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THE RELATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO SOCIETY IN
THE PLAYS OF BERTOLT BRECHT: 1926-1933

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
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By

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INTRODUCTION

About 1926 Bertolt Brecht began to study Marxism, and in the late twenties and the early thirties aligned himself more and more openly with the Communist Party and its struggle for a revolutionary transformation of society. This new commitment was more than a simple political choice; it went much deeper. It meant the acceptance not merely of certain theories of history and economics but of a whole world view, which had important implications both for his concept of man and for his view of his own function and goals as a dramatist.

This development first manifests itself clearly in Brecht's writing in the group of didactic plays, which he called Lehrstücke, written in the years 1928 to 1930. They are short works, austere in form and often forbiddingly cold in tone. All of them are cantatas or short operas in which solo parts alternate with choral passages. These pieces lack the earthy vitality of both the early plays and the best mature dramas written in the years of exile. From the perspective of the later plays, which are Brecht's greatest accomplishments, the Lehrstücke must certainly be regarded as minor works. Brecht himself was later none too pleased with most of them. Nevertheless, they form an extremely
Important stage in his artistic and intellectual development. To understand them is to understand an important aspect of his beginnings as a Communist. I say his beginnings, because the young convert—some of these pieces have unmistakable religious overtones—is still far from the relatively open-minded Marxist humanist that many liberal Western critics see, I believe rightly, in the later years.

A full understanding of Brecht's Communism is possible only if the whole body of his literary work is considered in conjunction with biographical material. The aim of this study is much more modest. It deals with one particular aspect of Brecht's Communism, albeit an important one: with his view, in the last years of the Weimar Republic, of the proper relation of the individual to society or to the collective. This question is brought into focus in the concept of "consent" (Einverständnis), which is central to an understanding of all the Lehrstücke up to Die Maßnahme. The term actually provides the title for the most directly programmatic of these pieces—Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis. Taken together, these plays represent a sustained effort on Brecht's part to explore the nature of consent and to instruct others in its proper use.

These Lehrstücke form the core of the present study. In addition, two other full-length plays, Mann ist Mann and
Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe, which deal with closely related problems, are analyzed in detail. In Mann ist Mann, written in 1926, a mild-mannered civilian is transformed, largely against his will, into a ferocious and enthusiastic soldier. The play is pre-Marxist, and the term "consent" does not yet occur, but both the problem posed by the need to transform a civilian into a soldier and the methods employed to achieve this bear a close and obvious relation to the problem that emerges a few years later in the Lehrstücke. Die heilige Johanna, 1929-30, on the other hand, was written about the same time as Die Maßnahme; both deal with the ethical problems of revolution, though in somewhat different form. Die Maßnahme tells of a young comrade who failed as an agitator because he could not control his feelings of pity and outrage and who had to be liquidated. Die heilige Johanna shows the transformation of a Salvation Army girl into an advocate of revolution; a gentle Christian reformer comes, through a series of bitter disillusionments, to consent to a violence once repugnant to her.

I will not attempt in this brief introduction to offer any precise definition of the term consent, because its meaning varies from play to play as Brecht's attitude toward the individual changes. Generally speaking, however, consent means the subordination of the individual and his interests to the good of society as a whole or to some particular group such as the Communist Party which claims to
act in the interests of society. The degree to which this consent is free or forced varies from play to play. In Mann ist Mann, where the term itself does not yet occur, we see a process which would today be called brainwashing in popular parlance. By means of a combination of cajolery and intimidation a civilian is made to consent to and ultimately to believe in an entirely new role in life. His transformation is something that happens to him; his personal decision plays only a residual role. In Die heilige Johanna, the last play to be dealt with, just the opposite is true. Johanna's acceptance of the need for violent action against the supporters of capitalism is ultimately a personal, moral decision which she makes; it is not forced on her from outside. The position in the Lehrstücke will be found to lie somewhere between these two poles. The concept of consent in them combines in varying degrees elements of physical and psychological compulsion with elements of free choice. The relation between the two is, of course, very important, and constitutes one of the most interesting as well as one of the most disturbing aspects of these little plays.

In a first introductory chapter the development of Brecht's attitudes toward the individual and his relation to society is traced through his earlier plays. It is important to touch briefly on these early works, not because they anticipate later developments, but because, by and large,
they are so very different from the Lehrstücke. If we know the background out of which the idea of consent grew, we can understand better why this problem had to play a central role for Brecht, the newly-persuaded Marxist. The second chapter deals in detail with Mann ist Mann and shows how the idea of consent is anticipated in this pre-Marxist play. The subsequent chapters deal with the various Lehrstücke from Der Flug der Lindberghs to Die Maßnahme and trace the development of the idea of consent in them. The last play dealt with in detail is Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe, where some aspects of the problem of consent are explored without the term itself's being any longer employed. Finally, in a brief closing section I shall try to show why the idea of consent then disappears from Brecht's later works.
CHAPTER I

THE EARLY PLAYS

Brecht's view of the individual and of society underwent a great change in the ten years or so that separate his first dramatic work in 1918 from the Lehrstücke. This can be strikingly demonstrated by comparing the final scenes of Trommeln in der Nacht (1919-22), and Die Maßnahme (1930). The hero of the former, Andreas Kragler, is a returned veteran, who, faced with the loss of his fiancée and cut off from a return to normal civilian life, is on the verge of joining the Spartakus uprising in Berlin. When the girl decides to come back to him after all even though she is pregnant by another man, Kragler immediately turns his back on the revolution and goes home with her. To his disappointed comrades he shouts:

Mein Fleisch soll im Rinnstein verwesen, daß eure Idee in den Himmel kommt? Seld ihr besoffen? ... Der Dudelsack pfeift, die armen Leute sterben im Zeitungsviertel, ... der Morgen graut, sie liegen wie ersäufte Katzen auf dem Asphalt, ich bin ein Schwein und das Schwein geht heim. ... Das Geschrei ist alles vorbel, morgen früh, aber Ich lüge im Bett morgen früh und vervielfältige mich, daß ich nicht aussterbe.

(Stücke, I, 203-204)

He categorically rejects all Idealism and all social responsibility and dismisses the uprising as bad theater, as an illusion taken seriously only by foolish romantics.
The primary reality for Kragler is the self and Kragler's main concern the securing of his own material interests. Socialism and revolution are to him nothing but "Besoffenheit und Kinderel" (Stücke, I, 204).

In Die Maßnahme this position is completely reversed. The young comrade whose errors have endangered the work of the Communist Party consents to die in the interests of society so that the work of revolution may go on. His last words express a complete solidarity with the Party:

Er sagte noch: Im Interesse des Kommunismus
Einverstanden mit dem Vormarsch der proletarischen Massen
Aller Länder
Ja sagend zu Revolutionierung der Welt.

(Versuche I-12, p. 349)²

This willing subordination of the self to the group even to the point of sacrificing one's life for the welfare of others is what Brecht means by the word Einverständniss ("consent"). The emergence of this concept as a new ideal will mean not only a rejection of Kragler's position at the end of Trommel in der Nacht but a rejection of all the heroes of the early plays.

The purpose of this first chapter is to show how Brecht's view of man develops from the early anarchic individualism just illustrated up to the point where the ideal of subordination of the individual to the collective, formulated fully in the later Lehrstücke, starts to emerge in Mann ist Mann. In view of the manifest incompatibility of the two
extremes indicated above the transition from one to the other is surprisingly gradual. The vital, unfettered individual of Brecht's earliest work is regarded more and more skeptically and gradually comes to be seen, in the works that follow, as a bitterly lonely figure who is powerless in the face of social forces in which he is caught up. Individual freedom and the joy of self-expression seem more and more illusory. As the role of the individual is diminished, the role of society becomes correspondingly more important. For better or for worse, man's life is found to be dominated by forces outside his control.

Baal

Brecht's first play, Baal, is a rebellious, anarchic work full of youthful vitality. In it Brecht rejects society completely and glorifies a hero who pursues his own desires without regard for either social conventions or the welfare of others. The rebellion against society begins in the first scene, where Baal is being lionized as a newly-discovered poetic genius at a literary soirée. In his contempt for the effete literati and the self-satisfied would-be patron of the arts, we see a reflection of Brecht's own youthful rejection of the inanity of bourgeois culture and the then fashionable literary Expressionism. Baal says as little as possible and applies himself vigorously to the
food and drink, but finally he can repress his reaction no longer and lets himself go in a lyrical outburst which shocks and insults both host and guests. To make the point as sharply as possible, Brecht has Baal administer a drubbing to the servants whom his host has sent to throw him out.

But Baal does not just thumb his nose at bourgeois society; he rejects all moral and social restraint whatsoever. Nothing is allowed to stand in his way and restrict the free development and expression of his nature. He accepts absolutely no responsibility toward others: he refuses to support his old mother although he loves her (and in theory even recognizes a certain responsibility toward her); he abandons the one mistress in whom he has shown some deeper interest when she becomes pregnant; and he is totally unconcerned about the fate of the other women he uses and discards. Finally, he kills his best friend, Ekart, in a brawl about a prostitute. His only comment when he learns what he has done is: "Also tot? Armes Tierchen, mir in den Weg kommen!" (Baal, p. 145).

Baal, I think, is clearly more than just a piece of social criticism in which middle-class society is rejected because it cripples the creative energy of the true poet. Rather, the play represents a complete rejection of the interests of society in favor of untrammelled self-expression. However, Brecht himself later tried to emphasize the element
of social criticism and played down the strong anti-social
strain. In the Introduction to his early dramas which he
wrote after the second World War, he viewed the play as a
Marxist and saw in it the struggle of an individual against
the exploitation of his poetic talents in capitalist
society:

Es ist nicht zu sagen, wie Baal sich zu einer
Verwertung seiner Talente stellen würde: er
wehrt sich gegen ihre Verwurstung. Die Lebenskunst
Baals teilt das Geschick aller anderen Künste im
Kapitalismus: sie wird befehlt. Er ist asozial,
aber in einer asozialen Gesellschaft.

(Stücke, I, 8)

But it is quite impossible to imagine any society in which
Baal could find acceptance as a man and a poet, or, in fact,
any society to which he would even want to belong. During
a stay in prison he is asked by a chaplain if he does not
fear the enmity of society, and Baal answers with charac­
teristic verve:

Ich lebe von Feindschaft. Mich interessiert alles,
soweit ich es fressen kann. . . . Aus den Hirnschalen
meiner Feinde . . . trinke ich mir Mut und Kraft zu.
Ihre Bäuche fresse ich auf, und mit ihren Därmen
bespanne ich meine Klampfe.

(Baal, p. 118)

A man who thrives on enmity and wishes to devour the world
is by nature anti-social.

One of the things that keeps the play from degener­
ating into a callow, overcharged piece of youthful extra­
vagance is Brecht's unwavering recognition that such a life
is necessarily self-destructive. Baal begins with fame and
fortune within his grasp and ends a fugitive from the police, dying among indifferent strangers in a hut in the forest. The remarkable thing is that Baal can recognize this process and yet affirm it and celebrate life. For him there is no other way. Again, it is the chaplain who elicits a revealing comment:

DER Geistliche:
Sie sinken immer tiefer!

BAAL:
Dank meines enormen Schwergewichts. Aber ich tue es mit Genuß. Es geht mit mir abwärts! Nicht?

(Baal, p. 118)

Baal finds the process of life good in itself and even in his final minutes he declares his love of existence. As the play ends he crawls dying (one assumes) out of the hut to get one last look at the stars.

Baal is more than just the story of a Bohemian poet who rejects all social ties in order to live and write more freely. The play is a celebration of the vital forces of nature embodied in a man who overflows mere human dimensions. Its hero's name is that of a Babylonian god of fertility, and in the "Choral vom Manne Baal" (Baal, pp. 81-82) he clearly is transformed into a semi-mythical creature, part man, part animal, part male fertility god in love with the fertile, female earth. Even in the body of the play, however, these characteristics are emphasized.
For men as well as women Baal has an uncanny animal presence:

JÜNGLING:
Deine Zähne sind wie eines Tieres: graugelb, massiv unheimlich.

