the exploiters. Similarly, in the execution scene, Brecht has Jim sing a defiant song which, in its defence of the pursuit of momentary pleasure as a proper response to the uncertainty of life, exerts a contrary emotional pull to the argument that emotional behaviour such as Jim's is self-destructive. The impression that we are meant to respond positively to Jim's "Anweisung" is strengthened by the fact that the song he sings to convey it first appeared as the "Schlusskapitel" of Brecht's Hauspostille (GW 8, 260). But the starkness of an early death in the electric chair counteracts the feeling of sympathy aroused by the song for the reckless, heroic philosophy of carpe diem. Throughout the play, Jim's behaviour has been presented in a similarly ambivalent manner. Repeatedly referred to as "einfacher Holzfäller aus Alaska", he is presented as embodying both certain strengths and certain weaknesses which are characteristic of someone with his background of experience. On the one hand, as a man who has experienced at first hand the coldness of the world, "Tief in Alaskas schneeweissen Wäldern" (M 21), and who for years has lived in daily confrontation with the fact of transience (the felling of trees constantly symbolizes the triumph of

death over life in Brecht's early plays), he has the authority of a man whose attitudes to life have been formed after giving the fullest consideration to the omnipresence of death. His experiences invite us to see life as an ultimately hopeless struggle with death, and, within the context of this nihilistic view of the world, to recognise as the supreme human value the individual's strength to face up to the confrontation with death and to snatch as much pleasure as he can from its jaws. On the other hand, because Jim's "Holzfällen" is also symbolic of the exploited situation of the wage labourer who "sells his skin" for dollars, his insights into life are only of relative validity. Viewed within the context of spiritual alienation arising from the process of exploitation, Jim's anarchic philosophy takes on the character of a conditioned reflex: he sees only destruction in the world, because the hectic pace of human and natural exploitation involved in the rapid expansion of the technological society has prevented him from seeing any other aspects of life. If nature were being consumed less rapidly and men exploited less severely (or even not at all), men might have more time to enjoy the experience of being alive. If Jim's mind were not so thoroughly moulded by the destructive process in which his work involves him, he might recognise and draw pleasure from the relatively stable whole in which the process of growth and destruction unfolds.³⁰ Yet Brecht does not, in this opera, ultimately advocate prudence and reject Jim's existential indulgence in passion. Presumably he was still so impressed by the transience of all created things that he remained unconvinced that it was desirable to sacrifice the momentary pleasure of a single individual in order to attain rationally a distant goal for the benefit of other individuals.

The last two "Nummern" of the opera recapitulate this underlying conflict. The post's capacity for rational social criticism is the dominant force in the "Spiel von Gott in Mahagonny", where religious sanctions are exposed as ideological instruments of exploitation. But the rebellion of the exploited, with which this scene ends, does not lead into an unambiguously revolutionary finale. While it is true that the closing scene plays before a background of the burning city, and depicts "riesige Demonstrationen gegen die ungeheure Teuerung" (M 57), the atmosphere contains elements of depression and hopelessness. Jim's revolt during the night of the hurricane is recalled, but in such a way as to retain the ambiguity of his rebellion:

Eine Gruppe Männer (erscheint. Sie tragen auf leinenem Kissen Hut und Stock Jims)

Wir brauchen keinen Hurrikan
Wir brauchen keinen Taifun,
Denn was er an Schrecken tuen kann,
Das können wir selber tun.

Eine zweite Gruppe Männer (erscheint. Sie tragen Ring, Uhr, Revolver und Scheckbuch Jims.)

Denn wie man sich bettet, so liegt man,
Es deckt einen keiner da zu.
Und wenn einer tritt, dann bin ich es,
Und wird einer getreten, dann bist du's. (M 57)

Jim is now evidently revered as a kind of saint, but his reliquies suggest that he is a patron of the alienated, materialistic values of capitalist society, not of revolutionary change. Yet while the foreground is filled with marching groups who bear placards with conflicting slogans, but nevertheless join in singing together the same dirge ("können einem toten Mann nicht helfen ... können uns und euch und niemand helfen"), the background is filled with the flames of the burning city. The meaning of this finale is quite unclear. The fire in the background may be seen as the promise of

a new beginning, a revolutionary response to the dreams of liberation from alienation expressed in Jim's need for friendship or the girls' nostalgia for their "good old mamma", a process of positive change which is under way although the majority are pessimistically ignorant of the fact. Or the scene may be interpreted as the pessimistic conclusion to a negative analysis of society: so complete is the alienation of humanity produced by an exploitative social system that even revolution offers no escape, since it is merely the senseless culmination of the destructive tendencies at work in society. On the other hand, the burning of Mahagonny may equally well be seen in relation to the theme of man's existential hunger, which, because it finds no satisfaction in this transient life, revolts against all forms of social existence, be it peaceful (because peace is boring) or openly antagonistic (because conflict heightens the individual's sense of isolation).³¹ The finale is, in short, thoroughly ambiguous and ambivalent in its kaleidoscopic presentation of the positive and negative facets of destruction. Such lack of clarity is entirely of a piece with all that has gone before, in as much as the whole work is permeated by a fundamental conflict between rationality and passionate impulse.

ooo000ooo

Mahagonny does not only depict conflict; as a satire it is actively engaged in conflict. The formal aspects of the work, as the following discussion will seek to show, are mostly so designed as to further the playwright's aim of attacking the evils of contemporary society. Seen in this light, the spirit of enquiry which is the purported motive and aim of Brecht's technique of alienation is

certainly not coolly scientific, but bears rather a decidedly aggressive mien. The poet's pen is guided by a sense of indignation, and the force of this sentiment can be felt in his chosen modes of expression.³²

Ignorance is, in Brecht's view, the principal reason for the continued existence of a social system which operates against the interests of the mass of the people. His chief weapon in his struggle with the present is, therefore, the rational analysis of this system as a means of demonstrating its tendency to work in the interest of the few. In formal terms, the author's aggressive rationality manifests itself in the "Gestus des Zeigens" which accompanies every "gezeigten Gestus" (GW 16, 697).³³ This deictic gesture first manifests itself in the framework of narration and commentary surrounding the dramatic scenes. The moral-instructive force of this device is evident, for example, in the projection which prefaces the scene of Jim's execution:

Hinrichtung und Tod des Jimmy Mahoney. Viele mögen die nun folgende Hinrichtung des Jimmy Mahoney ungern sehen. Aber auch Sie, mein Herr, würden unserer Ansicht nach nicht für ihn zahlen wollen. So gross ist die Achtung vor Geld in unserer Zeit. (M 52)

The aggressive impulse behind this technique can be seen in the ironic repetition of the projection showing the "wanted" notices for the city fathers just at the moment when they pronounce judgement on Jim Mahoney (M 50). Being anti-illusory in effect, the very fact of varying the methods of presentation, particularly the use of such mechanical novelties as loudspeakers and film-projectors, helps to draw attention to the fact that the dramatic scenes are being presented within a context of demonstration and argument; they are also an affront to any notion of the theatre as a place where art is identi-

fied with illusion. The parable character of the events portrayed is further emphasized by the widespread use of anti-naturalistic devices in structure and dialogue. The play-within-a-play structure, for example, occurs twice: once in Jim's imaginary trip back to Alaska, and again in the "Spiel von Gott in Mahagonny". The characters sometimes step forward to address the audience directly, as, for example, when Jim Mahoney proclaims the "Gesetze der menschlichen Glückseligkeit" (M 27). The artificiality of the operatic convention is consciously exploited throughout for the opportunities provided by aria and chorus for the direct description of attitudes or situations. In addition to its usefulness in this respect, the chorus also serves to symbolise the mass character of life in Mahagonny. Weill strove to emphasize this in his music by aiming at typical rather than individualised expression:

Daher sind alle Gesänge dieser Oper Ausdruck der Masse, auch dort, wo sie vom einzelnen als dem Sprecher der Masse vorgetragen werden. Die Gruppe der Gründer im Anfang steht den Gruppen der Ankommenden gegenüber. Die Gruppe der Anhänger des neuen Gesetzes kämpfen am Schluss des ersten Aktes gegen die Gruppe der Gegner. Das Schicksal des einzelnen wird nur dort vorübergehend geschildert, wo es beispielhaft für das Schicksal der Stadt ist.³⁴

Such concentration on the typical is an important feature of the rational-didactic character of the opera.

Brecht enhances the element of artificiality already present in the operatic convention by his handling of plot, situation, language and symbolism. The plot is utterly simple and makes no pretence at portraying a psychologically realistic sequence of events. The protagonist is an exemplary figure, not an individual with a unique psychological make-up, and the situations he encounters are self-evidently fantastic symbols of general social conditions. Yet the

fantastic quality in plot and situation is a firmly controlled element in the poet's rational assault on contemporary reality. The function of this fantasy is to exaggerate to the point of grotesqueness certain aspects of modern society, such as its tendency to mechanise and de-individualise life, so as to drive home with emotional force the results of empirical observation and rational analysis. If, in reality, men could have their livelihood threatened by being thrown out of work, as many were in the 1920's as a consequence of industrial rationalisation, the poet reserves the right to expose the ultimately fantastic discrepancy between the avowed social benefits and the real individual injustice of such a process, by making the same rationale (the supremacy of economic considerations over all others) the basis for an obviously fantastic trial and execution of a man for failing to pay a trivial bill.

By incorporating elements of farce into fantastic situations which result in suffering for a figure with whom one feels sympathy, Brecht created that tragi-comic mixture of emotions from which the experience of grotesqueness derives its greatest emotional force. The comic element necessary for this effect is established right from the outset, in the farcical opening scene of the opera, where the well-worn clown's gag of destroying a car simply by kicking it sets the tone (M 6). This piece of clowning is, of course, not without the deeper significance which is characteristic of the use of fantasy in the work; the car, a symbol of the already decrepit and unreliable values of the modern age, collapses under the slightest pressure. The scene is a good example of the co-operation of the author's intellect with his imagination and his aggressions, for, besides making an intellectual point vividly, it allows him to reduce a group

of capitalists to the status of clowns, and thus to attack the aura of respectability which normally shields the exploiters from the scorn of the exploited.³⁵ The comic quality established here is then exploited to the full in Jim's execution scene, where his verdict is presented as the consequence of a comically inverted scale of values, on which murder is a venal and poverty a heinous crime.

The same aggressive authorial gesture as is evident in the departures from situational realism is apparent in the handling of the dialogue. Just as Brecht has certain characters do things which expose them to ridicule, so he has them say things which it is against their interests to be known:

Fatty, Moses Aber dieses ganze Mahagonny
Ist nur, weil alles so schlecht ist,
Weil keine Ruhe herrscht
Und keine Eintracht,
Und weil es nichts gibt,
Woran man sich halten kann. (M 7)

Even where figures speak or sing within the limits of their characters, the controlling influence of the poet's intellect expresses itself in the unnaturalistic simplicity, clarity and logic of their diction. The deictic authorial gesture is particularly clear in the hurricane scene, where Jim tells Begbick where she has gone wrong:

Jim (zu Begbick)
Siehst du, du hast Tafeln gemacht
Und darauf geschrieben:
Das ist verboten
Und dieses darfst du nicht.
Und es entstand keine Glückseligkeit.
Hier, Kameraden, ist eine Tafel,
Darauf steht: es ist heut' nacht verboten
Zu singen, was lustig ist.
Aber noch vor es zwei schlägt,
Werde ich, Jimmy Mahoney,
Singen, was lustig ist,
Damit ihr seht,
Es ist nichts verboten! (M 26-27)

The tendency of the author's didactic vein to dominate expression is evident from linguistic details other than the clear and logical ordering of speech. Witty phrases, such as Begbick's question, "Wünschen Sie zuerst sich mit frischen Mädchen zu versorgen?" (M 12), trenchantly express the "Verdinglichung" of humanity in a materialistic society. Other examples of such perversion of everyday phrases in order to make strange man's acceptance of a topsy-turvy way of life, are the references to "Geldpapier" and the "Schöner, grüner Mond" (its colour being that of a dollar bill) in the song Auf nach Mahagonny, or Jim's attempt to borrow money to bribe the judge into hearing his case in a way that is "menschlich" (M 46). As particularly striking examples of such formal or stylistic expressions of alienation one might cite the use of foreign words (gin, whisky, poker) to suggest the foreignness of the things which dominate the reified life of Mahagonny, or the mechanical repetition by the brothel customers of Begbick's instructions on how to approach the whores (M 32). In all these instances the author is aggressively seeking to redress an imbalance of power which exists in reality. He is exposing the alienation of consciousness, of which the characters are by definition unaware, in order to contribute to a possible change in the social conditions which give rise to this phenomenon. Although the opera is not consistently revolutionary in its implications, it certainly is so in part.