(Baal, p. 91)

He is neither handsome nor graceful, yet he overwhelms women with his aura of naked sexuality. In the scene where he kidnaps and seduces a young woman he says to the alarmed but fascinated girl: "Es wird dunkel und du riechst mich. So ist es bei den Tieren" (Baal, p. 108). A little later she confesses:

Du bist so hübsch, so hübsch, daß man erschrickt. Aber dann... Dann macht es nichts.

(Baal, p. 108)

Such closeness to nature gives Baal great strength and energy, but it tends to blur and dissolve his human profile. He does not become more, but less of an individual. The elemental drives are in themselves impersonal and undifferentiated—the common denominators of man's physical nature, not the roots of his individuality. The chaplain perceives this quite clearly:

DER GEISTLICHE:
Ihre Seele ist wie Wasser, das jede Form annimmt und jede Form ausfüllt.

(Baal, p. 119)

Baal implies that his soul is the life force itself:

BAAL (ekstatisch erhebend, voll Sonne):
Meine Seele ist das Sonnenlicht, das in dem Diamanten bleibt, wenn er in das unterste Gestein vergraben wird. Und der Trieb zum Blühen der Bäume im Frühling, wenn noch Frost ist...
Und das Funkeln in den Augen zweier Insekten, die sich fressen wollen.

(Baal, p. 119)
Thus, for all its celebration of the man who has the strength and courage to go his own way beyond the confines of bourgeois society, and to live his life as he wishes (and perhaps must), Baal contains a strong anti-individualistic undercurrent.

This was pointed out very clearly by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, in a short, dramatic prologue he wrote for the 1962 performance of Baal in Vienna. One of the prologue's speakers comments on the cultural background of the play:

\[ \text{Sie haben früher etwas sehr Interessantes gesagt. . . . Nämlich, daß die Zeit unerlöst ist; und wissen Sie auch wovon sie erlöst sein möchte? . . . Vom individuum. . . . Sie schleppt zu schwer an dieser Ausgeburt des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts, die das neunzehnte groß gefüttert hat. . . . und ich würde soweit gehen zu behaupten, daß alle die ominösen Vorgänge in Europa, denen wir seit zwölf Jahren beiwohnen, nichts sind als eine sehr umständliche Art, den lebensmüden Begriff des europäischen Individuums in das Grab zu legen, das er sich selbst geschafft hat.} \]

\[ \text{(Lustspiele, IV, 418-19)} \]

The actor who is to play Baal comments:

\[ \text{Wir sind anonyme Gewalten. Seelsche Möglichkeiten. Individualität ist eine der Arabesken, die wir abgestreift haben. Sie werden sehen, wie ich den Baal spiele.} \]

\[ \text{(Lustspiele, IV, 419)} \]

This anti-individualism in Baal is, of course, very different from that of the later Lehrstücke. Baal surrenders himself to the forces of nature and draws strength from them; in the Lehrstücke the individual subordinates himself to society and to its interests. In this connection two things are important. The embracing of nature means the
elimination of everything that stands between man and the vital forces. This involves the sweeping away of all social conventions and restraints not just of bourgeois society but of any society, especially, of course, one which makes an absolute claim on the individual. The society or collective of the Lehrstücke, however, makes just such claims on man, and it demands that he be ready to sacrifice his life to the interests of the whole. Baal's diatribe against the necessity of physical death indicates clearly enough what his attitude toward such a demand would be:


Despite this crucial difference, Baal's relation to nature does, in another way, bear a certain similarity to man's submission to the collective in the Lehrstücke. The term Einverständnis could quite easily be used to characterize both. Baal finds himself in harmony with nature and surrenders himself to the flow of life that surges through him. He takes his place in the great cycle of birth, generation, and death, just as the individual in the later Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis will be asked to take his place in the dialectical process of social change and progress. The thing that changes is Brecht's view of what constitutes the dominant influence on human life. In his
first play it is clearly nature, while in the Lehrstücke nature has been supplanted by society. In each case, though, man is expected to bring himself into harmony with something beyond himself. In neither case is the isolated individual really an end in himself. However, the specifically Baalian qualities of protean vitality and joyous affirmation of the body can no longer find a place in the austere world of the Lehrstücke. This is not to suggest that these qualities disappear from Brecht's work permanently. After going underground for a number of years, they reemerge in various characters of the mature plays such as Galileo, Mother Courage, Azdak, and Puntila.

The heroes who immediately follow Baal are still far from the world of the Lehrstücke, but they have a much more modest human stature than he and they find it much harder to bear the loneliness and self-destructiveness of a life lived in defiance of the amenities and conventions of society. They would agree with the chaplain, who says: "Nichts ist so furchtbar als Einsamkeit." And they lack the strength to answer as Baal does: "Daß ich allein war, war bis jetzt mein Vorsprung" (Baal, p. 119).

Trommeln in der Nacht

Trommeln in der Nacht was Brecht's second play, written and revised in the years 1919-22. Andreas Kragler's programmatic rejection at the end of the play of all social
responsibility in favor of selfish material interests has already been cited. This ending also caused Brecht a good deal of distress when he came to write his introduction to the early plays after the second World War. He found Kragler's rejection of the Spartacus uprising and his reconciliation with his pregnant fiancée "die schäbigste aller möglichen Varianten" (Stücke, I, 5) but admitted that as a young man he had obviously approved of Kragler's behavior.

However, Trommeln in der Nacht is not quite as straightforward a rejection of the claims of society as was Baal, for the simple reason that Kragler cannot have his Anna and his marriage bed outside the framework of post-1918 German middle-class society. Kragler does not start off as an insider like the war profiteers Balicke and Murk. Kragler starts off as a returned war prisoner, presumed dead, who has absolutely nothing, neither material possessions nor even a confident awareness of his own humanity. To himself and to others he has become a strange creature, half animal, half ghost. Anna's family and her new fiancé want to have nothing more to do with him and try to drive him off in the most brutal and cynical way. Kragler must engage in a desperate fight not just to win back Anna but actually to regain the right to be a human being. He tries to explain that as a prisoner in Africa he survived under the most grueling conditions; but, deprived of normal human contact,
he lost something of his human substance:

KRAGLER:

(Stücke, I, 161-162, my emphasis)

Again and again he uses animal imagery to express the extent of his dehumanization and the depth of his need:

Ich bin wie ein altes Tier zu dir gekommen.

(Stücke, I, 148-149)

Only if Anna will come back to him, only if he finds some place in human society, however modest or shabby, can he become a man again. Only when he has achieved this can he afford the luxury of abandoning the revolution and turning his back on broader social and political responsibilities.

Thus, the rejection of the revolution at the end of the play is balanced by a new recognition, not to be found in Baal, that man is necessarily and unavoidably a social creature who cannot exist outside of the community of his fellows. Perhaps "balanced" is the wrong term. For Brecht does not yet seem to have recognized the nature of the
problem he touches on, and he makes no attempt to reconcile man's need for society on the one hand with his pursuit of purely selfish interests on the other.

**Im Dickicht der Städte**

In the early twenties Brecht's attitudes and ideas developed rapidly and continuously. Each new play differs, often radically, from the one that preceded it. **Im Dickicht der Städte** (1921-24), the next play Brecht wrote, is perhaps his most puzzling and difficult. It is the first of several works set in an exotic, semi-mythical America, in a Chicago from which ships sail to Tahiti. The story tells of the struggle between Garga and Shlink, two men who are bound to each other by love and hate in a masochistic, apparently homosexual relationship. The external action, though not very complex, is so elliptically presented that it is hard to follow. It is lucidity itself, however, compared to the inner action, to the motivation of the two men and the psychological interplay of their personalities.

The fight between Garga and Shlink is initiated in a strange scene in the book shop in which Garga is employed. Shlink enters and tries to bribe Garga into giving a positive opinion on a book that he considers trash. Garga proudly refuses to sell himself. Shlink raises his price, and, when this fails to move Garga, uses various means of intimidation. Finally, he gets Garga
dismissed from his position, but, poor as he is, Garga will not be forced to change his mind, even on such a trivial matter, at the bidding of another. Tearing off his jacket and his boots, which he throws down at Shlink's feet, he rushes into the street calling out for freedom.

In this scene a question is suggested which is close to that in the later Mann ist Mann: can a man be forced by external forces to change his attitudes and behavior? In Im Dickicht the matter is not pursued very far; Garga's literary opinion is really of no consequence to Shlink, who is more interested in testing Garga's mettle and in provoking him to an act of defiance. Garga soon seeks out Shlink in order to accept the challenge. In what follows he succeeds in maintaining a sort of freedom, while at the same time he becomes deeply entangled with Shlink and cannot shake himself free either of Shlink's presence or influence. The question of the extent of man's freedom and of the degree of his susceptibility to the influence of others is never clearly answered. In Mann ist Mann, as we shall see later, the play is devoted to showing how a group of soldiers transforms a civilian into a soldier. Their undertaking is a complete success; not only a man's opinions but his inner nature as well can be—and is—completely changed. In Im Dickicht human freedom is difficult and problematical; in Mann ist Mann it is denied altogether.
The Important thing about *Im Dickicht* is the fight itself, not the goal. Shlink does not care about Garga's literary opinions, but he is happy to have his challenge taken up:

**SHLINK:**
Sie nehmen den Kampf auf?

**GARGA:**
Ja! Natürlich unverbindlich.

**SHLINK:**
Und ohne nach dem Grund zu fragen?

**GARGA:**
Ohne nach dem Grund zu fragen. Ich mag nicht wissen, wozu Sie einen Kampf nötig haben. . . . Für mich genügt es, daß Sie sich für den besseren Mann halten.

(*Stücke, I, 228-229*)

This fight is very vague and abstract because it is never made clear just what determines "the better man." The criterion is certainly not physical or material superiority, because Shlink, instead of using the power at his disposal, signs his entire business over to Garga, putting his fate entirely in his opponent's hands. Garga responds to this gambit by liquidating the company. The two men seem to be involved in a sort of psychological chess game to which the key seems to lie in Garga's desire to maintain his freedom in the face of Shlink's efforts to catch him in a net of gratitude and obligation. But we do not really know, and perhaps we are not intended to. Garga certainly does not seem to understand what is going on either:
GARGA:
Ich habe einen Revolver in der Hosentasche. Ich
begegne einer zurückweichenden Verbeugung. Er
bietet mir seinen Holzhandel an. Ich verstehe
nichts, aber ich nehme an.

(Stücke, I, 233, my emphasis)

In a short introduction Brecht himself urges his reader not
to worry too much about such problems:

Sie betrachten den unerkärlichen Ringkampf zweier
Menschen. . . . Zerbrechen Sie sich nicht den Kopf
über Motive dieses Kampfes, sondern beteiligen Sie sich
an den menschlichen Einsätzen, beurteilen Sie un-
parteilisch die Kampfform der Gegner und lenken Sie
Ihr Interesse auf das Finish.

(Stücke, I, 209)

However, this suggestion is itself misleading, for the action
of the play does not really resemble a wrestling match. In
a sports contest we know exactly what the aim is and hence
what constitutes victory or defeat. There is no doubt and
no ambiguity. In Im Dickicht it is hard to see how one can
judge either the finish or the human substance invested in
the fight since we do not know what is at stake. At the end
of the play even the protagonists cannot agree on the purpose
and the meaning of their struggle. Garga claims to be the
victor because he is younger and will survive Shlink physi-
cally. Shlink claims it was a metaphysical fight which Garga
was too coarse to understand:

SHLINK:
Sie haben nicht begriffen, was es war. Sie wollten
mein Ende, aber ich wollte den Kampf. Nicht das
Körperliche, sondern das Geistige war es.