Satire gains its effects by drawing attention to a discrepancy between the real and the ideal in life. In Mahagonny the principal means employed to remind the spectator that certain ideal standards do exist by which to judge the grotesque corruption of humanity in the "Netzestadt" is the parodic allusion to other, archetypal literary

works in which humane values are embodied. As has been noted already, in discussing the scene headed "Fressen", the degradation of human aspiration to the level of seeking only to consume more than other men is highlighted by an implied allusion to Faust's inexhaustible capacity for self-development. This is, however, an isolated allusion to the German classics; much more important are the repeated allusions to the Bible. Brecht remained true to his original idea, first used in Die Sintflut, of using biblical stories as the basis for an attack on contemporary society, and put this into effect by drawing both on the Old Testament and the New. The opera opens with a scene showing a group of travellers, led by a man called Moses, attempting to flee from their enemies by crossing a desert. The biblical account of the Exodus has been changed in a number of obvious respects. Whereas the Israelites under Moses were the chosen of God, and the Egyptians their cruel persecutors, the opera shows a group of criminals fleeing from just retribution. The difference between the two accounts becomes even more ironic when the just pursuers in the opera are killed by an earthquake which many believe to be an act of God. Yet the pursued are not spared thereby, for the "human hurricane", Jim Mahoney, ultimately brings about the destruction of their city. Here, as elsewhere in the opera, Brecht's perspective on the biblical stories is a consistently humanistic one: he alludes to them as examples of humane values which are absent from the present, but seeks at the same time to eliminate God as the giver and defender of such values. In bestowing on his Moses the title "Dreieinigkeitsmoses", Brecht gives to a man the characteristics of God, and thus implies that it is man who is responsible for making human life what it is.³⁶

The parallels and contrasts with the biblical story of Moses continue as the plot of the opera unfolds. Whereas the original Moses led the Israelites away from the fleshpots of Egypt and towards a promised land which he himself was not permitted to enter, Dreieinigkeitsmoses establishes in the middle of the desert his own "Paradiesstadt" (M 8) which will offer more in the way of fleshpots than Egypt was ever capable of. Whereas God called Moses to carry out his mission, this modern Moses, having failed to lead his followers to safety, sends out a call to other men, inviting them to come to his newly-founded city with the words "Dort wurde gestern erst nach euch gefragt" (M 9). The exodus of the Israelites was part of a divinely providential plan, but the founding of Mahagonny occurs because of an accident. Whereas Jehovah could look on his creation and see that it was good, the founders of Mahagonny confess that they are merely making the best of a bad situation: "Aber dieses ganze Mahagonny/ Ist nur, weil alles so schlecht ist" (M 7).

The next stage in Brecht's blasphemous, provocative use of biblical material is the introduction of Jimmy Mahoney, whose counterpart in the Bible is Christ. A contrast with Christ's lowly birth is implicit already in Jimmy's arrival in Mahagonny in the role of a rich man. This initial point of difference gradually unfolds its deeper implications: whereas Jesus' poverty symbolized the gulf separating all that he stood for from worldly, materialistic notions of power, Jimmy's wealth defines him as a man who has already absorbed the values of this world, and so prejudices from the outset the possibility of his successfully fulfilling any redemptive function in Mahagonny. This parallel and contrast is developed further when Jimmy protests at being forced to stay in Mahagonny:

Jack, Joe, Bill Treib' es uns nicht zu dick!

Jack, Joe, Bill Jimmy, da ist ein Strick!
(Alle drei brüllend)
Wir schlagen dich einfach nieder,
Ach, Jimmy, bis du wieder ein Mensch bist!

Jim (ruhig) Oh, Jungens, ich will doch gar kein Mensch sein.

Joe So, jetzt hast du dich ausgesprochen und jetzt
kommst du hübsch wieder mit nach Mahagonny.
(Sie führen ihn in die Stadt zurück.) (M 21)

Jim's words, "ich will doch gar kein Mensch sein", imply an ironic contrast with God's self-incarnation in the person of Christ. Although Jimmy does not yet know this, his desire to leave Mahagonny proves subsequently to have been an attempt to avoid the redemptive task which his sense of the need for "something more" in life will force on him. Jimmy is an unwitting and unwilling Messiah, a saviour without a god to guide him, and the gospel he brings has all the imperfections that one might expect of such a redeemer. Whereas Christ brought a message of love, Jimmy, having only experienced social and existential conflict, knows no better alternative to the bogus harmony of life in Mahagonny than wild anarchy. The "Gesetze der menschlichen Glückseligkeit", expounded by Jimmy during the night of the hurricane, are a barbarous parody of the Beatitudes. The ultimate failure of Jimmy's doctrine, and his own longing for the love and friendship which he is unable to find in his reformed Mahagonny, suggest that the biblical original is not being rejected out of hand in the opera, but that the need for a gospel of love is as great in Mahagonny as it ever was. Brecht did in fact later move towards positively advocating something like charity in his praise of "Freundlichkeit", both as a goal to be attained and as an indispensable means of attaining it: Azdak's cunning needs to be augmented by Grusche's love if the child Michel is to be given a future.³⁷

In the course of the scenes depicting the vices of Mahagonny (the modern equivalent of Sodom and Gomorrha)³⁸ the relation of Jimmy to Jesus becomes more one of similarity than of contrast. In sacrificing his money for the sake of his friendship with Joe, Jimmy is refusing to conform to the materialistic logic of life in Mahagonny (although even this is not unambiguous: he may simply be making a wild gamble to make more money), and is beginning to consider human values more important than material ones. From this point on, the similarity between his fate and Christ's necessarily becomes more marked, as no-one may behave like this in Mahagonny without being destroyed, as Christ was destroyed, by the self-interest of others. The Last Supper finds its equivalent in Jimmy's invitation to his friends to drink with him, and the ironic contrast is reinforced by the words of these men:

Männerchor Jimmy, du hast uns zu trinken gegeben,
Jimmy, dafür lassen wir dich leben.
Du hast uns gespeist und hast uns getränkt,
Du hast uns Speise und Trank geschenkt. (M 41)

After being betrayed by Jenny and Bill, Jimmy has to experience a night in Gethsemane but without the comfort of a God:

(Jim liegt, mit einem Fuss an einen Baum gefesselt, im Wald. Es ist Nacht).

Jim Wenn der Himmel hell wird,
Dann beginnt ein verdammter Tag.
Aber jetzt ist der Himmel ja noch dunkel.
Nur die Nacht
Darf nicht aufhören,
Nur der Tag
Darf nicht sein.
Ich habe Furcht, dass sie schon kommen.
Ich muss mich auf den Boden legen,
Wenn sie da sind.
Sie müssen mich vom Boden reißen,
Wenn ich mitgehen soll.
Nur die Nacht
Darf nicht aufhören.
Nur der Tag darf nicht sein.
Stopf's in deine Pfeife,

Alter Junge,
Rauch' es auf.
Was gewesen ist,
War gut genug für dich
Und was jetzt kommt,
Stopf's in deine Pfeife.
Sicher, der Himmel bleibt noch lange dunkel.
 (Es wird hell.)
Es darf nicht hell sein.
Denn dann beginnt ein verdammter Tag. (M 43-44)

Despite the reversion of the Cross to a pagan life symbol (a living tree), and despite Jim's attempts at atheistic stoicism, this scene undoubtedly strives in its own way to approach the pathos of the biblical model.

The parallels with the Passion extend into the scenes of Jimmy's trial and execution. The freeing of Barabbas is echoed in the pardon given to the murderer Toby Higgins, the fickle emotions of the people of Jerusalem are paralleled by the vacillating attitudes of the spectators at Jimmy's trial. When Jimmy hands over Jenny to his friend Bill, his action is a sardonic perversion of Christ's bringing together of his best loved disciple and his mother. Whereas Christ died commending his soul to God, Jimmy dies an unrepentant sensualist and atheist:

Lasst euch nicht verführen.
Zu Fron und Ausgezehr,
Was kann euch Angst noch rühren,
Ihr sterbt mit allen Tieren,
Und es kommt nichts nachher. (M 55)

The consequences of their respective deaths are as different as their lives and gospels had been: Christ's disciples went out into the world to spread his gospel, Jimmy leaves behind a city in flames and confusion.

The provocation involved in using biblical material in this way is reinforced by the similarities in form between this opera and

Handel's oratorio, the Messiah. The commentary given by the anonymous narrator in Mahagonny corresponds in function to the role of the Evangelist in the Messiah. Although scenic enactment is not part of the oratorio, the division of Mahagonny into a series of separate episodes linked by a narrator approximates more to oratorio form than it does to the dramatic construction of opera. Weill laid great stress on the separateness of the "Nummern" in Mahagonny:

Es ist eine Folge von 21 abgeschlossenen musikalischen Formen. Jede dieser Formen ist eine geschlossene Szene, und jede wird durch eine Überschrift in erzählender Form eingeleitet.³⁹

Bei der Inszenierung der Oper muss stets berücksichtigt werden, dass hier abgeschlossene musikalische Formen vorliegen. Es besteht also eine wesentliche Aufgabe darin, den rein musikalischen Ablauf zu sichern und die Darsteller so zu gruppieren, dass ein beinahe konzertantes Musizieren möglich ist.⁴⁰

The three stages in the development of Mahagonny - the foundation of the city, the life and death of Mahoney, the lament of its citizens - correspond approximately to the three sections of the Messiah: "Like the other oratorios Messiah is divided into three parts, the contents of which can be summarized as follows: I The prophecy and realization of God's plan to redeem mankind by the coming of the Messiah; II The accomplishment of redemption by the sacrifice of Jesus, mankind's rejection of God's offer and mankind's utter defeat when trying to oppose the power of the Almighty; III A Hymn of Thanksgiving for the final overthrow of Death."⁴¹

Weill's musical reminiscences of Handel's style further underscore the links between Mahagonny and the oratorio tradition, and, in their implied tribute to Handel's musical mastery, reinforce the effect of Brecht's allusions to the Bible: they point to expressions

of humane, ideal values which are painfully absent from the life and culture of the present.⁴² The clash of the popular music incorporated by Weill with his allusions to Handelian style, corresponds on a cultural level to the discord between the ideals cited by Brecht and the corruption of the present. This is presumably what Weill meant when he wrote:

Der Stil des Werkes ist weder naturalistisch noch symbolisch. Er könnte eher als "real" bezeichnet werden, denn er zeigt das Leben, wie es sich in der Sphäre der Kunst darstellt.⁴³

ooo000ooo

The version of the work which has been analysed here was changed in two small, but significant ways for the revised version of 1930. The song Gegen Verführung is deprived of its function as Jim's last "Anweisung", and resituated in the hurricane scene.⁴⁴ In place of Jim's (now Paul's) refusal to repent his way of life is a speech in which he ascribes the evil of Mahagonny entirely to the rule of money there:

Paul Ackermann Jetzt erkenne ich: als ich diese Stadt betrat, um mir mit Geld Freude zu kaufen, war mein Untergang besiegelt. Jetzt sitze ich hier und habe doch nichts gehabt. Ich war es, der sagte: jeder muss sich sein Stück Fleisch herausschneiden, mit jedem Messer. Da war das Fleisch faul! Die Freude, die ich kaufte, war keine Freude, und die Freiheit für Geld war keine Freiheit. Ich ass und wurde nicht satt, ich trank und wurde durstig. Gebt mir doch ein Glas Wasser!⁴⁵

Speeches of this import are also inserted into the opera's finale:

Nämlich dieses schöne Mahagonny
Hat Alles solange ihr Geld habt
Dann gibt es Alles
Weil Alles käuflich ist
Und weil es nichts gibt was man nicht kaufen kann
(...)