GARGA:
Und das Geistige das sehen Sie, das ist nichts.
Es war nicht wichtig, der Stärkere zu sein, sondern
der Lebendige.

(Stücke, I, 312)
Even these remarks are not definitive; they are, as Shlink says, merely "die letzten Degenstöße."

The problem is further complicated by the fact that this fight is made impossible by the isolation and loneliness of modern man:

SHLINK:
Die unendliche Vereinzelung des Menschen macht eine Feindschaft zum unerreißbaren Ziel...

GARGA:
Die Sprache reicht zur Verständigung nicht aus.

SHLINK:
Ich habe die Tiere beobachtet. Die Liebe, Wärme aus Körpermitte, ist unsere einzige Gnade in der Finsternis! Aber die Vereinigung der Organe ist die einzige, sie überbrückt nicht die Entzweiung der Sprache.... Ja, so groß ist die Vereinzelung, daß es nicht einmal einen Kampf gibt.

(Stucke, I, 307-308)

This loneliness lies at the heart of the play and brings us back to the matter of the changing evaluation of the individual in Brecht's early plays. It is not just Shlink and Garga who find real human contact impossible. The other people in the play are also hopelessly isolated. Between Garga and his mistress, Jane, there is an abyss which nothing can bridge. Marie, Garga's sister, loves Shlink; but, because his homosexual inclinations bind him to her brother, Shlink can reply only with polite evasions or patently unfelt expressions of affection. In both women the inner loss expresses itself in physical degradation through drink and prostitution. This loneliness is neither a moral failure of the individual in his relation to others nor the result of
a corrupt order of society, but is a reflection of the human condition itself. At the climax of the speech quoted above, Shlink declares:

Wenn ihr ein Schiff vollstopft mit Menschenleibern, daß es birst, es wird eine solche Einsamkeit in ihm sein, daß sie alle gefrieren.

(Stücke, I, 308)

The whole play can be read as an exploration of and lament on this inevitable but almost unbearable isolation.

In Baal, too, man was lonely, but there the hero could affirm his loneliness because he thrrove on it. By breaking away from the restrictions imposed upon him by the obligations and the customs of organized society, Baal found a way open to another, more primitive, level of existence. He was able to draw strength and vitality from the generative forces of nature and to take on something of the protean quality of a life force. The price of suffering and lonely death was a small one to be paid for becoming part of the flux of natural life. In Im Dickicht, this Bohemian dream of the young poet is rejected as an illusion. An escape from the jungle of the city is no longer possible; the regenerating springs of nature no longer flow, not, at least, in this play. At the beginning of the play Garga still has illusions; quoting from Rimbaud's Saison en enfer, he hurls defiance at Shlink:

"Abgötterei! Lügen! Unzucht! Ich bin ein Tier, ein Neger, aber vielleicht bin ich gerettet."
Ihr seid falsche Neger, Wahnsinnige, Wilde, Geizige!"  
(Stücke, I, 223, my emphasis)

By the end of the play, quoting again from the same source, he comes to reject the primitive as a possible source of new life and strength:

"Ich werde hingehen, und ich werde zurückkommen mit eisernen Gliedern, dunkler Haut, die Wut im Auge. Meinem Gesicht nach wird man glauben, daß ich von starker Rasse bin. . . . Ich werde mich ins Leben mengen, gerettet sein."—Was für Dummheiten! Worte auf einem Planeten, der nicht in der Mitte ist!  
(Stücke, I, 310, my emphasis)

Rimbaud's words, earlier quoted with approval, are now quoted only to be rejected and mocked. There is no salvation and no real fulfillment for Garga either in his strange struggle with Shlink or in a withdrawal from the net of social relations in which he is caught up in Chicago. After Shlink's death he accepts loneliness and resolves to start a new life in New York. But he does not expect much from this new beginning, and says with resignation, "Das Chaos ist aufgebraucht. Es war die beste Zeit" (Stücke, I, 318).

Das Leben Eduards des zweiten von England

Brecht's next play, Das Leben Eduards des zweiten von England, was written in the years 1923-24. It is a free adaptation of Christopher Marlowe's drama and was considered by Brecht to be sufficiently his own to be included in the edition of his own plays after the war.

As was the case in Im Dickicht, one of its main
themes is the homosexual relation between two men, King Edward and his favorite Gaveston; and, like the earlier play, it can be read as a lament on the misery and loneliness of the human condition. Indeed, the melancholy words with which Edward sums up their relationship after Gaveston's death are like an echo of the remarks of Shlink quoted earlier (page 22):

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

(Stücke, 11, 99)

Where Das Leben Eduards differs from the earlier play is in the greater emphasis it places on the importance of social forces. The England of the play is an unstable late feudal society, and the struggle between the crown and the powerful nobles determines the course of the action. This social situation does in fact seem to reflect a development of Brecht's views, although it is not his invention but dictated by the nature of the play he is adapting. Since Brecht did choose this play, and since it does presage his future development, the new situation is worth examining.

In Das Leben Eduards the homosexual relationship of Gaveston and Edward occasions a civil uprising by the restless nobles against the king. The two lovers cannot manipulate their surroundings, but are buffeted and torn apart by events which they have provoked but which they cannot control. Indeed, all the major figures of the play try to force their wills
upon their society, and all are destroyed in the attempt. As king, Edward cannot withdraw into a private existence in order to indulge his fancies; he leads a public life whether he wishes to or not. Since he is unable to give up Gaveston, Edward tries to force Gaveston's official recognition. But this attempt by the king to command social acceptance of his personal predilections ends in failure; the interests of society prevail over the individual. Gaveston, the insolent butcher's boy who tried to achieve power through the king's favor, is even less successful at imposing his will on the world; and he becomes a helpless pawn in the hands of the nobles, to be spared or killed as political convenience dictates. In all this we must not, of course, try to discover any materialist or Marxist theory of history. There are as yet no iron laws governing men's fate. The closest Brecht comes to a law of history is in the gloomy suggestion that the men of a nation, once embarked on civil strife, show a natural tendency to degenerate more and more into inhumanity and bestiality. Images of beasts of prey and images of decay have a very important role in the play.

The impotence of the individual does not mean that human passion does not affect the course of history. Edward's decision to continue the civil war and to give his opponents no quarter in order to assert his authority and to avenge the killing of Gaveston has the gravest consequences for the country. Nevertheless, as a direct result of this decision
Edward ends his life as the unhappy prisoner of Mortimer, dragged Incognito through the back roads of the country and finally murdered in the sewers of the Tower of London because he will not renounce his crown. Mortimer, the Intellectual turned man of action, seems for a while destined to gather the reins of power into his hands as the successful usurper until the boy king, whom he had thought to control, asserts his authority and has him led off to the Tower. He too fails to impose his will on history.

In addition to showing us the ultimate powerlessness of the individual who opposes society, the play gives some indication that a man can bring himself into harmony with society. The fallen Edward, an abused and helpless prisoner, has no further resources as a private individual. What sustains him and keeps him from complete collapse is his social role, his kingship—not, of course, its outer trappings, but the inner consciousness of a right which cannot be taken from him by force. Although his persistent refusal to abdicate costs him untold suffering and physical degradation, the belief in his royalty enables him to overcome all humiliation and even gives him a certain undeniable nobility. It also gives him, though he does not know it, the power to topple the usurper, Mortimer. This idea that kingship may strengthen and ennoble a man as well as placing great demands on him is not, of course, uncommon in Elizabethan drama. But the possibility of such a positive relationship between man and society is a
new notion for Brecht. It will be recalled that in Baal all the representatives of conventional society are weak and impotent compared to the outsider Baal, who embodies the ideal of a real man and a true poet. Now just the opposite is true. As long as Edward prefers private infatuation to his responsibility as king, he proves weak; as a fallen king sustained only by his sense of inner royalty, he gains a dignity he never had in his days of power. It must be admitted, though, that the possibility of a social role giving a man the strength he lacks as a private individual is not yet presented very clearly or convincingly because the particular circumstances of the play are so unusual. However, in his next play, Mann 1st Mann, Brecht is ready to elaborate the idea that by playing a social role a man does not necessarily diminish himself, but may discover quite unexpected resources of strength. This idea becomes central in the Lehrstücke and is one of the roots from which the concept of Einverständnis springs.

With Mann 1st Mann we arrive at the actual theme of this dissertation: the process by which the individual is subordinated to the collective. Here Brecht, though not yet a Marxist, explicitly asserted the impotence of the individual and the dominance of the group. The next chapter will be devoted to a detailed consideration of this play.

However, before turning to Mann 1st Mann I would like to examine briefly two more works which, though written later, form part of the background against which the problem of
Die Dreigroschenoper was written and produced in 1928 before Brecht had completed any of his Lehrstücke. Der Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny was written during 1928 and 1929, and was actually contemporary with some of the Lehrstücke. Both works have musical scores. Brecht called them "operas," though "anti-operas" would in many ways be a more appropriate term to describe them. A complete analysis of both would involve an evaluation of Brecht's use of the opera form and a consideration of the element of musical parody in the works.

This is not my purpose here. Rather, the following remarks deal with the two pieces only in terms of the light they throw on Brecht's view of the relation of individual and society and on his increasingly critical attitude toward capitalism. This aspect of the two works is very important because the exploration of the idea of consent in the Lehrstücke assumes a rejection of capitalism. However, the Lehrstücke themselves contain only very rudimentary and abstract criticism of that system; by and large, its rejection is taken for granted. It is only in Die Dreigroschenoper and Mahagonny (not counting, of course, later plays) that we find a detailed criticism of the existing social and economic order.

Both plays can be seen as part of the development in Brecht's plays traced in this chapter from a form of individualism to a view of the world in which the forces of society dominate the lives of individual men. Neither Die Dreigro-
schenoper nor Mahagonny is as extreme in this respect as Mann ist Mann. Their importance lies in the fact that Brecht for the first time suggests that man's unhappy condition is caused by a particular form of society—namely, bourgeois society, or, more specifically, capitalism. This new emphasis on social criticism is, of course, a direct result of Brecht's study of Marxism, which started seriously in the fall of 1926. This naturally does not mean that Die Dreigroschenoper and Mahagonny are full-fledged Marxist works—they are not. But the influence of the new ideas Brecht is studying cannot be overlooked.

Die Dreigroschenoper

If we look beyond the high spirits and the comedy of Die Dreigroschenoper, we find a grim world governed by self-interest and the exploitation of man by his fellows, a world in which man is a wolf to man. This view of life is summed up in the second "Dreigroschen-Finale":

Denn wovon lebt der Mensch? Indem 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 da nur nichts ein.
Der Mensch lebt nur von Missetat allein.
(Versuche 1-12, p. 196)

Why is this so? Is it because human nature itself is corrupt, or is it due to a perversion of human behavior by the forces of the society in which we live? It is the latter answer we
would expect from a writer already under the influence of Marxism, as Brecht was in 1928. In fact, his position in the play is more complex and ambiguous.

In *Die Dreigroschenoper* the interaction of man and society forms a vicious circle from which there is no escape. Man cannot be good because the world is bad; in order to survive at all, he must be ruthless and cold-blooded and must never falter in the defense of his own interests. On the other hand, the world is such a cruel place in good part because of fundamental human greed and brutality. The famous tag, "Erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral" (*Versuche* 1-12, pp. 195-96) unites both these possibilities. It can mean that one cannot be moral until one's basic physical needs are met--that is, until the social order permits one to be good. But it can also mean--and the context supports both readings--that man's selfish material interests always take precedence over moral teachings, that goodness is illusory. Jeremiah Peachum sums the situation up well when he sings:

Ein guter Mensch sein?
Ja, wer wärs nicht gern?
Sein Gut den Armen geben, warum nicht?

Doch leider sind auf diesem Sterne eben
Die Mittel kärlich und die Menschen roh.
Wer möchte nicht im Fried und Eintracht leben?
Doch die Verhältnisse, sie sind nicht so!

(Versuche 1-12, p. 174, my emphasis)

The circumstances which make a decent life impossible are--as the underlined phrases make clear--to be sought both in the
conditions of life and in the state of human nature. The world of Die Dreigroschenoper is one in which man is by nature weak and bad, but also one in which it is the organization of society which makes it necessary for men to be selfish and immoral in order to survive.

The basic weakness of man's nature is most clearly demonstrated by his sexuality. Man's inability to control this drive is summed up in the "Ballade von der sexuellen Hörigkeit." The bondage of which this title speaks is not a passion which ties us to another person but is the inability to guide and repress the sexual urge as such. Man's inability to control his drives cannot be blamed on social circumstances as other moral failings might be. Here it is clear that human nature itself is at fault. One must, of course, be cautious in drawing conclusions about man's moral nature as such from his sexual nature. The two are not necessarily the same thing. However, the opera gives us little reason to hope that the weakness of will demonstrated in sexual matters will be compensated for by moral resolve elsewhere.

The way in which man is caught between the weakness of his nature and the forces of society is well illustrated in Macheath's capture by the police. He is taken, on the one hand, because his friend and protector, the police chief Brown, cannot match the power of Jeremiah Peachum backed by the organized beggars of London. The most influential social force in the play carries the day and sweeps all before it.
On the other hand, Macheath would nevertheless have escaped easily from London if he had not surrendered to his desires and paid his habitual visit to the brothel, and if Jenny had not been so easily bribed to inform against him.

Die Dreigroschenoper was intended by Brecht as a satire on bourgeois society, and it is well known that as such it largely missed its mark. Instead of feeling attacked, the German middle-class audiences were delighted and Die Dreigroschenoper became one of the greatest theatrical successes of the Weimar Republic. It is not hard to understand at least some of the reasons for this. The opera was seen by its audiences as a cynical affirmation of the world as it really was. Through their laughter the middle-class spectators experienced a release from the hypocrisy and pretense of everyday life where one had to pay lip service to the values of a bourgeois, Christian culture. There is nothing surprising in this reaction, for it is one of the traditional functions of comedy to provide relief from the strains of social propriety by voicing some of the raw truths that underlie civilized life.

Furthermore, the play does little to suggest that the evils exposed in it can be eliminated or even alleviated. The vicious circle formed by the disorder of society and the deficiencies of human nature would seem to be unbreakable. If it is, then the best thing man can do is to recognize and
accept himself and the world for what they are and to "play
the game." What is more, bourgeois society in *Die Dreigroschenoper* tends to appear as a universally valid social
form to which all other groups strive to conform. For
example, Brecht may have wanted to suggest through the figure
of Macheath (Mackie Messer) with his veneer of bourgeois
manners that the good Bürger is also something of a gangster. What he seems to have suggested to his audience is, rather,
that the bourgeois is an ideal type which even the successful
gangster (however ludicrously) tries to imitate. Similarly,
there is no need to see in Peachum's organization of beggars
the suggestion that all businesses exist by exploiting human
misery. One can equally well take it to mean that even the
outcasts of society must organize themselves along good
bourgeois lines if they are to make a success of begging.

*Die Dreigroschenoper* was Brecht's first attempt to
satirize and criticize bourgeois society on the stage after
he began to study Marxism. Though it has many other merits,
the play does not entirely succeed in this respect. Of
course, one must be cautious about judging the play from a
strict Marxist point of view. The ambiguity and ambivalence
of the text probably give a better picture of Brecht's
attitudes when it was written than he himself was later
prepared to admit. For a more incisive criticism of
capitalism we must turn to *Mahagonny*.
Der Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny

Der Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny is an opera about a mythical American city of bars and brothels built to attract prospectors and lumberjacks from Alaska. Despite a setting and milieu rather more exotic than that of Die Dreigroschenoper, the play is a far sharper and more bitter satire of bourgeois society. Mahagonny did not achieve the popular success of the earlier work, and the first audiences were antagonized and even outraged by the mirror image held up to their society.

That Mahagonny was intended to create at least a partial image of capitalism is not, I think, open to serious question. The city is built and controlled by a group of entrepreneurs who regard the services they offer the men from the north as the most effective way of extracting their hard-earned money. Financial profit is the only goal of the city, and, as we eventually learn, lack of money is the only real crime it recognizes. The city of Mahagonny is subject to periodic crises just as Germany and other capitalist countries were in the twenties. The hurricane that threatens to destroy the city in the course of the play is clearly a symbol for such a crisis. It approaches when it becomes apparent that Paul Ackermann and his Alaskan friends are discontent with the pleasures which the city has to offer, and when other pleasure-seekers (and their money) are fleeing the city. The hurricane
bypasses the city only after Paul discovers the "laws of human happiness" which consist simply of total license to do whatever is dictated by whim or lust. This makes the money flow again and the city is saved. At the end of the play after Paul has been executed for debt, the inevitable breakdown presaged by the storm occurs, and the city collapses into disorder and anarchy.

In order to make sure that the significance of the action is not overlooked, Brecht made the link between Mahagonny and the world of his audience explicit in many of the titles. The trial at which Paul is condemned while a murderer is acquitted in return for a bribe is introduced by a title which states that:

Die Gerichte in Mahagonny waren nicht schlechter als andere Gerichte.

(Versuche, 1-12, p. 87)

More provocative is the title of the execution scene, which asserts that, though many spectators will be displeased with the death sentence, none would be willing to pay Paul's bills (Versuche, 1-12, p. 93). In the final scene following the collapse of Mahagonny groups of demonstrators carry slogans which represent, often in satirical form, the social ideas and conflicts of late capitalism. The function of this scene as a whole is to make it clear that the fall of Mahagonny represents the fall of capitalism itself.

At the same time Brecht does not try to give a comprehensive Marxist analysis of capitalism in the play. For
Marx the typical capitalist was the owner of the means of production in an extractive or manufacturing industry. In *Mahagonny* Widow Begbick and her associates are not producers at all, but belong to what would be called the service industries today. Similarly, Paul and his friends do not figure in the play as exploited workers, but as consumers who must be gullied out of their money. Brecht was obviously not interested in dissecting the economic structure of capitalism in *Mahagonny*, as he was later to do in *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe*.

What Brecht was interested in was demonstrating the ethos of capitalist society. *Mahagonny* suggests that the goal for consumers in such a society is the enjoyment of material pleasure, and that man's highest ethical ideal is the freedom to pursue this pleasure without let or hindrance. It is this freedom which Paul promulgates in the night of the hurricane as the solution both to his own discontent and to the problems confronting the city. Through the action of the play, Brecht offers a number of important comments on this society. First, we are shown that the system debases all the pleasures it touches. The pleasures of eating become gluttony, love is reduced to fornication, and sport is turned into murderous violence. Nothing fundamental changes in *Mahagonny* after Paul discovers the laws of happiness; the rhythm of life simply becomes duller and more brutal. The coarse, deadening round of
pleasure is well caught in the following chorus:

Erstens, vergebt nicht, kommt das Fressen
Zweitens kommt der Liebesakt.
Drittens das Boxen nicht vergessen
Viertens Saufen, das steht im Kontrakt.
Vor allem aber achteft scharf
Daß man hier alles dürfen darf.

(Versuche 1-12, pp. 72-73)

Second, we learn that the freedom that Mahagonny offers is completely illusory. It is extended only in order to encourage men to purchase Mahagonny's "pleasures." The ultimate value which actually guides life in this society is not freedom and not pleasure, but money; as soon as Paul runs out of money his freedom is taken away. Mahagonny grants men license to do as they please only as long as they can pay for it. When Paul asks for help, his friend and his mistress desert him without hesitation; even for them money is everything.

Before his execution Paul gives voice to his disillusionment in a speech, which, I believe, also represents Brecht's final judgment on Mahagonny and the society it symbolizes:


(Versuche 1-12, p. 97)

In the final scene this bitterness merges with the more general despair engendered by the collapse of a system which
cannot survive even though it is prepared to devour its children. The bizarre ending has its comic element, but the final effect is a somber one. The funeral processions following the body of Paul Ackermann seem to be following the coffin of capitalism itself. The marchers reiterate their importance: "Können einem toten Mann nicht helfen," "Können uns und euch und niemand helfen" (Versuche 1-12, pp. 99-100).

In Mahagonny, the individual is even more impotent than in Die Dreigroschenoper. He has become an almost helpless pawn of the social system. This is the reason Brecht shows far less interest in examining the moral character of the individual and its implications in Mahagonny than he did in Die Dreigroschenoper. Man in Mahagonny is no less ignoble and selfish than in the earlier work, but this fact has become less important. The relation of man and society can no longer be regarded as a vicious circle because social forces now clearly dominate the individual. As we saw, Paul eventually recognizes the vanity of his freedom and sees that he is trapped by the city. But the owners of the city are not any freer than he; they are caught in a net of circumstances just as surely as the men they exploit. The opening dialogue between Willy, der Prokurist, and Dreieinigkeitsmoses provides a comic demonstration of this:

Hallo, wir müssen weiter!
Aber der Wagen ist kaputt.
Ja, dann können wir nicht weiter.

(Pause)
Aber wir müssen weiter.
Aber vor uns ist nur Wüste.
Ja, dann können wir nicht weiter.

(Pause)
Also müssen wir umkehren.
Aber hinter uns sind die Konstabler, die uns von Angesicht zu Angesicht kennen.
Ja, dann können wir nicht umkehren.

(Versuche 1-12, p. 45, names of speakers omitted)

Unable to go on, unable to turn back, Begbick and her friends have no choice but to stay and found the city of Mahagonny. Men do not really plan and control their destiny; they do what the social and economic (and in this case environmental) circumstances demand of them.

Brecht does not suggest any possible alternative to the social order of Mahagonny and shows no way out of the debacle at the end of the play. The possibility of reforming the system without changing its basic money ethos is rejected in the play itself (if I am correct in regarding Paul's declaration of freedom as an attempt at such reform). Nor is there any suggestion that a more revolutionary change is possible. There is no hint of class consciousness or of anything else which could form the basis of a revolutionary movement. Although the old order destroys itself, no hope for a new beginning is offered. The bleakness of the finale is unrelieved. This does not mean that Brecht was really this
pessimistic when he wrote the play, of course, but merely that he chose not to show the more positive forces in European society which we know he believed to exist in 1929. Mahagonny shows what Brecht regarded as the fate of man under capitalism without the advent of socialism.

Brecht's advocacy of a Communist solution is reflected in the Lehrstücke, to which a large part of this study will be devoted. In them he turns away from a criticism of capitalism and examines the problems of the individual's relation to the revolutionary movement and his responsibility to society.

Brecht had the men of Mahagonny experiment with a form of anarchic freedom as a basic principle of their society, and he then showed that this principle failed to solve the social problems of Mahagonny. From this false freedom, which he seems to have regarded as typical of capitalism, Brecht turns to the ideal of consent (Einverständnis), which is the exact opposite of license. It demands a rigorous self-discipline and insists that men should not live merely for themselves as they did in Mahagonny, but for the whole of society, or, at least, for that portion of it which is progressive. It is only if we take the bitterness and despair expressed in Mahagonny seriously, as an expression of Brecht's own feelings and attitudes toward capitalism, that we can understand the radical nature of the consent which is advocated in the Lehrstücke. Before turning to them, the earlier play, Mann 1st Mann, which contains a pre-Marxist anticipation of consent, will be analyzed in the following chapter.

2Bertolt Brecht, *Versuche 1-12*, Heft 1-4. This is a new, unchanged edition of *Versuche*, Heft 1-4 (Berlin: Gustav Klepenhauer Verlag, 1930-31).