Aber dieses ganze Mahagonny
Hat nichts für euch wenn ihr kein Geld habt
Für Geld gibts Alles
Und ohne Geld nichts
Drum ist das Geld nur, woran man sich halten kann.⁴⁶

Through this concentration on social, remediable causes of suffering, to the exclusion of existential, irremediable ones, and through the suppression of the element of heroic nihilism in the earlier version, Brecht largely eliminates the ambivalence of his original conception. Yet this ideological expurgation of the text is bought at the price of psychological inconsistency: how the hero can suddenly overcome the limitations of his alienated consciousness and attain such a clear insight into the causes of alienation remains an unsolved problem in the revised version.

Along with the revised version of 1930, Brecht published his "Anmerkungen zur Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny" which point to the important role played by irony in this experiment with opera. In these notes Brecht describes Mahagonny as a work which "ist nichts anderes als eine Oper", in as much as it "nähert sich dem Gegenstand in geniesserischer Haltung"⁴⁷ in order to offer a "Spas" to the audience. The difference between Mahagonny and the normal operatic "Abendunterhaltung"⁴⁸ is its attempt to sabotage opera by offering "fun" which isn't really funny on the one hand - by making something truly "unvernünftig" (namely the social anarchy of capitalism) the subject-matter of opera, so as to destroy through the matching of form to content the emotionally escapist function normally performed by "Das Unvernünftige" of the operatic convention; and on the other hand, by introducing a foreign body into the opera - in the shape of directly didactic elements which make the whole question of

"Genuss" and "Ware" a matter for critical discussion.⁴⁹ Brecht's argument here is at times as oblique and ironic as the opera itself. His claim that the opera is "kulinärisch" hardly seems to fit the biting, grotesque satire of the work. Yet in using such a term, he is venting anger at what he now, a year after completing the opera, regards as his own "bourgeois" weakness in failing to offer a positive revolutionary alternative to the way of life satirized in Mahagonny. The "Anmerkungen" close with a pointer to the new direction his work has taken since the completion of Mahagonny; as part of this strategy of making a new beginning, he states, incorrectly, that he wrote the work three years previously!

Die Oper "Mahagonny" ist vor drei Jahren, 1927, geschrieben. In den anschliessenden Arbeiten wurden Versuche unternommen, das Lehrhafte auf Kosten des Kulinärischen immer stärker zu betonen. Also aus dem Genussmittel den Lehrgegenstand zu entwickeln und gewisse Institute aus Vergnügungsstätten in Publikationsorgane umzubauen.⁵⁰

Mahagonny is the last full-scale dramatic work written before Brecht's decision to place his writings wholeheartedly in the service of revolutionary Marxism. The step from here to Marxist ideology was a short one: he had already moved a long way towards analysing human behaviour in relation to its social context, and only needed now to jettison his tenacious determination to uphold anarchic-individualist values even in the face of the logic of his own social analysis. This process of attempting to eradicate his attachment to an existentialist-individualistic perspective on life will be analysed in the following chapter on his experiments with a new conception of drama, the "Lehrstück".

NOTES

1. F. Kafka, Amerika (Frankfurt, a.M. 1956), p. 200.
2. The abbreviation (M + page number) is used throughout this chapter to refer to the edition of the libretto published under the number UE 9852 by Universal Edition (Wien). It is not clear whether this version was actually published in 1929 (the work on the opera was not completed until November 1929) or in 1930; at any rate the copyright date is 1929. This is the version of the libretto used for the first performance of the work in Leipzig on 9 March, 1930. For an account of the changes in the text made for different performances, see David Drew's article "The History of Mahagonny", Musical Times (January, 1963), p. 18 et seq. The first of the changes Weill was reluctantly persuaded to make was the removal of Jim's chorale, Lasst euch nicht verführen to a new position, at the end of Act II. An alternative version of the libretto (UE 9851) is characterised both by this emendation and by the deletion of the Benares Song which was originally the twenty-first "Nummer" of the opera.
3. This term has been applied to Mahagonny by M. Kesting, Das epische Theater, p. 73.
4. K. Weill, "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper Mahagonny"; Die Musik, (März, 1930), pp. 440-441.
5. Tage mit Bertolt Brecht (München, 1960), pp. 143-144. The red flag of the Nazis may help to explain why Brecht has the founders of Mahagonny, who are anything but socialists, hoist a red flag above the town.
6. See: J. Hay; "Bertolt Brechts and Ernst Hardts gemeinsame Rundfunkarbeit", Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft 12 (1968), p. 123. In a letter from Brecht to Hardt, quoted by Hay, he says about Die Sintflut, "Es gehen ziemlich moderne Grossstädte dabei unter.", *ibid*, p. 123.
7. To avoid unnecessarily increasing the number of notes in this chapter, all references to material in the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv" are given in this form immediately after the quotation.
8. The Book of Nahum, Ch. I, v. 8.
9. The name "Job" does not reappear in the fragments. Presumably Brecht simply decided to change the name of the warning prophet to "Nahaia".
10. The theme of flight is taken up again in Brecht's earliest "Lehrstücken" and will be discussed in Chapter 8 below.
11. See the discussion of Brecht's imagery in Baal (p. 13) and in Im Dickicht (p. 117).
12. "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper Mahagonny", p. 440.

13. References in this form are to David Drew's edition and reconstruction of Das kleine Mahagonny published by Universal Edition in 1963 (UE 12889). Small Roman numerals indicate references to Drew's introduction (although these are actually printed as small arabics in the edition); Arabic numerals refer to the pages of the "Klavierauszug" itself (printed as full size arabics in the edition).
14. Boxing, as a symbol of the struggle that life essentially is, also occurs in Im Dickicht, in Das Elefantenkalb, and in the poem Gedenktafel für 12 Weltmeister (GW 8, 307). An unfinished project of Brecht's was his Lebenslauf des Boxers Samson-Körner (GW 11, 121).
15. Cf. Walter Benjamin's now classic interpretation of the song in Versuche über Brecht (Frankfurt a.M., 1967), pp. 54-56.
16. That the whole work was intended to resemble a mediaeval morality play is indicated by a general production note: "Wenn das Werk in anderen Räumlichkeiten als einem Theater oder einem Konzertsaal aufgeführt wird, hat dies den Vorteil, eine gewisse Verwandtschaft mit den mittelalterlichen Wanderbühnen augenscheinlich zu machen. MAHAGONNY IST EIN TOTENTANZ" (KM vii). What the production note omits to say, although this is clear from the text, is that Mahagonny is a secularized dance of death in which the holy family of God, Mary and Jesus are travestied in the figures of bar proprietor, prostitute (Mary Weeman), and barman ("Missionar").
17. H. Rischbieter writes of "die eigengesetzliche Kunst-Realität der Stadt Mahagonny", Bertolt Brecht, p. 75. Schumacher fails to do justice to the active participation of Brecht's fantasy in his recreation of contemporary life when he says simply, "Es ist offensichtlich, dass Mahagonny ein Abbild jener atomisierten, anarchischen kapitalistischen Gesellschaft ist", Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 273.
18. It is an interesting coincidence that Brecht's metaphor of "ein Netz, / Das für die essbaren ^{Vögel} gestellt wird" (M 6) should resemble so closely Marx's description of the relation of producer to consumer in a competitive society: "Jedes Produkt ist ein Köder, womit man das Wesen des andern, sein Geld, an sich locken will, jedes wirkliche oder mögliche Bedürfnis ist eine Schwachheit, die die Fliege an die Leimstange heranzuführen wird." Marx/Engels, Gesamtausgabe, Abt. I, Bd 3 (Berlin, 1932), p. 128.
19. Melchinger argues, "dass es für Brecht beim Entwurf dieses Werkes den Gegensatz zwischen einer bürgerlich-kapitalistischen und einer proletarisch-sozialistischen Welt nicht (noch nicht) gegeben hat: die Welt ist die Welt, Jimmy oder Paule ist der Mensch, wie ihn Brecht damals sah: homo lupus, der Mensch als des Menschen Wolf. Die Welt ist schlecht, weil der Mensch schlecht ist. Und daran wird sich nichts ändern.": "Mahagonny als Mysterienspiel", Theater heute (Mai, 1964), p. 34. This interpretation overlooks the fact that Brecht, in portraying the city founders as criminals, is criticising a social system which allows such men to control it. The question of the funda-

mental goodness or badness of human nature may be an insoluble one, but this is not what most concerns the playwright here; what worries him is the vast social power which such evil individuals can acquire under capitalism. Gaede's analysis of the work is open to the same objections: Figur und Wirklichkeit im Drama Bertolt Brechts, Ph.D. Diss. (Freiburg, 1963). One of the useful comments made by Brecht in his "Anmerkungen zur Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny" points to the specifically capitalist evils exposed in the opera: "Was den Inhalt dieser Oper betrifft, ihr Inhalt ist der Genuss. Spass also nicht nur als Form, sondern auch als Gegenstand. Das Vergnügen sollte wenigstens Gegenstand der Untersuchung sein, wenn schon die Untersuchung Gegenstand des Vergnügens sein sollte. Es tritt hier in seiner gegenwärtigen historischen Gestalt auf: als Ware". Versuche 1 - 12, p. 103. (Berlin/Frankfurt a.M., 1959)

20. "Der Fetischcharakter der Ware und sein Geheimnis", Das Kapital I, (Leipzig, 1929), p. 49 et seq.
21. G. Hartung makes this comment on the role of nature in Brecht's parable plays: "Brechts Parabelstücke kreuzen überhaupt gern natürliche und gesellschaftliche Bedingungen (Regen in Mann ist Mann, Alkohol in Puntilla); die Natur wird hier immer zur Auslösung gesellschaftlicher Konflikte benutzt, sie hat die Rolle des Zufalls im alten Drama übernommen." "Zur epischen Oper Brechts und Weills", Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Halle, (Juni, 1959), pp. 670-671. Yet, it also needs to be said that the hurricane represents not only the chance interference of external nature in human institutions but also, as a symbol of transience, the hostility to the falsity of life in modern society which grows out of man's existential self-awareness.
22. Adorno sees in Jim's behaviour in this scene "Intentionen der Freiheit": "Was aber in der Nacht des Hurrikans geschieht, was sprengt und in der wirren Verstrickung der Anarchie über sie hinausdeutet, ist Improvisation; die ungebärdigen Lieder, in denen die Freiheit des Menschen sich meldet: 'Wir brauchen keinen Hurrikan, wir brauchen keinen Taifun', die atheistische Theologie des 'Denn wie man sich bettet, so liegt man'. So treten quer und verdeckt im Kapitalismus und in seinen Krisen zumals Intentionen der Freiheit auf, und sie sind es allein, in denen der klassenlose Zustand sich ankündigt", "Mahagonny", Der Scheinwerfer III, Heft 14 (Essen, 1930), p. 13. It is presumably because of the "Verstrickung" of freedom in the meshes of capitalist anarchy and the alienation this creates, that Adorno sees at the end of the opera a "Revolution" which comes "zu spät", Mahagonny, p. 14.
23. Gaede oversimplifies - and so falsifies - the significance of the woodcutting-symbol in Brecht's early works when he asserts that, "alles, was den Wald betrifft, toposartig in Brechts Werk eine ursprüngliche und eigenständige Realität meint, die gegen jede Manipulierbarkeit ihr 'An sich' bewahrt." Figur und Wirklichkeit im Drama Brechts p. 49. Yet from the beginning, the forest has connections both with man's fundamental existen-

tial situation, and with the manipulation of that situation within capitalist society: the patronising Mech who tries to "buy" Baal, is a wholesaler in the timber business i.e., he is a symbol of death in the guise of a capitalist entrepreneur, an embodiment of the spiritual death involved in accepting the bonds of capitalism.