3A number of Expressionist poems are recited at this soirée. They elicit extravagant and inane enthusiasm from the guests, but, at best, mild, rather sarcastic, approval from Baal. It is not clear whether Baal rejects the poems, or only their fashionable and foolish admirers. See Bertolt Brecht, *Baal*: Drei Fassungen, Dieter Schmidt (ed.), pp. 85-86. Hereafter referred to as *Baal*. All references are to the second version of 1919.


5Bertolt Brecht, *Stücke*, Vol. II.

6See Mortimer's long speech on the Trojan War, which he intends as an allegorical warning to his countrymen (*Stücke*, 11, 34-37).


9The notes to *Die Dreigroschenoper* were written in 1931, and in them Brecht discusses the social criticism in the play in a way that makes the work seem closer to Marxism than is actually the case (*Versuche 1-12*), pp. 220-227).
CHAPTER II

MANN IST MANN

Mann ist Mann, written 1924-26, marks a turning point in Brecht's work, and is, together with Baal, the most important of his early plays. It is the first play in which epic form and didactic intent are combined in a way that was to become the basis of Brecht's future dramatic work. At the same time, Mann ist Mann is clearly the work of a young and high-spirited writer who takes pleasure in shocking middle-class sensibilities and in challenging conventional opinions about human nature. It is a loud, rowdy, aggressive play.

Most important of all for the present study, Mann ist Mann is the first play in which the ascendancy of the social group over the individual is presented clearly and unambiguously. The gradual devaluation of the individual in the early plays was traced in the previous chapter; here it emerges programmatically as the central theme of the play.

The play was first published early in 1927 in a version which differs substantially from that found in Stücke, II. It is this first version which forms the basis of the following discussion and from which subsequent quotations are taken.

Mann ist Mann is set in an India insouciantly concocted by Brecht's imagination and occupied by fierce, hard-drinking
English soldiers. A four-man machine-gun crew is forced to abandon one of its members after plundering a Chinese pagoda (1) in search of funds to replenish its whiskey supplies. In order to escape detection, the remaining soldiers must replace the fourth member of their crew. To this end they approach a civilian worker, Galy Gay, who appears suitable and somewhat weak-willed. Although he is willing to fill in temporarily at roll call, he refuses, despite their urging, to surrender his identity and become Jeraliah Jlp, the missing soldier. When it becomes clear that the latter will not return from the pagoda where he is being detained, the three soldiers decide to employ more energetic means to transform Galy Gay into a new Jlp. It is the thesis of the play that human nature makes such a transformation entirely feasible. To this end Galy Gay is trapped in an illegal elephant sale, brought to trial, and condemned to death. Although he is by now protesting that he is not Galy Gay, he is forced to go through a (mock) execution. Finally, in the person of Jeraliah Jlp he has to give a funeral oration for the "dead" Galy Gay.

Here the first stage of the transformation is completed and the army leaves, with Galy Gay in uniform, for the front. On the train he has a relapse, but is eventually persuaded to accept his new identity again. On arriving at the front, the once mild civilian gives a ferocious demonstration of fighting prowess. At last fully transformed into
a "menschliche Kampfmaschine" (p. 126), he vindicates the thesis of the play that "Mann ist Mann," that men are basically interchangeable.

The action of Mann ist Mann is based on two closely related theories about man. One is a theory about human nature according to which a man's character is something malleable, determined by his social environment and capable of adapting to altered circumstances. This theory rejects the more traditional view that a man's character is something fixed and immutable which distinguishes him from all other men and determines the direction his fortunes take, or, at least, determines how he will react to the circumstances in which he finds himself. This adaptability of man is described by one of the soldiers, discussing the possibility of turning Galy Gay into Jip:

So einer verwandelt sich ganz von selber. Wenn ihr den in einen Tümpel schmeißt, dann wachsen ihm in zwei Tagen zwischen den Fingern Schwimmhäute.

(p. 50)

The other theory, based on the first, concerns the manipulation of the individual by the social group. According to it a man because of his malleability is nothing more than raw material to be formed by the collective so that he will fulfill a necessary function. These views find their clearest summary in the Interlude Introducing the transformation of Galy Gay. Leokadja Begblick addresses the audience directly:

(p. 62)

The deliberately provocative comparison of a man with a car shows how mechanical Brecht's conception of social engineering was.

Bernard Guillemin reported an interview in 1926 in which Brecht had occasion to summarize his views on human nature and the character of his dramatic figures:

Auch wenn sich eine meiner Personen in Widersprüchen bewegt, so nur darum, weil der Mensch in zwei ungleichen Augenblicken niemals der gleiche sein kann. Das wechselnde Außen veranlaßt ihn beständig zu einer Inneren Umgruppierung. Das kontinuierliche Ich ist eine Mythe. Der Mensch ist ein immerwährend zerfallendes und neu sich bildendes Atom.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 270)

Brecht was perhaps influenced by Watson's behaviorist psychology, which analyzes human behavior in terms of observable responses and denies the necessity or relevance of referring to consciousness—that is, to unobservable mental processes. One can also see in Brecht's position the influence of sociological thought which is concerned with group rather than
individual behavior. This is seen most clearly when the soldiers discuss the possibility of transforming Galy Gay:

POLLY:
Wir haben nichts als Jips Paß.

JESSE:

(p. 49, my emphasis)

This implies that men are basically the same and that apparent differences between them are unreal or superficial. Men ought to be studied in the mass where the common pattern of behavior will become statistically evident.

In Mann ist Mann Brecht demonstrates the correctness of the thesis presented to the audience in the interlude quoted above (p. 46) by showing the successful transformation of Galy Gay into a soldier. The play also contains two supporting demonstrations which present Brecht's ideas in simpler form, and I would like to examine these before turning to Galy Gay himself.

The simplest of these parallels to the main action is the incident in which the soldiers give Galy Gay a fake surplus army elephant to sell so that they can arrest him as a criminal. The elephant is hastily constructed by borrowing a stuffed head from Mrs. Begbick and draping an old map over two of the
soldiers. The result leaves something to be desired, but Urla explains why the transparent falseness of the beast is inconsequential:

SOLDATEN (lachend):
Glaubt ihr denn, das wird er für einen Elefanten halten?

POLLY:
Ist er denn so schlecht?

URIA (zornig):
Und er wird ihn doch für einen Elefanten halten. Nur weil ein Käufer da ist! Ich sage euch, der würde diese Whiskyflasche für einen Elefanten halten, wenn einer mit dem Finger drauf deutet und sagt: Verkaufe mir diesen Elefanten; ich bin Käufer! (p. 65, my emphasis)

The example is, of course, a deliberately extreme one. The mock elephant would be quite incapable of doing the work of a real animal, but in this particular situation the elephant has only one function: to be sold. When Galy Gay first sees the elephant, he is upset; but as soon as a willing purchaser appears he cheers up:

SOLDATEN (Kommen herein mit Uria):
Hast du noch einen Zweifel in Bezug auf den Elefanten?

GALY GAY:
Da er gekauft wird, habe ich keinen Zweifel.

URIA:
Nicht wahr, wenn er gekauft wird, ist er richtig?

GALY GAY:
Da kann ich nicht nein sagen. Elefant ist Elefant, besonders wenn er gekauft wird. (pp. 70-71, my emphasis)

Elephant is elephant and a man is a man. It is not a thing's inner nature which determines what it is and what social function it will have; it is the role which determines a
thing's nature or rather what is publicly accepted as its nature. Whether in the case of a man a change in role will also lead to a change in personality is something only the experiment with Galy Gay will show.

The next parallel to the main action is the story of the real Jeralah Jip, who was left behind at the pagoda because he was drunk and because a minor injury marked him as one of the robbers. Here he falls into the hands of the bonze, who decides to turn him into a new god through whom the pagoda's losses can be made good. How is this to be done? How can a drunken soldier become a god? In keeping with the knock-about spirit of the play, the solution is disarmingly crude. Jip is stuffed into a large prayer box, where all that is required is that he thump and grunt at the right moment:

WANG (nach hinten):
Halt! Halt, ihr Gläubigen! Bleibt stehen, nur eine Minute! Der Gott redet zu euch mit drei Donnerschlägen. Zählt die Schläge genau! Es sind vier, nein fünf. Schade, es sind fünf Tael, die ihr opfern sollt.

(p. 44)

No spark of inner divinity is necessary to make Jip into a god, only acceptance by the superstitious worshippers. The measure of this acceptance is equally external. What matters is the amount of the offering; the quality of religious fervor is unimportant. Thus far, Jip is very much like the elephant: an absurd imitation of the real thing, but successful because the faithful accept him as a god.
However, since Jlp is a real man and not a makeshift imitation, he presents certain problems the elephant does not. Having created this god, the bonze must also keep him from running away. In doing so, he gives us our first lesson in the manipulation of men. It is a very simple one. The bonze realizes that Jlp's uncontrolled desire for drink got him into trouble in the first place and uses this knowledge to control him. Judiciously administered portions of beefsteak and whiskey prove effective, and after a few rumblings of conscience Jlp is dissuaded from returning to the army. This surrender to appetite does not change Jlp's personality or consciousness any more than his job as a god does. At the end of the play he shows up on the battlefield and tries to join the machine-gun crew again. He is refused not because he has become a different man, but because his functions as a soldier are being fulfilled by another.

Jlp, and, as we shall see later, Sergeant Blody Five (sic) are controlled by means of their appetites. Their stories show how men can be manipulated. However, the means employed with them prove too simple to be applied successfully to Galy Gay, who shows little interest in either women or drink. The machine-gun crew has to devise other and more ruthless means to deal with him.

The transformation of Galy Gay into a soldier is more
complex than the two transformations already considered. As we have seen, the change involved in the case of the elephant and Jip is purely external. They themselves are unchanged: the elephant remains a fake and Jip a drunken soldier. But Galy Gay must actually become a soldier, and this involves a change in consciousness as well as a change in behavior.

The first step Galy Gay takes toward becoming a soldier is a voluntary one. The three men of the machine-gun crew persuade him to fill in temporarily for Jip at the roll call. All that is needed to win him is a few drinks and a couple of cigars. This first step involves only externals. Galy Gay puts on a uniform, carries Jip's pass, and calls out Jip's name, but he remains Galy Gay, unchanged. All that matters is that the sergeant hears the name and is satisfied. At this stage Galy Gay has become a soldier the way Jip becomes a god: purely externally. The only difference is that the arrangement is more temporary, and that, unlike Jip, he feels no compulsion for the drinks offered him as payment.

Matters become more difficult when Jip does not return and the machine gun crew needs a permanent replacement. There are two problems. The first is that Galy Gay must do more now than simply answer for Jip at roll call. The fake elephant did not have to do a real elephant's work, but Galy Gay must function as a real soldier. The second problem is that Galy Gay is unwilling to take Jip's place permanently. Why?
"Weil ich Galy Gay bin," he says quite simply (p. 52). The difficulty is not that he finds a soldier's life distasteful but that he does not want to surrender his personal identity.

Almost by accident the soldiers hit on the scheme of involving him in an illegal elephant sale. The mention of an elephant has an electrifying effect on a poor man like him:

GALY GAY:
Elefant? Ein Elefant, das ist selbstverständlich eine Goldgrube. Wenn Sie einen Elefanten haben, da verrecken Sie nicht im Spital.
(p. 54)

This is Galy Gay's weak spot just as drink is Jip's and sex the sergeant's. Finding this weakness does not in itself allow the soldiers to manipulate Galy Gay, but it does give them a chance to maneuver him into a position in which they can subject him to ruthless intimidation.

Even before things become critical for Galy Gay he shows a readiness to adapt himself to changing circumstances. Just after he has been offered the opportunity to sell the elephant, his wife appears at the canteen looking for him with the sergeant. Unwilling to spoil his chances, Galy Gay coldly denies his identity and pretends his wife is a complete stranger. Later, when Leokadja Begbick offers to buy the elephant from him, he requests that he not be named in the transaction. The man who is not willing to surrender his identity is ready to deny or conceal it as soon as it is financially to his advantage to do so. This, of course, bodes
well for the soldiers' undertaking.