24. Hartung comments aptly: "Die grosse Pointe des Stückes besteht nun aber darin, dass in Mahagonny auch dieses äusserste Vergnügen zu haben ist, natürlich nur für Geld. Auch der anarchistische Individualismus wird zur Ware und muss gekauft werden; er ist nur den Besitzenden möglich. Mahagonny stellt sich einfach um und verkauft ein Vergnügen neuer Art, wobei es jetzt erst richtig zur Blüte kommt. Keiner der Besitzer hat etwas gegen den Anarchismus solange er im Rahmen des Gesetzes bleibt und die Warenwelt nicht antastet", "Zur epischen Oper Brechts und Weills", p. 669. The difference between Brecht's presentation of events and Hartung's interpretation of them lies in the fact that Brecht is spelling out in grotesquely exaggerated terms the potential immorality of the system, whereas Hartung takes this to be a fair account of what actually happens under capitalism.
25. Adorno makes this comment: "Die Anarchie der Warenproduktion, die die marxistische Analyse trifft, kommt projiziert als Anarchie der Konsumtion vor, verkürzt bis zum bündigen Entsetzen, das die ökonomische Analyse so nicht zeitigen könnte." , "Mahagonny", p. 12.
26. *ibid*, p. 12.
27. Schumacher appears unwilling to take the possible consequences of alienation as seriously as Brecht did, when he criticises as flatly wrong the fact that Brecht has a worker discover and pronounce the law of anarchy as the key to happiness: "Falsch an der Brechtschen Darstellung ist weiter, dass die Maxime der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft: Alles ist erlaubt für Geld, unter dem Eindruck einer Naturkatastrophe entdeckt wird, wo sie Voraussetzung für die kapitalistische Verhaltensweise schlechthin ist. Noch schiefer ist, dass die Maxime von einem Holzfäller, einem Arbeiter entdeckt und ausgesprochen werden muss." Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 273. Yet surely the irony of the work lies precisely in its showing workers embrace a principle (of exploitation) which, although they have been and remain unconscious of its full implications, already operates in their lives, and which only becomes fully effective through their explicit acceptance of it: alienation operates most effectively when the alienated person accepts as "natural" the processes which create alienation.
28. Adorno comments well on the situation of the lovers: "Die Frau hat er sich gekauft und zu seiner Bequemlichkeit soll sie keine Wäsche tragen, aber beim Sterben bittet er sie um Verzeihung: 'Nimm mir nichts übel'; und ihr schnödes 'Warum denn' hat mehr strahlende Veröhnung, als alle Romanciers edler Resignation je zusammen aufbrächten", Mahagonny, p. 13.

29. Hartung writes of a "Widerspruch von Einsicht und Sehnsucht" in Brecht's implied defence to the last of Jimmy's individualism despite his own awareness, "dass dieser Individualismus Ware ist, gekauft werden muss, den Menschen zugrunde richtet", "Zur epischen Oper Brechts und Weills", p.673. This interpretation simplifies the problem by failing to recognise that there are two distinct perspectives involved. On the one hand, it is true that Brecht criticizes individualism on the grounds that it is limited in its possibilities of expression by its social context: unless the individual lives outside society, he must be contaminated by its alienating, manipulative influences. But on the other hand, the fact that Jim's individualism is shown to be self-destructive does not necessarily imply outright criticism of it. Brecht presents the conscious self-destruction of Baal and Eduard in an heroic light, as being honest in its acceptance of a destructive world. Thus, while one may agree that the logic of Brecht's social analysis "contradicts" his longing for individualism, one may equally well conclude that this very logic argues for total asociality (which, admittedly, has internal barriers to overcome within the individual), or one may see Brecht's existential pessimism as making irrelevant any prudential conclusions that one might draw from the logic of his social analysis.
30. I have been deliberately cautious in suggesting that Brecht may have implied a positive alternative to the social system analysed here. Schumacher, by contrast, who gives no consideration to the problem of whether it is possible to overcome the effects of alienation, takes it as a matter of course, that if Brecht had recognised the potential of a revolutionary proletariat, the work need not have been so pessimistic in its conclusions: "Es ist klar: Wenn nur die Anarchie mit all ihren Grausamkeiten, mit ihrer ungeheuerlichen Entmenschlichung registriert wird, nicht aber auch der Gegenspieler des Kapitalismus, das kämpferische Proletariat unter Führung einer revolutionären Partei, dann bleibt nur Resignation und ein trüber Ausblick", Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts, p. 276.
31. Gaede sees only existential pessimism in the finale, Figur und Wirklichkeit im Drama Brechts p.108. Yet even if one stresses the existential dimension of the work, it is not clear that its conclusion is pessimistic; that Brecht could see value in self-destructive nihilism has been noted already in the examination of Leben Eduards des Zweiten.
32. In later years Brecht liked to think of his writings as embodying a "kämpferischen Realismus" (GW 19, 374).
33. Weill incorporated the "Gestus des Zeigens" in his music: "immer musste der einfache, balladeske Grundstil gewahrt bleiben", "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper Mahagonny", p. 440.
34. "Vorwort zum Regiebuch der Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny", Anbruch Heft 1 (Wien, 1930), p. 6.

35. Brecht talked of the need to destroy through farce the irrational respect which power commands, in connexion with his satire on Hitler, Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui (GW 17, 1176).
36. Gaede, who has drawn attention to a number of the similarities between Mahagonny and Handel's Messiah, describes Brecht's opera as a "materialisiertes Weltspiel", (Figur und Wirklichkeit im Drama Brechts, p. 98), where men take over the function of God. Where I would disagree with him is in his interpretation of Mahagonny as a model of the whole world, rather than as a model specifically of a capitalist undertaking.
37. See the article by W.A.J. Steer, "The Thematic Unity of Brecht's Der kaukasische Kreidekreis", German Life and Letters, 21 (1967/68), p. 1 et seq.
38. Drew quotes a letter of Weill's in which he describes changes made, unwillingly, by him, which obscured the revolutionary implications of the finale: "for two whole days now I have worked with Brecht at a clarification of the events in Act 3. We now have a version which the Pope himself could no longer take exception to. It is made clear that the final demonstrations are in no wise 'Communitic' - it is simply that Mahagonny, like Sodom and Gomorrha, falls on account of the crimes, the licentiousness and the general confusion of its inhabitants", "The History of Mahagonny", p. 20.
39. "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper Mahagonny", p. 441.
40. "Vorwort zum Regiebuch der Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny", p. 7.
41. J.P. Larsen, Handel's Messiah (London, 1957), p. 96.
42. Both Hartung and Adorno offer detailed analyses and interpretations of Weill's musical symbolism. See, Hartung "Zur epischen Oper Brechts und Weills", pp. 671-672, and Adorno: "Mahagonny", pp. 14-15.
43. "Vorwort zum Regiebuch der Oper Aufstieg und Fall er Stadt Mahagonny", p. 7.
44. See Versuche 1-12, pp. 68-69.
45. *ibid.*, p. 97.
46. *ibid.*, pp. 98-99.
47. *ibid.*, p. 102.
48. *ibid.*, p. 101.
49. *ibid.*, pp. 103-107.
50. *ibid.*, p. 107.

CHAPTER EIGHT

From the "Lindberghflug" to "Der böse Baal der asoziale"

Throughout this thesis it has been argued that the unity of the first period in Brecht's development as a dramatist is constituted by the common factor of unresolved conflict. At the root of the many and varied antagonisms in the early plays there is a fundamental existential conflict between the self and the world which will ultimately destroy it. This existential antagonism has social repercussions. Depending on their degree of intellectual sophistication, the characters may be more or less aware of the nature of the conflicts in which they are inevitably involved. Whereas characters like Baal, König Eduard or Shlink are moved by their private existential conflicts deliberately to seek conflicts in the social dimension of life, in order to mete out to others the treatment which they receive from the world, other characters, who are less aware of the fundamental antagonisms in existence, such as Galy Gay, Kragler or Jim Mahoney, are subjected involuntarily to conflicts which they barely understand. A further dimension of conflict is created by the inescapable burden of ethical awareness which hinders men in their pursuit of existential independence; mostly an ethical perspective is presented through minor characters, but even the most brutally selfish heroes also experience moments of remorse. Conflict is to be found not only within the characters and action of these early plays, but is also reflected at a formal level in the tension between certain stylistic characteristics which betray and invite sympathetic involvement in the characters' conflicts, and others which have the effect of inhibiting such empathy.

It is now proposed to conclude this study with a quite brief examination of some aspects of certain of the "Lehrstücke" which Brecht began to publish in 1929, and which mark the break with his earlier type of drama. In these short pieces he turns away from the ironies and pervasive ambivalence of his first period, in order to concentrate attention on specific social problems amenable to rational solution. Brecht's underlying insecurity about the rightness of his moral decision to exchange ambivalence for political determination to change the world at all costs is suggested, it will be argued here, by the fact that he continually returns in these "learning-plays"¹ to a basic situation of an individual in confrontation with death. In particular, one of the "Lehrstücke", which significantly remained a fragment despite repeated attempts to complete it, a series of scenes entitled Der böse Baal der asoziale, bears out the impression that the rational pragmatism of the early 1930s was constantly threatened, privately at least, by doubts arising from a continuing sympathy with the existential perspective of the transient individual.

At the Baden-Baden music festival in July 1929 two new works by Brecht were performed, the Lindberghflug² with music by Weill, and a contrasting piece simply entitled lehrstück³ with music by Hindemith. Certain features of these pieces suggest that they may have been intended to be performed together as a kind of diptych. Both works deal with man's attempts to fly, both take the theme of flight as the starting point for a consideration of the individual's relation to society, and, in addition to these links in content, there is the interesting formal feature that the chorus which concludes the Lindberghflug is repeated as the opening chorus of the lehrstück.

Before going on to examine these works in some detail, some general remarks must be made about the change in Brecht's thinking which took place about this time.

While working on his new concept of a drama for lay actors, which would be designed to give them training in the attitudes of mind necessary for survival in the modern world,⁴ Brecht made the following jotting in a notebook, reproduced by Steinweg in the form of reported speech:

Das Kommen grosser Veränderungen kündige sich durch Furcht an. Gegenwärtig gebe es Furcht vor dem Überhandnehmen der grossen Städte, vor dem Mechanischen und vor der kollektiven Moral. Die Führenden jedoch verwirklichten die grossen Städte usw., weil es Torheit sei, gegen den Strom zu schwimmen, aber weise, die Richtung des Stroms zu erkennen.⁵

Here a positive attitude to the advance of modern civilisation replaces the mainly negative attitude expressed in the earlier plays. The hero of the Lebenslauf des Mannes Baal, it will be recalled, dreaded the spread of the great cities and devoted himself to a frantic "Abgrasen" of nature before it became swallowed up by progress; in Mann ist Mann and Mahagonny the mechanical and collectivist tendencies of modern life were the subject of severe criticism. Acceptance of the objective compulsions of the modern world, which in Mann ist Mann was presented as an act of immoral self-preservation, now acquires moral dignity as "Einverständnis", a pragmatic philosophy of facing up to certain inescapable forces in the real world as a first step to learning how to gain control over the flow of events. This concept of "Einverständnis" is a dialectical one, for general assent to the flow of events (towards mechanisation and collectivisation) does not mean resigned acceptance of the negative aspects of such tendencies, just as acceptance of collectivisation does not imply acceptance of the

exploitative social structure in which this process has hitherto unfolded. Brecht sums up the dialectical nature of his new activist philosophy in the paradoxical statement, "einverstanden sein heisst auch: nicht einverstanden sein".⁶ Later Brecht found support for this conception of political action in the writings of Francis Bacon:

Gute Devisen für Realisten sind schon Francis Bacons Sätze: "Natura non nisi parendo vincitur" (Die Natur beherrscht nur, der ihr gehorcht) und "Ignoratio causae destituit effectum" (Wenn die Ursache nicht bekannt ist, kann die Wirkung nicht hervorgebracht werden). Eine realistische Betrachtungsweise ist eine solche, welche die treibenden Kräfte studiert, eine realistische Handlungsweise eine solche, welche die treibenden Kräfte in Bewegung setzt. (GW 19, 368)

The dialectical nature of "Einverständnis" is evident in its application to the fields of science or technology, where human freedom manifests itself in the creative ability to devise means of meeting and controlling the pressures of "Notwendigkeiten":

Schwer ist es, einverstanden zu sein; denn schwer ist es, zu erkennen, was verlangt wird. Die Notwendigkeiten verlangen die Erfindungen. Die Erfindungen sind Einverständnisse.⁷

The first dramatic expression of Brecht's new attitude to modern technology, and to the masses whose lives can be improved or impaired by its achievements, is the radio-play (significantly, a new form designed to exploit the social potential of a new technology) entitled Der Lindberghflug, to which we now turn.

As the title indicates, the Lindberghflug concerns Charles Lindbergh's successful transatlantic flight in May 1927. The work, which is arranged for orchestra, soloist (who takes the part of Lindbergh) and chorus (which sings various parts), is divided into fifteen "Nummern", each with its own introductory headline, thus:

- ERSTENS: Aufforderung an die amerikanischen Flieger,
den Ozean zu überfliegen.
- ZWEITENS: Vorstellung des Fliegers Charles Lindbergh.
- DRITTENS: Aufbruch des Fliegers Charles Lindbergh in New
York zu seinem Flug nach Europa. (L 2)

Lindbergh's response to this challenge reveals a mixture of emotional excitement and sober practicality in his approach to his task:

Ich fliege allein.
Statt eines Mannes nehme ich mehr Benzin mit.
Ich fliege allein
In einem Apparat ohne Radio.
Ich fliege mit dem besten Kompass,
Drei Tage habe ich gewartet auf das Wetter.
Aber die Berichte der Wetterwarten
Sind nicht gut und werden schlechter,
Nebel über den Küsten und Sturm über dem Meer.
Aber jetzt warte ich nicht länger,
Jetzt steige ich auf!
Ich wage es! (L 8-10)

Throughout the flight Lindbergh has to fight with natural enemies, fog, snow and sleep. At first he is confident of his strength, but during the snowstorm's onslaught he begins to despair. After experiencing the fear of death, Lindbergh's boastful self-confidence yields to a new, more sober attitude to his undertaking:

(spricht schnell und leise, ohne Ausdruck)
Zwei Kontinente, zwei Kontinente
Warten auf mich.
Ich muss ankommen.

Auf wen wartet man?
Und sogar der auf den man nicht wartet,
Ankommen muss er.

Mut ist gar nichts, aber
Ankommen ist alles.
Wer auf das Meer hinausfliegt und ersauft,
Der ist ein verdammter Narr, denn
Auf dem Meer ersauft man.
Also muss ich ankommen.

Wind drückt herunter und
Nebel macht steuerlos, aber
Ich muss ankommen.

Freilich mein Apparat
Ist schwach und schwach ist
Mein Kopf aber
Drüben erwarten sie mich und sagen,
'Der kommt an', und da
Muss ich ankommen. (L 36-38)

Lindbergh now draws strength to keep going from his knowledge that the hopes of many people are invested in him, and from his determination not to appear a fool in the eyes of the world. Whereas previously his main concern was for self-aggrandizement, the humbling experience of mortal fear has given him some distance from his former self ("Auf wen wartet man? Und sogar der auf den man nicht wartet, ankommen muss er"). Thus, when he arrives at Le Bourget, he does not sing a song of triumph, but simply repeats the verses sung by the chorus during his flight:

Wenn der Glückliche über das Meer fliegt,
Halten die Stürme sich zurück.
Wenn die Stürme sich nicht zurückhalten,
Bewährt sich der Motor.
Wenn der Motor sich nicht bewährt,
Bewährt sich der Mann.
Und bewährt sich der Mann nicht,
Dann bewährt sich das Glück!
Also glauben wir,
Dass der Glückliche ankommt. (L 50-53)

There may be irony in this speech, in that the bland confidence of the public about the success of "Lucky Lindbergh" is unlikely to correspond to the feelings of the pilot himself after his hard experience of the extent to which the individual's life is dependent on the sheer contingency of luck. But, whether ironic or not, Lindbergh's words here do indicate an acceptance of the limits of man's capacity to control his fate, an acceptance which is further underscored by the closing chorus of the cantata, headed "Bericht über das Unerreichbare":

Tausend Jahre fiel alles von oben nach unten,
Ausgenommen der Vogel.
Selbst auf den ältesten Steinen
Fanden wir keine Zeichnung
Von irgend einem Menschen, der
Durch die Luft geflogen ist.
Aber wir haben uns erhoben,
Aber wir haben uns erhoben.

Gegen Ende des zweiten Jahrtausends unserer Zeitrechnung
Erhob sich unsere
Stählerne Einfalt,
Aufzeigend das Mögliche,
Ohne uns vergessend zu machen das
Unerreichbare:

Diesem ist dieser Bericht gewidmet. (L 59-64)

The acceptance, in the Lindberghflug, both of individual limitation, and of the limits of all human achievement, is the first dramatic expression of Brecht's turn away from unresolvable existential conflicts, and towards problems which could be solved by collective, technological effort. The work teaches such acceptance of individual limitation as a first step towards practical progress not only through its content, but also through the manner of its performance. The cantata is not designed for public performance before a passive audience, but is intended rather as an instrument of education for each individual listener, who is required to read or sing the part of the aviator while the radio broadcasts the other parts:

Der "Ozeanflug" hat keinen Wert, wenn man sich nicht daran schult. Er besitzt keinen Kunstwert, der eine Aufführung rechtfertigt, die diese Schulung nicht bezweckt. Er ist ein Lehrgegenstand und zerfällt in zwei Teile. Der eine Teil (die Gesänge der Elemente, die Chöre, die Wasser- und Motorengeräusche und so weiter) hat die Aufgabe, die Übung zu ermöglichen, das heisst einzuleiten und zu unterbrechen, was am besten durch einen Apparat geschieht. Der andere pädagogische Teil (der Fliegerpart) ist der Text für die Übung: Der Übende ist Hörer des einen Textteiles und Sprecher des anderen Teiles. Auf diese Art entsteht eine Zusammenarbeit zwischen Apparat und Übenden, wobei es mehr auf Genauigkeit als auf Ausdruck

ankommt. Der Text ist mechanisch zu sprechen und zu singen, am Schluss jeder Verszeile ist abzusetzen, der abgehörte Teil ist mechanisch mitzulesen.

(...)

Diese Übung dient der Disziplinierung, welche die Grundlage der Freiheit ist. Der einzelne aber wird zwar nach einem Genussmittel von selber greifen, nicht aber nach einem Lehrgegenstand, der ihm weder Verdienst noch gesellschaftliche Vorteile verspricht. Solche Übungen nützen dem einzelnen nur, indem sie dem Staat nützen, und sie nützen nur einem Staat, der allen gleichmässig nützen will. Der "Ozeanflug" hat also weder einen ästhetischen noch einen revolutionären Wert, der unabhängig von seiner Anwendung besteht, die nur der Staat organisieren kann. Seine richtige Anwendung aber macht ihn immerhin so weit "revolutionär", dass der gegenwärtige Staat kein Interesse hat, diese Übungen zu veranstalten. (GW 18, 124-127)

That Brecht was not entirely satisfied with the answer given in Der Lindberghflug to the individual's fear of death, namely that he must simply accept that there are problems to which no solutions are humanly attainable ("das Unerreichbare"), is suggested by the other cantata performed at Baden-Baden, the lehrstück. This second piece opens with the chorus which had ended the Lindberghflug, thus making the newly arrived-at acceptance of human limitations the starting point for its reconsideration of the individual's relation to society. Whereas the Lindberghflug presented the theme of transatlantic flight within a universal context of human progress, technology is seen in the lehrstück from a dialectically opposed standpoint, namely that of the oppressed classes whose life is not directly improved at present by technical achievements. The deepening of the problem of the individual's relation to the collective consequent on this change of perspective, is accompanied by a more detailed consideration of the problems of contingency and transience as they affect the individual. These two problems are brought together in a drama of confrontation in which one of Lindbergh's

less fortunate predecessors, the crashed airman Nungesser, appeals to a chorus representing the oppressed masses for help in his extremity. His request for water and a cushion for his head is refused on the grounds that he has done nothing to deserve such help. At this point the question of death which was raised in the Lindberghflug, only to be answered by resigned acceptance of the limits of human self-determination, is posed again in an acute manner. Whereas Lindbergh could accept the existence of insuperable problems because he personally was fortunate enough to escape death, the crashed airman Nungesser is unable emotionally to acquiesce in the fact of his own transience.

Although unwilling to give material assistance to the dying man, the chorus makes an offer of spiritual help, namely instruction in how to come to terms with death. The lesson then given to the aviator is a doctrine of total renunciation:

aus dem chor tritt der sprecher mit einem buch. er begibt sich zu dem gestürzten und liest folgende sätze:

welcher von uns stirbt, was gibt der auf? der gibt doch nicht nur seinen tisch auf oder sein bett auf! wer von uns stirbt, der weiss auch: ich gebe auf was da vorhanden ist, mehr als ich habe schenke ich weg. wer von uns stirbt, der gibt die strasse auf, die er kennt und auch, die er nicht kennt. die reichtümer die er hat und auch: die er nicht hat. die armut selbst. seine eigene hand.

wie nun wird der einen stein heben, der nicht geübt ist? wie wird der einen grossen stein heben? wie wird, der das aufgeben nicht geübt hat, seinen tisch aufgeben oder gar: alles aufgeben, was er hat und was er nicht hat! die strasse die er kennt und auch, die er nicht kennt. die reichtümer, die er hat und auch: die er nicht hat. die armut selbst. seine eigene hand. (LS 28)

The chorus advises the aviator to reduce himself to his spiritual "kleinste Grösse" in order that he may thus be able to meet death with equanimity:

um einen menschen zu seinem tode zu ermutigen bat der denkende ihn seine güter abzulegen. als er alles abgelegt hatte blieb nur das leben übrig. lege weiter ab sagte der denkende.

wenn der denkende den sturm überwand so überwand er ihn weil er einverstanden war mit dem sturm. also wenn ihr den tod überwinden wollt so überwindet ihr ihn wenn ihr einverstanden seid mit dem tod. wer aber den wunsch hat einverstanden zu sein der hält bei der armut. an die dinge hält er sich nicht. die dinge können genommen werden und dann ist da kein einverständnis. auch an die gedanken hält er sich nicht: die gedanken können auch genommen werden und dann ist da auch kein einverständnis. (LS 30-31)

This piece of positive instruction in the prudence of "Einverständnis" is followed by a warning that failure to assume one's "kleinste Grösse" voluntarily will have painful consequences, since life will inevitably enforce a reduction in stature at the first sign of weakness. This warning is expressed in a symbolic "Clownszene" in which two clowns, "einser" and "zweier" physically dismantle a third, giant clown by the name of Herr Schmitt. After this demonstration Nungesser accepts the puniness of his achievements in flight and renounces even his individuality:

wer also stirbt wenn du stirbst
der zuviel gerühmt wurde

wer also stirbt wenn du stirbst
der sich wenig über den boden erhob

wer also stirbt wenn du stirbst
auf den niemand wartet

wer also stirbt wenn du stirbst
niemand

jetzt weiss er: niemand stirbt wenn er stirbt

jetzt hat er seine kleinste grösse erreicht. (LS 45-47)

In writing this peculiar drama of secularised spiritual quiescence Brecht was clearly still strongly aware of the individual's natural terror of death, so much so, in fact, that he felt it necessary to provide a social answer even to this most private and

intractable of problems in an effort to integrate the self fully into the social dimension of existence. Presumably it was because Brecht was also the creator of Baal, a man who sucks in greedily every last breath of life, that he felt the need to make such excessive claims about the collective's ability to ease even the most intimate individual problem. His keen awareness that the terrors of death can drive the individual into a desperate, defiantly asocial way of life in what was for him an otherwise meaningless world, led Brecht to attempt to socialise even the moment of dying. Again and again in his early "Lehrstücke" Brecht returns to the extreme situation of a man confronted with his own death, and creates situations where the individual is shown to feel a bond even in his dying moment with other men. In two of these plays a physical gesture of bodily proximity underscores the theme of spiritual unity:

Die drei Studenten

Lehne deinen Kopf an unsern Arm.
Strenge dich nicht an.
Wir tragen dich vorsichtig. (GW 2, 622)

Die drei Agitatoren

Lehne deinen Kopf an unsern Arm
Schliess die Augen.
Wir tragen dich.⁸

The suspicion that unresolved existential conflict continues to exist in Brecht's mind despite his adoption of the doctrine of "Einverständnis", is confirmed by the evidence of another "Lehrstück", Der böse Baal der asoziale, on which he began work in 1930 but which, despite continued experimentation, still remained a fragment when he gave up work on it in 1954.