The next stage in the transformation consists of three steps: Galy Gay's trial, mock execution, and funeral oration. Galy Gay is subjected to a process of "brainwashing." This involves the destruction of his old consciousness, of his sense of identity, and the gradual substitution of a new consciousness. During the trial, which hinges less on the elephant than on his own identity, Galy Gay tries desperately to persuade the soldiers that he is not Galy Gay but an innocent bystander. The fact that the trial is patently absurd and the crime a crude frame-up confuses and disorients him rather than assuring him of his innocence. For, of course, though he is innocent in actual fact, he is guilty in terms of his intentions; and the soldiers exploit his guilty conscience in order to increase his anxiety and confuse his sense of what is real and what is make-believe. He starts to lose contact with reality and drifts into a nightmare, from which the soldiers, in whose power he is, will not let him awake. The disorientation becomes acute after Galy Gay has been condemned to death and is gradually overcome by fear. When he faces the firing squad, we see a man crumble away before our eyes:

GALY GAY:

Coming in the midst of a farcical scene, this is a terrifying speech. In the same breath Galy Gay both denies and admits his own identity, and the confusion is real, not pretended. His personality is breaking down, and all that is left is the physical substratum, the digestive tube to which he points. Just as the firing-squad is about to shoot, Galy Gay faints and the shots echo over his head.

When he comes to, he finds himself addressed as Jeraiah Jip and is assigned the job of giving Galy Gay's funeral address. His meditation beside the coffin supposed to contain his own remains reflects his continued anguish and uncertainty about his identity, but at the same time shows him trying to come to terms with his new situation:

Ich könnt nicht ansehen ohne sofortigen Tod
In einer Kist ein entleertes Gesicht
Eines gewissn, 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 fiedermäusig Ding, hängend
The speech made before the execution indicated bewilderment and collapse. This soliloquy represents an attempt to accept the fact that he is both dead (figuratively speaking) and yet alive with a new, as yet imperfectly formed identity. His old face is "entleert" and he fears its emptiness. At the same time he cannot detach himself completely from his past, "Dieweil das Herz an seinen Eltern hängt." He feels himself to be neither Galy Gay nor Jip but an ill-defined "abgenabelt fledermäusig Ding," neither bird nor beast, suspended in uncertainty and ambiguity. The "brainwashing" has not produced a tabula rasa upon which a new identity can be mechanically inscribed. Galy Gay cannot be turned into Jip without some act of consent on his part, and in the last lines he decides to give up the identity that is "unbeliebt" and to be "angenehm," easy to deal with. He acts under severe duress, to be sure, and we can scarcely imagine him refusing and standing up to his tormentors. But the role of consciousness has not been eliminated altogether; Galy Gay has not quite been reduced to the status of a car which is simply
Galy Gay's decision to submit to the demands of the soldiers and to surrender his old identity comes close to Einverständniss (consent), as the term is used in the Lehrstücke. The collective that dominates the individual is, of course, different in these Communist plays but the process of subordination is similar. The intimidation of the individual is never again represented so crassly as in Mann ist Mann; but it is there nevertheless, in slightly disguised form, especially in Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständniss.

Galy Gay's decision to accept his new role as Jip does not quite solve his problems. The actual funeral oration betrays a lingering bewilderment about who he really is (p. 101). But, as the scene closes and he packs his equipment for the train trip to the front, the new Jeriah Jip seems to fall into his new role with gusto.

The trip, however, brings a serious relapse. Awakening one morning, he wants to get off the train and cannot remember his new name. After refusing to give his name at all, he suddenly bursts out with "Ich weiß nur, dass ich Galy Gay heiße" (p. 110). A glance at his new army pass only further confuses him, and he sits down in a corner, depressed. Only the example of Sergeant Blody Five finally cures him. This notorious soldier has compromised his name by succumbing to his sexual urges. Since the name Blody Five is more
Important to him than anything in the world, he decides to salvage his reputation by eliminating temptation; and in a fit of passion he castrates himself. Galy Gay learns a valuable lesson:

Das ist ein großes Glück für mich, daß ich das gesehen habe: Jetzt sehe ich, wohin diese Hartnäckigkeit führt und wie blutig es ist, wenn ein Mann nie mit sich zufrieden ist und so viel Aufhebens aus seinem Namen macht!

(pp. 114-115)

Here again Galy Gay makes a decision, this time one caused by reflection rather than duress. He decides that it is absurd and self-destructive to insist on one’s individuality. The world is too uncertain to build on such an unstable foundation. This decision leaves some doubt as to whether his relapse was due to genuine confusion about who he was, or was really a form of half-open rebellion against his forced transformation. But one thing is sure: wisdom suggests that it is best to accept his role in the army without quarrel and to forget his civilian life.

This new life involves not just a change of roles for Galy Gay; it means that he ceases to be an individual and becomes part of a collective in which men are no longer differentiated from each other in any basic way. The interchangeability of men in the army has already been strongly emphasized in the "Mann-ist-Mann Song," the singing of which accompanies the long transformation scene. Now Galy Gay is
prepared to accept and even affirm the army's uniformity:

GALY GAY:
Und wie viele gibt es hier, die nach Tibet fahren?

LEOKADJA:
Hunderttausend!

GALY GAY:
Nicht wahr? Hunderttausend! Und was essen sie?

LEOKADJA:
Gedörrte Fische und Reis.

GALY GAY:
Alle das gleiche?

LEOKADJA:
Alle das gleiche!

GALY GAY:
Nicht wahr? Alle das gleiche.

LEOKADJA:
Sie haben alle Hängematten zum Schlafen; jeder seine eigene, und Drilllichanzüge für den Sommer.

GALY GAY:
Frauen?

LEOKADJA:
Die gleiche.

GALY GAY:
Frauen die gleiche.

LEOKADJA:
Und jetzt weißt du doch auch, wer du bist?

GALY GAY:
Jerahah Jip, mein Name.
(Er läuft zu den drei und zeigt es ihnen im Paß.)

(pp. 115-116)

It is, however, only in the final battle scene that Galy Gay really grows into his new role and appears secure in
It. Singlehanded he destroys the Tibetan border fortress. Sergeant Bloy Five, who believes him an imposter, approaches and demands to know who he is. At the same time the triumphant soldiers brush aside his question with another more important one:

Wer aber ist der Mann, der die Bergfestung Sir el Dchowr gefällt hat?

(p. 126)

It is not important who Galy Gay is; the important thing is what he has done. His successful performance as a soldier assures his legitimacy. Galy Gay answers the soldiers and states that he is one of them:

GALY GAY: Ich bin es, einer von euch, Jeraiah Jip!

STIMMEN VON UNTEN: Was aber hast du gemacht, daß der Paß jetzt frei ist?

GALY GAY (durch das Megaphon): Beinahe nichts! Beinahe nichts! Meine Ansicht ist: Mann ist Mann!

STIMMEN VON UNTEN: Dann bist du der größte Mann, den die Armee hat, Jeraiah Jip, menschliche Kampfmaschine!

(p. 126, my emphasis)

The final and crucial demonstration of the success of the transformation of Galy Gay into a soldier is thus found in fighting, that is in his fulfillment of a function and not in his psychological acceptance of a new identity. One feels that he becomes secure in his new identity only when he starts to behave like a soldier, as he does in this scene. When he
prepares for battle and leads the fighting, the split between his sense of who he is and the nature of the role he has to play is completely healed.

Galy Gay has not just become a successful soldier; he has become a better and more efficient soldier than anyone else. He, the newcomer, has clearly taken charge. He orders the other members of the machine-gun crew about, and requisitions their rations for himself (pp. 121-122). After the battle he is celebrated as the mightiest man in the army. How is this possible if man really equals man? Should not one soldier be much the same as another, just as the "Mann ist Mann" song suggests? But Brecht is not really contradicting himself here. We know that Galy Gay was something of a weakling as a civilian. Therefore, his new strength comes from the collective and from his acceptance of his role in it. Because of the peculiar nature of the transformation he has undergone, Galy Gay develops into a pure type, a human fighting machine. As such he does not suffer from the human weaknesses like the desire for drink or women which the others have retained. The others remain imperfect members of the collective. Galy Gay has become the "ideal" soldier whose more than human (or perhaps less than human) stature they can never equal.

How far Brecht has traveled from his first play, Baal, can be seen by comparing its hero with Galy Gay. The poet
Baal finds his strength in independence. He fears bonds with other people, even those he loves, as restraints upon himself. For him to be strong is to live in perfect freedom and flout all the safe and accepted standards of society. Baal is prepared to be absolutely ruthless to others in order to live as he wishes and is prepared to accept the self-destruction that this life entails. Galy Gay is exactly the opposite of Baal. Where Baal seems to be of super-human semi-mythical stature, Galy Gay seems at first to be a little less than a man. He is mild and ineffectual and appears unable to say no to anyone. Unlike Baal, his sexual drive is feeble, and he is unmoved by Leokadja Begbick, whose charms are later so overwhelming for Sergeant Blody Five. In short, as an individual Galy Gay is a weakling and a nobody. It is only as a soldier, as a member of a collective, that he shows real strength. He grows out of individuality to fulfill a purely collective function. As such, he is in his way as far beyond ordinary human measure as Baal. Baal is (almost literally) an apotheosis of the unrestrained individual; Galy Gay, the soldier, is a celebration of collective man.

There is one further transformation in the play which parallels that of Galy Gay. This is the transformation of Sergeant Blody Five into a civilian and his attempt, already mentioned, to restore his reputation. It seems to be intended by Brecht to elucidate Galy Gay's situation, but reveals,
Instead, certain ambiguities and uncertainties in Brecht's own position.

The contrast between the two transformations is at first sight illuminating. The weak civilian Galy Gay is turned into a ferocious and powerful soldier by surrendering his individuality and becoming an agent of the collective. The sergeant, feared by all his men, is unable to control his sexual desires and turns into a civilian, a private individual concerned only with satisfying his personal needs. In the midst of the brainwashing of Galy Gay he turns up at Leokadja Begbick's canteen in a dinner jacket and bowler hat looking for the services of one of Begbick's daughters. He is drunk and the soldiers mock him, refuse to obey, and encourage him to make a complete fool of himself. Meanwhile, the army is breaking camp, and it is made perfectly clear that the sergeant is neglecting his military duty. The fierce sergeant has turned into a weak and ridiculous civilian. So far his story seems to demonstrate the superiority of collective man over the private individual. But the matter is more complicated.

The sergeant is fiercely attached to his reputation as a soldier; it is more important to him than life itself. His is not a self-indulgent nature; he desperately wishes to control his drives, but he cannot. We are thus forced to the conclusion that Brecht is exaggerating when he says, in
the interlude, that he will prove "daß man mit einem Menschen beliebig viel machen kann" (p. 62). Whether he realizes it or not, he demonstrates that there are human drives which are anarchic and resist any form of social control and thus threaten to cause a breakdown of social roles. This is true not just of the sergeant, but also of Jip, whose greedy hunger for meat and whiskey is greater than his sense of duty. Indeed, the whole machine-gun crew has endangered its position in the army by robbing the pagoda for whiskey-money.