In 1930 Brecht had thought that it ought to be possible to write a "Lehrstück" which embodied truly asocial behaviour:

Indem die jungen Leute im Spiele Taten vollbringen, die ihrer eigenen Betrachtung unterworfen sind, werden sie für den Staat erzogen. Diese Spiele müssen so erfunden und so ausgeführt werden, dass der Staat einen Nutzen hat. Über den Wert eines Satzes oder einer Geste oder einer Handlung entscheidet also nicht die Schönheit, sondern: ob der Staat Nutzen davon hat, wenn die Spielenden den Satz sprechen, die Geste ausführen und sich in die Handlung begeben. Der Nutzen, den der Staat haben soll, könnte allerdings von platten Köpfen sehr verkleinert werden, wenn sie zum Beispiel die Spielenden nur solche Handlungen vollführen lassen würden, die ihnen sozial erscheinen. Aber gerade die Darstellung des Asozialen durch den werdenden Bürger des Staates ist dem Staate sehr nützlich, besonders wenn sie nach genauen und grossartigen Mustern ausgeführt wird. Der Staat kann am besten die asozialen Triebe der Menschen am besten dadurch verbessern, dass er sie, die von der Furcht und Unkenntnis kommen, in einer möglichst vollendeten und dem einzelnen selbständig beinahe unerreichbaren Form von jedem erzwingt. Dies ist die Grundlage des Gedankens, das Theaterspielen in Pädagogien zu verwenden. (GW 17, 1023)⁹

What is not made clear is how the "asozialen Triebe" might be "verbessert" (whatever this may mean), nor how each individual could be forced to produce such asocial drives with a degree of perfection unattainable by individuals acting independently. Examination of Der böse Baal der asoziale, which incorporates just such asocial or anti-social behaviour, suggests that Brecht was not himself clear about how to accommodate asociality within a collectivised society.

In the fragmentary scenes which make up the first "Schicht" of Der böse Baal der asoziale, Brecht's approach to the problem of asociality is the relatively simple one of demonstrating the positive possibilities in apparently anti-social behaviour, and the possible anti-social effects of superficially correct behaviour. In the longest of these scenes Baal, who has been invited to sing at a dinner party given in his honour by a rich man, breaks his host's musical instrument in order to test the genuineness of his praise for Baal's performance:

aus misstrauen, um zu prüfen, ob das lob des kaufmanns ernst gemeint ist, zerschlägt der böse baal der asoziale vor seinen augen das instrument. (DBB 79)

Here his anti-social behaviour has the positive function of exposing the hypocrisy of the merchant, whose interest lies in giving a grand dinner party to show off his wealth, including his musical instrument, rather than in listening to the poetry of Baal. Another short scene shows "der böse Baal" in the role of a government official:

Der böse Baal

als passbeamter. eine frau kämpft um das leben ihres bruders. der beamte erfüllt sämtliche formalitäten. eile ist alles. (DBB 81)

That superficial generosity or orderliness are no guarantee of a person's positive social intentions is the fairly obvious lesson which might be learned by performing these scenes. On the other hand, the scenes do not explore the causes of or possible remedies for such behaviour, nor do they raise the question as to whether the self has a truly asocial dimension to its existence, nor how the good state should deal with the existence of asocial needs or impulses if they do exist.

Before taking up work on the project again, Brecht tried to account for his inability to develop it very far in the first place.

In March 1939 he made the following note:

Heute begriff ich endlich, warum es mir nie gelungen ist, die kleinen Lehrstücke von den Abenteuern des "Bösen Baal, des assozialen" herzustellen. Die assozialen Leute spielen keine Rolle. Es sind einfach die Besitzer der Produktionsmittel und sonstigen Lebensquellen, und sie sind es nur als solche. Natürlich sind es auch ihre Helfer und Helfershelfer, aber eben auch nur als solche. Es ist geradezu das Evangelium des Feindes der Menschheit, dass es assoziale Triebe gibt, assoziale Persönlichkeiten usw. (DBB 109)

This feeble attempt to dismiss the problem of asociality by equating it with one very limited type of behaviour, namely ownership of the means of production - which would mean that in a state where the means of production were publicly owned the public would be asocial! - can have done little to satisfy Brecht's unease about the play's incompleteness. Two years later, in March 1941, he had another flash of insight into his reasons for leaving the work a fragment:

Der grosse Irrtum, der mich hinderte, die Lehrstückchen vom "Bösen Baal dem asozialen" herzustellen, bestand in meiner Definition des Sozialismus als einer grossen Ordnung. Er ist hingegen viel praktischer als grosse Produktion zu definieren. Produktion muss natürlich im weitesten Sinn genommen werden, und der Kampf gilt der Befreiung der Produktivität aller Menschen von allen Fesseln. Die Produkte können sein Brot, Lampen, Hüte, Musikstücke, Schachzüge, Wässerung, Teint, Charakter, Spiele usw. usw. (DBB 110)

Just how the concept of productivity solves the problem of asociality is not clear. What Brecht does not seem to have asked himself is whether any state could ensure "grosse Produktivität" without "grosse Ordnung".

In the "zweite Schicht" of the composition of Der böse Baal der asoziale more scenes are worked out in greater detail. By now it is clear that Brecht is prepared to face up to the problems of the truly asocial aspects of the human mind. One short scene concerns the value of Baal's poem, Der Choral vom Bösen Baal :

Verleger und Arbeiter (staatsmann)

nach dem choral vom bösen baal.

Arbeiter die wörter sind gut aber der inhalt hat keinen wert für den staat.

Baal und Keuner die wörter sind der inhalt -

Keuner - und der staat kann ihn verwerten. ich wende mich wie du siehst gegen dich weil ich einen mann

nicht beurteile nicht nach dem was er abliefert.
diese art zu urteilen gehört zu einem schlechten
staat. (DBB 83)

Keuner's claim that the state - a workers' state in this instance - can "use" things which have no practical purpose, even the form of a poem, marks a considerable advance towards the accommodation of asocial values within society. Quite apart from the defence of formal qualities of poetry as being of the essence of poetry, the acknowledgement in this scene of the beauty of a poem which celebrates the intrinsic value of an intensely led, utterly self-centred life shows how far Brecht was now prepared to go in asserting that individual happiness was the yardstick by which to judge the success of any form of social organisation. The immediate emotional appeal of Baal's existential perspective on life is demonstrated in the last scene of this fragment, when a messenger brings Baal notice of his dismissal:

Der Mann Herr Inzipient! Sie brauchen heute nicht ins Büro zu kommen. (Er hält ihm einen blauen Brief hin.) Ich bekomme 20 Pfennig. (Gibt ihm den Brief.)

Baal (legt sich aufs Bett) Was steht drin, Baumann?

Der Amtsdienner (liest) Werter Herr Baal! Da für Genies Ihrer Sorte eine so ermüdende Arbeit wie die eines Schreibers, der Sie sich ja selbst tagelang entziehen, nicht mit dem Verantwortlichkeitsgefühl der Behörde vereinbar ist, sind Sie ab 1. Juni aus den städtischen Diensten entlassen. Unterschrift: der Chef selbst. Es tut mir leid, Herr Inzipient.

Baal Baumann, manchmal träume ich von einem See, der ist tief und dunkel und zwischen die Fische lege ich mich und schaue den Himmel an. Tag und Nacht, bis ich verfault bin.

Der Amtsdienner Unter diesen Umständen verzichte ich auf die 20 Pfennig, obwohl ich auch leben muss. Habe die Ehre! (Ab.)

Baal (lacht) (DBB 90-91)

Baal's lyrical talent places the individual's transience at the centre of concern, as does his whole way of life in all its creative and destructive aspects. Brecht's sympathy for this existential perspective is counterbalanced by an awareness, evident in other scenes, of the dangers for society contained in the energies which are released by such a keen sense of transience. In one of these scenes Baal is shown to behave with senseless destructiveness, spoiling the meal of a pair of hungry workers who, because of their eagerness to start eating, fail to give him all the praise he wants for one of his poems (DBB 87). In an overt statement of intention Brecht claimed that there should be a progression from sympathy for Baal to antipathy towards him in the course of the "Lehrstück" (DBB 89). In another passage, however, his uncertainty about condemning Baal from the standpoint of the state's concern for order is evident:

darin aber ist der böse baal der asoziale gross
dass seine stimme durch den bericht seines feindes
der ihn beschreibt die meine
hindurchdringt
mich bezichtigend ich hätte
von heiterkeit erfüllt
so lange er die ausbeuter ausbeutete
und die verwerter verwertete
ihn schlechter behandelt
als er auch meiner gesetze spottete
aber dies ist seine schuld
darum ist er der asoziale geheissen
dass an ihn billige forderungen stellend
der vollkommene staat wie ein ausbeuter dastünde (DBB 90)

The irony here lies in the fact that even in the commentator's closing lines of self-justification, Baal's voice continues to be heard mocking the talk of "billige forderungen". Brecht's ambivalence is reflected in an ambiguity in the third line, where "die meine" links grammatically the voice of the narrator, Baal's enemy, with the voice of Baal himself, so as to suggest an underlying identity behind these

two Brechtian personae. It is surely no coincidence that Brecht's initials, bb, are contained in the abbreviation which he mostly uses for "der böse Baal der asoziale", dbbda.

To the end, it would appear, Brecht was divided in his mind between two perspectives on life, the one seeing society, all society, from the standpoint of the existential self, as simply a mass of other selves with whom he is in constant competition, the other seeing society ideally as a moral institution in which right is somehow more than might. The following four antithetically arranged stanzas taken from Der böse Baal der asoziale perfectly express the clash of these two perspectives, which he still found himself unable completely to resolve as late as 1954:

Der linke Chor

der beste zustand ist
die kälte vor die wärme kommt
alles macht sich so klein
wie es nur sein kann. alles
schweigt so sparsam nur
der gedanke ist da un-
ausführbar und dann
kommt die wärme

Der rechte Chor

das tier ohne fell
in der kälte erfriert es und
die kälte kommt doch
der mann ohne mantel
erfriert weil es kalt ist
denn die welt ist kalt
und der denkende liebt
die welt wie sie ist

Der rechte Chor

lobet das schöne tier das
grausame. sein klares auge
spiegelt wider den natürlichen schrecken
der unänderbaren welt ohne
zusatz. es ist
ohne furcht vor der zukunft und
dem hunger des feinds. es nimmt

hin was kommt für
andre und sich

Der linke Chor

die welt ist kalt
darum verändert sie
ist der mensch wärme gewohnt
und erfriert ohne mantel
gebt ihm den mantel gleich
der denkende liebt
die welt wie sie wird.

Not surprisingly, Brecht tried to keep out of his later plays the kind of intractable conflict which was typical of his early work and which, as can be seen from the fragment of Der böse Baal der asoziale, continued to concern him long after his turn to Marxism. Yet it cannot be said that he was altogether successful in his later plays in presenting a vision of life which unambiguously invited a Marxist interpretation of and solution to human problems. In so far as these plays have an overt message, they uphold humane values such as "Freundlichkeit", and condemn the evils of the internal and external wars of class society. His frequent attacks on war and violence in the later plays represent a deliberate rejection of the indulgence in conflict which was typical of his early work. There are a number of such issues on which he now explicitly advances a diametrically opposed evaluation of matters to that made by his early characters. Galilei, for instance, repeatedly stresses only the positive, liberating effects of discovering that the heavens are "leer" and, consequently, that, since the universe no longer has a fixed centre, each individual has the right to view himself as a "Mittelpunkt".¹⁰ In the early plays, by contrast, the characters were alive to the existential horror of living in a purposeless, centre-less universe, and the only "positive" attitude they could

take to this fact was to indulge fully in the irresponsible selfishness to which they felt they were licensed by the lack of any universal moral order. Thus to impose a positive evaluation on facts which were previously regarded at best with mixed, and certainly not with humane feelings, merely draws a discreet curtain over the problems arising from the individual's tendency, which is rooted in his awareness of the shortness of life, to take the most selfish attitude he thinks he can get away with in any given situation - a tendency which Galilei himself exhibits fully in the course of the play.