The matter becomes even more complex if we consider the scene in the train where the sergeant castrates himself in a supreme effort to regain his reputation by destroying that part of himself which he cannot control. Since his earlier transformation into a civilian was presented as a decline and a proof of weakness, it would be natural if his drastic attempt to retain his role in the collective (if not his method) met with some sympathy. In fact, Galy Gay clearly regards the self-castration as a foolish and mistaken act. We have seen earlier what he learns from it: that it is foolish to make such a fuss about a name, and that he should stop clinging to his own civilian identity (pp. 114-115). Galy Gay's position ought to imply that, whereas he himself should give up his resistance and become a member of the collective, the sergeant ought to give in to his drives and become a private individual rather than mutilate himself.
This would mean that it is unimportant whether one is a private individual or a collective man as long as one is passive and bends where the wind blows strongest. This is not, however, what Brecht was trying to demonstrate in *Mann ist Mann*. As I shall try to show in the next section, there is good reason to believe that in 1926 he regarded Galy Gay's transformation into a member of a collective as an important and positive achievement in itself. Mere adaptability was not what Brecht was interested in showing.

Nevertheless, the story of the sergeant represents more than just an inconsistency in Brecht's conception of the play. Whether he realized it or not, he showed that the problem of personality was more complex than the simple formula "Mann ist Mann" would suggest. The sergeant is forced to choose between two incompatible alternatives: surrender to his sexual desires and retention of his military authority and reputation. Both are essential to him as a man, and he is unable to resolve the conflict satisfactorily. Looked at this way, the sergeant is surprisingly like the young comrade in *Die Maßnahme*. Although the problem is transferred from the physical to the moral level, the conflict between the young comrade's need to behave humanely and his desire to advance the revolution faces him with an insoluble dilemma quite similar to the sergeant's. "Aufständige werden erschossen" (p. 114) says Bloy Five,
Indulging in a last pun before he castrates himself; and it is just a little uncanny that these words also indicate, almost literally, the means by which the Communist Party solves the problem posed by the young comrade. 9

How, then, are we to regard Galy Gay's transformation into a soldier? This is an important question in view of the way in which Brecht's ideas on the relation of the individual and society developed in the following years. The idea of Einverständniss, central to the Lehrstücke, which Galy Gay's acceptance of his new role anticipates, is an entirely positive one for Brecht. It means submission to the will of the Communist Party or self-sacrifice for the good of society, and both of these came to be of great importance for the Marxist Brecht. But is Galy Gay's development into a collective man really something to be praised, or is it to be rejected as an abhorrent manipulation of man? It is hard for the present-day reader, who has watched the rise of totalitarian movements and for whom imperialism has lost its Kiplingesque veneer, to view the forced integration of Galy Gay into a colonial army with anything but detestation. His trial and mock execution are a disquieting anticipation of brainwashing. It is hard to imagine that Brecht, whom we like to regard as a Marxist humanist, might, as a young man, not have shared our feelings.
Nevertheless, a careful examination of the text suggests that Brecht took a positive view of the transformation in 1926, and his early comments on the play corroborate this view. It should, however, be noted from the outset that *Mann ist Mann* is not a play of social criticism or social advocacy. Brecht's proclaimed aim is to demonstrate a certain thesis about human nature and the social control of men. Such a demonstration can in itself be quite objective, neither praising nor blaming. This is why so much of the action in *Mann ist Mann* is presented neutrally, and why the total effect of the work seems a little ambiguous.

For most of the play we tend to sympathize with Galy Gay and regard him as the victim of a group of ruthless soldiers. Although he is trapped by his own greed and gullibility, he seems driven into the dubious dealing with the false elephant by his own poverty. The speeches in which the bewildered man tries to understand what is happening have a genuine pathos despite the almost slapstick character of much of the transformation scene. Our natural reaction is to condemn his tormentors and to regard him as a tragic, if completely unheroic, figure.

Galy Gay, however, surprises and perhaps disappoints those who wish to pity him. He emerges from the transformation stronger than his tormentors, not broken as one might expect. He starts ordering the others around almost immediately; on the train one of the machine-gunners complains that
he has taken away all their blankets, and before the battle he eats up everyone’s rations. The battle marks Galy Gay’s final triumph and his vindication as a soldier. In this particularly grotesque scene he demolishes a fortress virtually unaided and is celebrated by the admiring troops as a hero. Galy Gay’s immediate companions, his three "creators," have reason to be a little more reserved in their enthusiasm and one of them closes the play with the jocular but ominous words:

POLLY (zurück über die Schulter):
Der läßt uns noch alle Köpfen.

(p. 127)

In trying to understand Brecht’s attitude, I think we must distinguish between the social process he is demonstrating and the particular model he has chosen for this demonstration. That is to say, we must distinguish between Brecht’s attitude toward the transformation of a private individual into a member of a social collective and his attitude toward colonialism and colonial soldiers. It is the collective that really interests him; and, at least in 1926, he was a little indifferent to the exact form it took. His India is so arbitrarily exotic that one feels he did not take this colonial army very seriously except as a convenient model for his demonstration.

An introduction to a 1927 radio production of the play confirms this primary emphasis on the collective per se. Brecht began by talking about a new type of man that he felt
was developing in his time, a new man who sounds like the class-conscious worker who will rise to power in a new society. However, this new man does not sound very much like Galy Gay:

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.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 84)

Nevertheless, Brecht suggested that his listeners regard Galy Gay as a precursor of this new man even though they may be inclined to look down on the play's hero. They are wrong to undervalue him:

Ich denke auch, Sie sind gewöhnt, einen Menschen, der nicht nein sagen kann, als einen Schwächling zu betrachten, aber dieser Galy Gay ist gar kein Schwächling, im Gegenteil, er ist der Stärkste. Er ist allerdings erst der Stärkste, nachdem er aufgehört hat, eine Privatperson zu sein, er wird erst in der Masse stark.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 85)

It is not Galy Gay's strength as a soldier, but his strength as a member of a group that was important to Brecht. Galy Gay's destruction of the fortress is not to be regarded as an act of individual prowess but as the expression of a collective will. In the play, when the sergeant tries to prevent Galy Gay from taking part in the battle and firing on the fort, the latter refuses, saying: "Nicht, was ein Mann will, sondern was alle wollen" (p. 120). Brecht went on to warn his listeners against regarding Galy Gay as a victim:
Sie werden sicher auch sagen, daß es eher bedauernswert sei, wenn einem Menschen so mitgespielt und er einfach gezwungen wird, sein kostbares Ich aufzugeben, sozusagen das Einzige, was er besitzt, aber das ist es nicht. 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.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 85-86)

However, as if to acknowledge something of the ambivalence of the play and of his own attitude as well as to encourage the audience to do its own thinking, he concluded lightly:

Aber vielleicht gelangen Sie zu einer ganz anderen Ansicht. Wogegen Ich am wenigsten etwas einzuwenden habe.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 86)

As a mature writer and a Marxist, Brecht was, as one might expect, rather critical of the play. In 1954, when he reissued the early plays, he commented:

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.

(Stücke, I, 14, my emphasis)

These are the same misgivings that he expressed about Andreas Kragler of Trommeln in der Nacht, a man who had openly rejected all social responsibility. For this reason, Brecht presents the problem of the play rather differently in 1954 than he did in 1927:

Das Problem des Stücks ist das falsche, schlechte Kollektiv (der "Bande") und seine Verführungskraft, jenes Kollektiv, das in diesen Jahren Hitler und seine Geldgeber rekrutierte, das unbestimmte Verlangen der Kleinbürger nach dem geschichtlich reifen, echten sozialen Kollektiv der Arbeiter ausbeutend.

(Stücke, I, 14)
It is clear that the Marxist who had experienced National Socialism looked at the play with other eyes than the young Iconoclast of 1927. However, this change of opinion came long before 1954. Already in 1931 when he directed a particularly important production of the play, he had found the ending unacceptable and omitted the last two scenes:


(Stücke, I, 14-15)

This was, of course, not very satisfactory. Such a truncation of the play concealed the problem rather than solving it. In 1954 Brecht felt that a properly critical presentation of the last two scenes could show the negative character of Galy Gay's development, and he made a few additions to the last scene to facilitate this (Stücke, I, 15). These additions strike one as rather clumsy. The first reminds us that war brings suffering to innocent people:

FERNE STIMME:
Die Bergfestung Sir El Dchawr steht in Flammen, welche 7000 Flüchtlinge aus der Provinz Sikkim beherbergt hat, Bauern, Handwerker und Kaufleute, zum großen Tei fleißige und freundliche Menschen.

(Stücke, I, 293)

The other represents Galy Gay as the bloodthirsty tool of aggressive powers:

GALY GAY:
Oh--Aber was soll das mir?
Das eine Geschrei und das andere Geschrei
Und schon fühle ich in mir
Den Wunsch, meine Zähne zu graben
In den Hals des Feinds
Urtrieb, den Familien
Abzuschlachten den Ernährer
Auszuführen den Auftrag
Der Eroberer.

(Stücke, 11, 293)

If a few such passages plus proper staging can change the whole tenor of the play, then it is safe to conclude that Brecht's original positive evaluation of Galy Gay's transformation was not deeply rooted in the text. In the original Mann ist Mann Brecht was primarily concerned with demonstrating a certain sociopsychological process with a show of scientific objectivity. Bernard Guillemin's interview with Brecht catches this detached attitude well:

Guillemin: Und woran arbeiten Sie noch?
Brecht: An einem Lustspiel "Mann ist Mann."
Es handelt sich um die technische Ummontierung eines Menschen in einen anderen zu einem bestimmten Zweck.
Guillemin: Und wer nimmt die Ummontierung vor?
Brecht: Drei Gefühlisingenieure.
Guillemin: Gelingt das Experiment?
Brecht: Ja, darauf atmen alle auf.
Guillemin: Entsteht dabei vielleicht der ideale Mensch?
Brecht: Nein, nicht sonderlich.

(Schriften zum Theater, 11, 271)

As we have seen, Brecht looked on this process with favor, and certainly relished presenting it in a way which would shake the preconceptions of his audience about human nature. He does not seem to have been very concerned with the political implications of his views about man and society. And, as his answer to the last question indicates, he had no particular admiration for the soldier as such and did not
regard him as an ideal type.

I said earlier that Galy Gay's collapse in the face of the soldiers' intimidation and his reluctant readiness to become a part of the army was similar to what Brecht later termed Einverständnis in the Lehrstücke. This requires some qualification. Einverständnis is a political concept for Brecht, a means to create a movement capable of realizing a socialist society. It therefore becomes an ideal. Proper Einverständnis is something men must strive to achieve and which the dramatist attempts to teach. In Mann ist Mann Brecht had as yet no such political goals; he was still more an observer than a partisan. He was interested in exploring social phenomena without becoming the advocate of any cause. What he tried to make us see is that men are molded by their social environment and change with it. He also wanted to suggest that collective man is superior to the private individual, but in 1926 he did not yet know to what ends this new collective man should have his efforts directed. Brecht showed him as a soldier because the army was a convenient mass organization for his demonstration and not because of any special sympathy for the military as such.

It is of great interest that Brecht came to believe in the ascendancy of society over the individual before he became a Marxist. We know from Elisabeth Hauptmann that Brecht did not start a serious study of Marxism until after
the premiere of Mann's Mann in the Fall of 1926. It is clear that the admiration for the collective demonstrated in this play must have predisposed him to socialism. Someone who has rejected individualism and believes that men are stronger and better off as members of a disciplined group than as private persons is likely to find the Communist Party an attractive and promising organization. In addition, Marxism enabled Brecht to integrate his views on man and society—views which in 1926 existed in a disquieting political vacuum—into a coherent and comprehensive political, social, and economic interpretation of the modern world.
NOTES, CHAPTER II

There are actually three versions of the play:
(a) Mann ist Mann: Die Verwandlung des Packers Galy Gay in
den Militärbaracken von Kilkosa im Jahre neunzehnhundert-
fünfundzwanzig (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag [1927]); (b) In
Gesammelte Werke, I (London: Malik Verlag, 1938); (c) Stücke,
II. Version (b) appears to represent the stage version of
1931. It is a revision of (a) with the last two scenes
omitted altogether. Version (c) consists essentially of
(b) plus a revised version of the first two scenes of (a).
The most important differences between the original version
(a) and that available in Stücke will be indicated in subsequent footnotes. The first version (a) forms the basis for
the discussion in this chapter and references to it are by
page number only.