The same determination to take a positive view of the world and of human nature can be seen in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan, where the phrase "der Engel der Hafenkneipen", a phrase which was used with unmitigated sarcasm in Trommeln in der Nacht, is applied with all seriousness to the heroine Shen Te; from doubting man's capacity for true compassion, Brecht has moved to presenting the sentimental cliché of the big-hearted whore as a symbol of the innate goodness in people which is perverted by the conditions of life in a capitalist society. Yet, despite Brecht's frequent assertions that it is possible to build a new world free of evil if man's innate goodness is released from the crippling shackles of life in a competitive society, certain aspects of his so-called mature plays conflict with the positive ideology in the service of which they were allegedly composed. In the first place, many of his characters do not give the impression of being "naturally" good. Far from showing any great spiritual difficulty in acting immorally, his characters usually do the selfish thing with hardly a qualm, and often with outright pleasure - the cut-throat haggling of Mutter Courage with the cook over the price

of a chicken is an obvious example.

Not only do Brecht's plays show men willing to do immoral things where this seems necessary to satisfy their imperious appetites (including the appetite for conflict), the most attractive characters in his plays are frequently Baalian figures with enormous appetites and the wit, energy and aggressiveness required to satisfy such needs. Since even his later plays are most alive when depicting scenes of violent or intense conflict, and notoriously tedious when sketching the amicable socialist future (the "Streit um das Tal" in Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis will serve as an example of this), it may be said that, although his moral allegiance was now to a future of peaceful co-operation, his aesthetic allegiance continued to lie with the naturally dramatic conflicts in the imperfect societies of the present and the past. It could even be argued that the Marxist dialectic was little more than a pretext which the dramatist Brecht used in order to indulge, under protective rational and moral cover, his life-long love of portraying vital, although potentially or actually anti-social characters in conflict with their fellow-men, and that the Marxist call for revolutionary violence gave Brecht a convenient opportunity to continue to be emotionally committed to violence without being beset by the moral scruples which are to be found everywhere in his early plays.

Such cynical assessments of Brecht's allegiance to Marxism almost certainly go too far. They overlook the element of ethical awareness which was already present in his early work and which found an outlet in his decision to work for the cause of the exploited. The very fact that Brecht served the Communist cause unswerv-

ingly for over twenty-five years is itself strong evidence of the depth of his commitment to what he believed to be the best way of achieving a future free from destructive conflicts. On the other hand, as this brief foray into his later plays has sought to indicate, it is equally clear that the work he produced in the service of Marxism continues to bear the stamp of the deep-seated conflicts which had preoccupied him so persistently throughout the first ten years of his career as a writer.

NOTES

1. Brecht himself translated the term "Lehrstück" as "learning-play" in an essay entitled "The German Drama: pre-Hitler", Left Review vol. II (London, July 1936).
2. Der Lindberghflug was published in 1930 by Universal Edition (Wien). All references to this edition are in the form (L page number).
3. lehrstück was published in 1929 by Schotts Söhne (Mainz). All references to this edition are in the form (LS page number).
4. In 1928 Brecht criticised the drama of the German Classics on the grounds that, if schoolchildren were to perform these plays, they would not be made "lebensfähiger" as a result, (GW.15, 182).
5. R. Steinweg Das Lehrstück (Stuttgart, 1972), p. 14.
6. Der böse Baal der asoziale (Stuttgart, 1968), p. 81. In the following, references to this edition will be in the form (DBB page number).
7. BBA 330/51.
8. Die Massnahme, ed. Steinweg (Stuttgart, 1972), p. 33.
9. Brecht saw his "Lehrstücke" as material for use in "Pädagogien" or theatre workshops, where anyone with a practical problem could go to act out a model of the situation causing difficulty and thus prepare himself to meet the situation in real life. See Steinweg Das Lehrstück, p. 18.
10. GW 3, 1234.

Bibliography

A. Primary Sources

a) Brecht's works

Baal, Kiepenheuer Verlag (Potsdam, 1922)

Baal. Drei Fassungen, ed. Schmidt, Suhrkamp Verlag
(Frankfurt a.M., 1966)

Baal. Der böse Baal der asoziale, ed. Schmidt,
Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt a.M., 1968)

Trommeln in der Nacht, Drei Masken Verlag (München, 1922)

Im Dickicht der Städte, ed. Bahr, Suhrkamp Verlag
(Frankfurt a.M., 1968)

Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England, ed. Grimm,
Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt a.M., 1968)

Mann ist Mann, Arcadia Verlag (Berlin, 1926)

Die Dreigroschenoper, Universal-Edition (Wien, 1929)

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Universal-Edition
(Wien, 1929)

Songspiel Mahagonny, ed. Drew, Universal-Edition
(Wien, 1963)

Der Lindberghflug, Universal-Edition (Wien, 1930)

Lehrstück, Schotts Söhne (Mainz, 1929)

Die Massnahme, ed. Steinweg, Suhrkamp Verlag
(Frankfurt a.M., 1972)

Materialien zu Brechts "Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder",
Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt a.M., 1964)

Materialien zu Brechts "Der kaukasische Kreidekreis",
Suhrkamp Verlag (Frankfurt a.M., 1966)

Gesammelte Werke (20 vols.), Suhrkamp Verlag
(Frankfurt a.M., 1967)

Schriften zum Theater (7 vols.), Suhrkamp Verlag
(Frankfurt a.M., 1963)

Unpublished material in the keeping of the "Bertolt Brecht-Archiv"

b) Works by other authors

John Gay The Beggar's Opera, ed. Roberts, (London, 1969)

Christopher Marlowe, Edward the Second, ed. Moelwyn Merchant (London, 1967)

B. Secondary Literature

The majority of titles listed below have been explicitly referred to in the thesis. A small number of other titles have been included because of their value as general background material.

M. ADLER "Untersuchungen zum Studium Bert Brechts", Neue deutsche Hefte 13 (1966)

T. ADORNO "Mahagonny", Der Scheinwerfer III, Heft 14 (Essen, 1930)

T. ADORNO "Jene Zwanziger Jahre", Merkur (Jan., 1962)

G.M. ALLEN The role of adaptation in the work of Bertolt Brecht Ph.D. Diss (Univ. of Calif., 1970)

R.F. ARNOLD Das Deutsche Drama, (München, 1925)

E.R. AUFRICHT Erzähle, damit du dein Recht erweist (Berlin, 1966)

J. BAB Über den Tag hinaus, (Heidelberg, 1960)

G. BAHR "Im Dickicht der Städte": Ein Beitrag zur Bestimmung von Bertolt Brechts dramatischem Frühstil Ph. D. Diss. (New York, 1966)

D. BATHRICK "'Anschauungsmaterial' for Marx: Brecht returns to Trommeln in der Nacht", in: Brecht Heute 2 (1972)

R. BECKLEY "Adaptation as a feature of Brecht's dramatic technique", German Life and Letters 15 (1961-62)

W. BENJAMIN Versuche über Brecht (Frankfurt a.M., 1966)

E. BENTLEY Bertolt Brecht. Seven Plays (Introduction) (New York, 1961)

E. BENTLEY The Life of the Drama (New York, 1964)

- E. BENTLEY "Bertolt Brecht's First Play" Kenyon Review 26 (1964)
- E. BENTLEY Bertolt Brecht: Edward II. A Chronicle Play (Introduction) (New York, 1966)
- J. BITHELL Modern German Literature (London, 1959)
- E. BLOCH Das Prinzip Hoffnung (Frankfurt a.M., 1969)
- P. BÜCKMANN Provokation und Dialektik in der Dramatik Bertolt Brechts (Krefeld, 1961)
- T.O. BRANDT Die Vieldeutigkeit Bertolt Brechts (Heidelberg, 1968)
- O. BRAUN Von Weimar zu Hitler (New York, 1940)
- A. BRONNEN Tage mit Bertolt Brecht (München, 1960)
- D. BRONSEN "'Die Verhältnisse dieses Planeten' in Brechts frühen Stücken", in: Festschrift für Bernhard Blume (Göttingen, 1967)
- R. BRUSTEIN The Theatre of Revolt (Boston/Toronto, 1962)
- V. CANARIS "Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England" als vormarxistisches Stück Bertolt Brechts (Bonn, 1973)
- P. CHIARINI Bertolt Brecht (Bari, 1959)
- G. DEBIEL Das Prinzip der Verfremdung in der Sprachgestaltung Bertolt Brechts Ph.D. Diss. (Bonn, 1960)
- P. DEMETZ (ed.) Brecht. A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, 1962)
- H. DENKLER Drama des Expressionismus (München, 1967)
- M. DIETRICH Das moderne Drama (Stuttgart, 1961)
- D. DREW "The History of Mahagonny", Musical Times (Jan., 1963)
- B.F. DUKORE "The Averted Crucifixion of Macheath", Drama Survey 4 (1964)
- B. EKMANN "Bert Brecht, vom Baal aus gesehen", Orbis Litterarum 20 (1965)
- B. EKMANN Gesellschaft und Gewissen (Kopenhagen, 1969)
- W. EMRICH "Zur Ästhetik der modernen Dichtung", Akzente I (1954)
- W. EMRICH Protest und Verheissung (Frankfurt a.M./Bonn, 1960)

- E. ENGEL Schriften über Theater und Film (Berlin, 1971)
- M. ESSLIN Brecht: A Choice of Evils (London, 1965)
- M. ESSLIN Bertolt Brecht (New York/London, 1969)
- Europe. Revue Mensuelle 133/134. Special Brecht issue (Paris, 1957)
- F. EWEN Bertolt Brecht. His Life, his Art and his Times (New York, 1967)
- K. FASSMANN Brecht. Eine Bildbiographie (München, 1958)
- I. FETSCHER Der Marxismus (München, 1964)
- L. FEUCHTWANGER Drei angelsächsische Stücke (Berlin, 1927)
- L. FEUCHTWANGER Erfolg (Berlin, 1930)
- L. FEUCHTWANGER "Bertolt Brecht dargestellt für Engländer", in: Deutsche Literaturkritik im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert, ed. H. Mayer (Stuttgart, 1965)
- O. FLECHTHEIM Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik (Frankfurt a.M., 1969)
- E. FRANZEN Formen des modernen Dramas (München, 1961)
- J. FUEGI The Essential Brecht (Los Angeles, 1972)
- F.W. GAEDE Figur und Wirklichkeit im Drama Bertolt Brechts Ph.D. Diss. (Freiburg i.B., 1963)
- F. GAEDE "Bertolt Brecht", in: Expressionismus als Literatur, ed. Rothe (Bern, 1969)
- E. GAGEY Ballad Opera (New York, 1937)
- H.F. GARTEN Modern German Drama (London, ²1964)
- J. GASSNER (ed.) Ideas in the Drama (New York/London, 1963)
- P. GAY Weimar Culture (London, 1968)
- J. GEIS "Meine Inszenierung von Bertolt Brechts Mann ist Mann, Darmstadt, Landestheater", Die Szene (Berlin, October 1926)
- B. GOLDSTEIN "Bertolt Brecht's Baal: A Crisis in Poetic Existence", in: Festschrift für Bernhard Blume (Göttingen, 1967)
- R. GRAY Brecht (Edinburgh/London, 1961)
- R. GRIMM Bertolt Brecht. Die Struktur seines Werkes (Nürnberg, 1959)

- R. GRIMM Bertolt Brecht und die Weltliteratur (Nürnberg, 1961)
- R. GRIMM (ed.) Episches Theater (Köln/Berlin, 1966)
- R. GRIMM "Brechts Anfänge", in: Aspekte des Expressionismus
ed. Paulsen (Heidelberg, 1968)
- R. GRIMM Bertolt Brecht (Stuttgart, ³1971)
- R. GRIMM, J. HERMAND (eds.) Die sogenannten zwanziger Jahre
(Frankfurt a.M., 1970)
- D. GROSSVOGEL Four Playwrights and a Postscript (Ithaca, 1962)
- H.W. GRÜNINGER "Brecht und Marlowe", Comparative Literature 21
(1969)
- W. HAAS Bert Brecht (Berlin, 1958)
- W. HAAS Die literarische Welt (München, 1958)
- G. HARTUNG "Zur epischen Oper Brechts und Weills", Wiss.
Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg,
Gesellschafts- und sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe 8 (1958/59)
- G. HAY "Bertolt Brechts und Ernst Hardts gemeinsame Rundfunkar-
beit", Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft 12 (1968)
- W. HECHT Brechts Weg zum epischen Theater (Berlin, 1962)
- W. HECHT Aufsätze über Brecht (Berlin, 1970)
- W. HECHT, H. - J. BUNGE, K. RÜLICHE-WEILER Bertolt Brecht. Leben
und Werk (Berlin, 1963)
- A. HEIDSIECK Das Grotoske und das Absurde im modernen Drama
(Stuttgart, 1969)
- H. HESSE Klingsors letzter Sommer (Zürich, no date)
- W. HINCK "Bertolt Brecht", in: Deutsche Literatur im XX.
Jahrhundert ed. Mann (Bern, 1967)
- M. HÜGEL Bertolt Brecht. Ein Porträt (Augsburg, 1962)
- H.E. HOLTHUSEN Kritisches Verstehen (München, 1961)
- H. HULTBERG Die ästhetischen Anschauungen Bertolt Brechts
(Kopenhagen, 1962)
- H. JHERING Von Reinhardt bis Brecht 3 vols. (Berlin, 1958-1961)
- H. JHERING Bertolt Brecht und das Theater (Berlin, 1959)
- INTER NATIONES Bertolt Brecht, 1956-1966 (Bad Godesberg, 1966)

- W. JENS Statt einer Literaturgeschichte (Pfullingen, ²1962)
- H. KÄCHELE Bertolt Brecht. Sein Leben in Bildern (Leipzig, 1963)
- K. KÄNDLER Drama und Klassenkampf (Berlin/Weimar, 1970)
- H. KAUFMANN "Drama der Revolution und des Individualismus", Weimarer Beiträge II (1961)
- H. KAUFMANN Bertolt Brecht. Geschichtsdrama und Parabelstück (Berlin, 1962)
- H. KAUFMANN Krisen und Wandlungen der deutschen Literatur von Wedekind bis Feuchtwanger (Berlin, 1966)
- W. KENNEY The Major Plays of Bertolt Brecht (New York, 1964)
- M. KESTING Bertolt Brecht in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1959)
- M. KESTING Das epische Theater (Stuttgart, 1959)
- M. KESTING "Die Groteske vom Verlust der Identität", in: Das deutsche Lustspiel II ed. Steffen (Göttingen, 1969)
- V. KLOTZ Bertolt Brecht. Versuch über das Werk (Darmstadt, 1957)
- V. KLOTZ Kurze Kommentare zu Stücken und Gedichten (Darmstadt, 1962)
- J. KNOFF Bertolt Brecht. Ein kritischer Forschungsbericht (Frankfurt a.M., 1974)
- E. KOLB Die Arbeiterräte in der deutschen Innenpolitik 1918-1919 (Düsseldorf, 1962)
- H. KOTSCHENREUTER Kurt Weill (Wunsiedel, 1962)
- S. KRACAUER "Der heutige Film und sein Publikum", Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt (30 Nov., 1928)
- S. KRACAUER Von Caligari bis Hitler (Hamburg, 1958)
- E. KRISPYN "Brecht and Expressionism", Revue des Langues Vivantes 31 (1965)
- L. LABOULLE "A Note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's Edward II", Modern Language Review 54 (1959)
- L. LABOULLE Dramatic Theory and Practice of Bertolt Brecht - with particular reference to the Epic Theatre Ph.D. Diss. (Leicester, 1961)
- J.P. LARSEN Handel's Messiah (London, 1957)

- C. LEECH (ed.) Marlowe. A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, 1964)
- H. LETHEN Neue Sachlichkeit 1924-1932 (Stuttgart, 1970)
- R. LEY "Brecht: Science and Cosmic Futility", The Germanic Review 40 (1965)
- L. LUCAS Dialogstrukturen und ihre szenischen Elemente im deutschsprachigen Drama des 20. Jahrhunderts (Bonn, 1969)
- H. LÜTHY "Vom armen Bert Brecht", Der Monat, 44 (1952)
- C.R. LYONS "Two projections of the isolation of the human soul: Brecht's Im Dickicht der Städte and Albee's The Zoo Story", Drama Survey 4 (1965)
- C.R. LYONS "Bertolt Brecht's Baal: The Structure of Images", Modern Drama VIII (1965)
- C.R. LYONS Bertolt Brecht: The Despair and the Polemic (Carbondale, 1968)
- O. MANN B.B. - Mass oder Mythos? (Heidelberg, 1958)
- O. MANN and W. ROTHE (eds.) Deutsche Literatur im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert (Bern/München, 1967)
- K. MARX/F. ENGELS Gesamtausgabe (Berlin, 1932)
- H. MAYER Bertolt Brecht und die Tradition (Pfullingen, 1961)
- H. MAYER Anmerkungen zu Brecht (Frankfurt a.M., 1965)
- H. MAYER Brecht in der Geschichte (Frankfurt a.M., 1971)
- S. MELCHINGER "Mahagonny als Mysterienspiel", Theater heute (Mai, 1964)
- F.N. MENNEMEIER Modernes deutsches Drama I (München, 1973)
- W. MOELWYN MERCHANT Marlowe: Edward the Second (Introduction) (London, 1967)
- K.D. MÜLLER Die Funktion der Geschichte im Werk Bertolt Brechts (Tübingen, 1967)
- H. MÜLLER-FRANKEN Die November Revolution (Berlin, 1928)
- H.O. MÜNSTERER Bert Brecht. Erinnerungen aus den Jahren 1917-1922 (Zürich, 1963)
- W. MUSCHG Von Trakl zu Brecht (München, 1961)
- G.E. NELSON "Baal": The foundation of Brecht's style Ph.D. Diss. (New Haven, 1968)

- F. NIETZSCHE Werke (Leipzig, 1906)
- D. NORRIS The rise and fall of the individual in the early Bertolt Brecht, 1918-1932. An examination of the "Baal" plays Ph.D. Diss. (Columbia Univ., 1971)
- J. ONDERDELINDEN "Brechts Mann ist Mann: Lustspiel oder Lehrstück?", Neophilologus (1970)
- W. PAULSEN (ed.) Aspekte des Expressionismus (Heidelberg, 1968)
- H. PLESSNER "Die Legende von den zwanziger Jahren", Merkur 16 (1962)
- R. POHL Strukturelemente und Entwicklung von Pathosformen in der Dramensprache Bertold (sic) Brechts. (Bonn, 1969)
- Q. QURESHI Pessimismus und Fortschrittsglaube bei Bert Brecht (Köln/Wien, 1971)
- L. REINISCH Die Zeit ohne Eigenschaften. Eine Bilanz der Zwanziger Jahre (Stuttgart, 1961)
- L. RENN Nachkrieg (Leipzig, no date)
- P. RILLA Essays (Berlin, 1955)
- H. RISCHBIETER Bertolt Brecht 2 vols., (Velber, 1966)
- H. ROSENBAUER Brecht und der Behaviorismus (Bad Homburg, 1970)
- A. ROSENBERG Entstehung der Deutschen Republik 1871-1918 (Berlin, 1928)
- G. RÜHLE Theater für die Republik 1917 bis 1933 (Frankfurt a.M., 1967)
- J. RÜHLE Theater und Revolution (München, 1963)
- G. SALOMON "Happy Ending, Nice and Tidy", Kenyon Review 24 (1962)
- B. SCHÄRER Bertolt Brechts Theater. Sprache und Bühne (Zürich, 1964)
- D. SCHMIDT "Baal" und der junge Brecht (Stuttgart, 1966)
- A. SCHÖNE "Theatertheorie und dramatische Dichtung", Euphorion 52 (1958)
- A. SCHOPENHAUER Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung (Leipzig, 1937)
- W.E. SCHULTZ Gay's "Beggar's Opera": its Content, History and Influence (Newhaven/Conn., 1923)

- E. SCHUMACHER Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933 (Berlin, 1955)
- G. SEMMER "Trommeln in der Nacht", Nachrichtenbrief Nr. 63, Arbeitskreis Bertolt Brecht (Köln, November 1968)
- G. SERREAU Bertolt Brecht (Paris, 1955)
- L. SHAW The Playwright and Historical Change (Madison, 1970)
- L. SHAW "The Morality of Combat: Brecht's search for a Sparring Partner", Brecht Heute I (Berlin, 1971)
- Sinn und Form, 1. Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht (Berlin, 1949)
- Sinn und Form, 2. Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht (Berlin, 1957)
- W. SOKEL "Brecht und der Expressionismus", in: Die sogenannten zwanziger Jahre, ed. Grimm and Hermand (Frankfurt a.M., 1970)
- W. SOKEL "Dialogführung und Dialog im expressionistischen Drama", in: Aspekte des Expressionismus ed. Paulsen (Heidelberg, 1968)
- M. SPALTER Brecht's Tradition (Baltimore, 1967)
- W. STEER "Baal: A Key to Brecht's Communism", German Life and Letters 19 (1965/66)
- W.A.J. STEER "Brecht's Epic Theatre", Modern Language Review 63 (1968)
- R. STEINWEG Das Lehrstück (Stuttgart, 1972)
- G. STERN "Brecht's Trommeln in der Nacht als literarische Satire", Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht 61 (1969)
- F. STERNBERG Der Dichter und die Ratio (Göttingen, 1963)
- J. SVENDSEN "The Queen is Dead. Brecht's Eduard II", The Drama Review II (1965/66)
- R.T.K. SYMINGTON Brecht und Shakespeare (Bonn, 1970)
- G. SZCZESNY Das Leben des Galilei und der Fall Bertolt Brecht (Berlin, 1965)
- Text und Kritik Sonderband. Bertolt Brecht II (München, 1973)
- P. TROST "Die Sprache Bert Brechts", Germanistica Pragensia I (1960)
- S. UNSELD (ed.) Bertolt Brechts Dreigroschenbuch (Frankfurt a.M., 1960)
- K. VÖLKER Brecht-Chronik (München, 1971)

- G. WEALES "Brecht and the Drama of Ideas", in: Ideas in the Drama ed. Gassner (New York and London, 1964)
- W. WEIDELI Bertolt Brecht (Paris, 1961)
- K. WEILL "Korrespondenz über Dreigroschenoper", Anbruch (Wien, Jan. 1929)
- K. WEILL "Über den gestischen Charakter der Musik", Die Musik 21/6 (März, 1929)
- K. WEILL "Vorwort zum Regiebuch der Oper Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny", Anbruch (Wien, Jan. 1930)
- K. WEILL "Anmerkungen zu meiner Oper Mahagonny", Die Musik 22 (1930)
- U. WEISSTEIN "Marlowe's Homecoming or Edward II crosses the Atlantic", Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht LX (1968)
- U. WEISSTEIN "Brecht's Victorian Version of Gay: Imitation and Originality in the Dreigroschenoper", Comparative Literature Studies 7 (1970)
- U. WEISSTEIN "The first version of Brecht/Feuchtwanger's Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England and its relation to the standard text", Journal of English and Germanic Philology LXIX (1970)
- U. WEISSTEIN "The lonely Baal. Brecht's first play as a parody of Hanns Johst's Der Einsame", Modern Drama 13 (1970/71)
- B. VON WIESE Zwischen Utopie und Wirklichkeit (Düsseldorf, 1963)
- B. VON WIESE (ed.) Deutsche Dichter der Moderne (Berlin, 1969)
- J. WILLETT The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht (London, 1959)
- R. WILLIAMS Modern Tragedy (Stanford, 1966)
- R. WILLIAMS Drama from Ibsen to Brecht (London, 1968)
- R. WINTZEN Bertolt Brecht (Paris, 1954)
- H. WITT (ed.) Erinnerungen an Brecht (Leipzig, 1964)
- C. ZUCKMAYER Als wär's ein Stück von mir (Frankfurt, 1966)