One might suggest Goethe's concept of geprägte Form
as a classical expression of the view of personality that
Brecht was rejecting:
"So mußt du sein, dir kannst du nicht entfliehen,
So sagten schon Sibyllen, so Propheten;
Und keine Zeit und keine Macht zerstückelt
Geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt."
(from "Urworte. Orphisch")

In both later versions of the play the following
lines have been added to the Interlude to encourage a more
critical attitude to the transformation:

"Und wozu er auch immer umgebaut wird
In ihm hat man sich nicht geirrt.
Man kann, wenn wir nicht über ihn wachen
ihn uns über Nacht auch zum Schlächter machen."
(Sstücke, II, 229-230)

A note on the text of this interview makes it clear
that Guillen was rendering the substance of what Brecht
said not quoting his actual words (Bertolt Brecht,
Schriften zum Theater, II, 299).

It is not possible to prove the direct influence of
J. B. Watson's behaviorism on Brecht at this period. His
only reference to it is found in his essay, "Der Dreigros-
schenprozeß," which appeared in 1931 (Versuche 1-12, pp.
268-269). Reinhold Grimm sees evidence of Watson's influ-
ence as early as 1926 (Bertolt Brecht und die Weltliteratur,
p. 18). Martin Esslin also suggests a fairly early influence
of these ideas on Brecht (Brecht: Das Paradox des politischen Dichters, pp. 56 and 77). I do not know how early Watson's work was translated into German nor whether his ideas became known before such translations appeared. Ernst Schumacher speaks of a translation of Watson's book Behaviorism appearing in Germany in 1930, but he does not indicate whether or not other works appeared earlier (Die dramatischen Versuche Bertolt Brechts 1918-1933, p. 178, hereafter referred to as Die dramatischen Versuche).

6 This song appears in the original version instead of the "Lied vom Fluß der Dinge," which appears in both the later versions. Successive verses are sung during the transformation scene. The refrain is as follows:

"Drauf kommt's nicht an,
Denn ein Mann ist ein Mann.
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 sieben tausend Männer hin,
Die sterben alle unbeweint,
Und 's ist bei keinem schad um ihn:
Denn sagen wir: 's ist gleich, auf wen
Die rote Sonne von Kilkoa schien!'" (p. 68)

7 Of course, such passive adaptability is in fact an important theme in Brecht's work. The "Lied vom Fluß der Dinge," which was substituted for the "Mann-ist-Mann Song" in the 1931 production of the play, brings out this passive element strongly:

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

(Stücke, II, pp. 243-244)

Such a passive acceptance of life and experience was not new in 1931, but was already a theme in the poems of Die Hauspostille, where it found one of its clearest expressions in the poem "Vom Schwimmen in Seen und Flüssen" (Gedichte, I, 66). Galy Gay himself is an extremely passive character; this is why his transformation into a soldier succeeds so well. On the other hand, the original Jip is also passive and lets himself be turned into a spurious god without real resistance. In his case passivity has negative results, eventually even for himself. Thus passivity alone is not enough; one must also surrender to the right influences.
The problem of the relationship between natural drives (and spontaneous "instinctive" expressions of feeling) and the conscious, reasoning ego is a very complicated one in Brecht's work, and it lies outside the scope of the present study. Martin Esslin traces the conflict between what he calls reason and instinct as a major, albeit unconscious, theme through all of Brecht's work (Brecht, esp. pp. 325-353).

Esslin, Brecht, p. 339.
The Lehrstücke, to which Brecht devoted much of his creative effort in the years 1929 and 1930, are short plays, with musical accompaniment, written for performance by young people or amateurs. In a brief article on the German theater in the twenties written about 1936, Brecht described the Lehrstücke and the circumstances under which they were written as follows:

Während einer Reihe von Jahren versuchte Brecht mit einem kleinen Stab von Mitarbeitern abseits des Theaters, das durch den Zwang, Abendunterhaltung zu verkaufen, allzu unbewegliche Grenzen hatte, einen Typus theatricalischer Veranstaltungen auszuarbeiten, der das Denken der daran Beteiligten beeinflussen könnte. . . . Es handelte sich um theatricalische Veranstaltungen, die weniger für die Zuschauer als für die Mitwirkenden stattfanden. Es handelte sich bei diesen Arbeiten um Kunst für den Produzenten, weniger um Kunst für den Konsumenten. (Schriften zum Theater, III, 20)

The pieces he mentions are Der Flug der Lindberghs (Der Ozeanflug), Der Jasager, Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, and Die Maßnahme. These are the didactic pieces which will be dealt with in this study.

The term Lehrstück itself is open to a certain misunderstanding. Brecht used it as a special term to designate the above group of didactic pieces; he did not use it to refer to any of his full-length plays, which, at least from...
1926 on, are all didactic. For these longer plays he consistently preferred the term epic theater. Although the Lehrstücke contain many epic elements, and the epic plays didactic ones, the two terms are kept quite distinct. In subsequent chapters the individual Lehrstücke will be discussed in detail. The present one deals with two introductory problems. First, why did Brecht turn away from the commercial theater in the late twenties? Second, what was his basic concept of the Lehrstück and its function?

As is well known, the young Brecht was extremely critical of the German theater. He regarded it as a serious obstacle to the free development of modern drama:

Die moderne dramatische Produktion erhebt seit Jahren die Behauptung, sie werde falsch aufgeführt, der herrschende Theaterstil sei nicht imstande, sie zu bewältigen, sie selber aber verlange und ermögliche einen völlig neuen Theaterstil.

(Schriften zum Theater, I, 191)

Especially from the year 1926 on these complaints become numerous in his writings. Not only was the theater not able to do justice to the new plays, but "Es hat lediglich seinen alten Stil benutzt, unsere Stücke zu verderben" (Schriften zum Theater, I, 165). The new writers were expected to take the existing theater seriously and adapt their work to the demands of playhouses which Brecht denounced as "diese alten, von dreckigsten Vorstellungen besudelten Amusierkästen" (Schriften zum Theater, I, 199).
The closer Brecht moved to Communism in the late twenties, the more he found himself in conflict with the commercial theater. He felt restricted not just as a dramatist but as a political thinker and teacher too. His most acute discussion of the situation is found in his notes to Mahagonny, written in 1930, where the problem is analyzed in social and economic terms rather than as a conflict between traditional, "Aristotelian" theater and epic theater.

In these notes Brecht came to the conclusion that freedom of expression was an illusion for the contemporary intellectual whether he was a playwright, musician, or critic. The playwright, for example, imagines that he creates freely and independently and assumes that the function of the theater is to present whatever he has written. In reality it is the theatrical apparatus which determines both what is performed, and, more indirectly, what is written. Since he is not in control of the means of production, the writer--Brecht calls him a "Kopfarbeiter"--becomes a well-paid proletarian whose work takes on "Likerantencharakter": he supplies material to the specifications of the theaters. These in turn require a continuous flow of material to stay in operation. Brecht sums up this situation as follows:

Die Produzenten aber sind völlig auf den Apparat angewiesen, wirtschaftlich und gesellschaftlich, er monopolisiert ihre Wirkung, und zunehmend nehmen die Produkte der Schriftsteller, Komponisten und Kritiker Rohstoffcharakter an: das Fertigprodukt stellt der Apparat her.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, III-112, footnote)
As a result the whole critical approach to new works is distorted:

Es entsteht ein Wertbegriff, der die Verwertung zur Grundlage hat. Und dies ergibt allgemein den Usus, jedes Kunstwerk auf seine Eignung für den Apparat, niemals aber den Apparat auf seine Eignung für das Kunstwerk hin zu überprüfen. Es wird gesagt: dies oder das Werk sei gut; und es wird gemeint, aber nicht gesagt: gut für den Apparat.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 110-111)

Not only does the theater reject works not suited to its mode of operation, but it is itself very resistant to change, because the theater is a product of bourgeois society and has a certain function in that society:

Dieser Apparat ist aber durch die bestehende Gesellschaft bestimmt und nimmt nur auf, was ihn in dieser Gesellschaft hält. Jede Neuerung, welche die gesellschaftliche Funktion dieses Apparates, nämlich Abendunterhaltung, nicht bedrohte, könnte diskutiert werden. Nicht diskutiert werden können solche Neuerungen, die auf seinen Funktionswechsel drängten, die den Apparat also anders in die Gesellschaft stellen, etwa ihn den Lehranstalten oder den großen Publikationsorganen anschließen wollten.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, III)

Entertainment does not at first sight seem a very essential function. But Brecht feels that it serves to regenerate the energies of society. Bourgeois entertainment, he suggests, is a sort of self-affirmation which reinforces the existing order:

Diese Gesellschaft nimmt durch den Apparat auf, was sie braucht, um sich selbst zu reproduzieren. Durchgehen kann also nur eine "Neuerung," welche zur Erneuerung, nicht aber Veränderung der bestehenden Gesellschaft führt—ob nun diese Gesellschaftsform gut oder schlecht ist.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, III)
Thus, the theater, however harmless and unpolitical it seems, plays an important, socially conservative role.

Consequently, as a Marxist playwright interested in instructing rather than entertaining his audiences, Brecht found himself in danger of being excluded from the commercial theater in the late twenties and early thirties. His last commercial success, *Mahagonny*, was a borderline case—an entertainment that criticized the role of entertainment in bourgeois society. Its position was precarious:

... sozusagen sitzt es noch prächtig auf dem alten Ast, aber es sägt ihn wenigstens schon (zerstreut oder aus schlechtem Gewissen) ein wenig an... (Schriften zum Theater II, 125-126).

It was a sufficient compromise to be acceptable to the commercial theater even though it did provoke strong protest and at least one splendid scandal. However, the fate of Brecht's subsequent plays in the increasingly reactionary atmosphere of the years before the Nazi takeover seemed to confirm his harsh analysis. No theater was willing to produce *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe*, completed in 1930; and performances of *Die Mutter* and *Die Maßnahme* outside the commercial theater were interrupted by police. It is not surprising, therefore, that Brecht should have experimented with pieces which could be produced independently of the large theaters, without the audiences they attracted and needed. He tells us that after *Mahagonny* he made the attempt:
... das Lehrhafte auf Kosten des Kulinarischen immer stärker zu betonen. Also aus dem Genügs-mittel den Lehrgegenstand zu entwickeln und gewisse Institute aus Vergnügungsstätten in Publikationsorgane umzubauen.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 126)

Brecht remarked, as we have seen, that the writer was becoming an intellectual proletarian without realizing it. However, this was only a negative development under capitalism, where the writer's work was exploited by the theaters or the publishing houses in ways that did not further the general good of society. In themselves, the limitations placed on the writer's independence were good because he was being drawn into the major social movement of the time:

An sich aber ist die Einschränkung der freien Erfindung des einzelnen ein fortschrittlicher Prozeß. Der einzelne wird mehr und mehr in große, die Welt verändernde Vorgänge einbezogen. Er kann nicht mehr sich lediglich "ausdrücken." Er wird angehalten und instand gesetzt, allgemeine Aufgaben zu lösen.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 112)

Although Brecht makes no reference to himself, this is a remarkably good description of the position he found himself in, in the years when the Lehrstücke were being written.

As a student of Marxism who was gradually aligning himself with the cause of the Communist Party, Brecht felt obliged to discipline his talent and restrict the free expression of the fertile and anarchic imagination to which the early plays and poems give such ample testimony.

This discipline enabled him to put his art at the
service of the forces turning the world (he hoped) to socialism. In the _Lehrstücke_ he did this in a very simple and direct way. They are plays that deal with the problems of the individual's work and sacrifice for society. The plays are directed to the people most concerned with such problems: children learning to take their place in society, working-class people, and possibly left-wing intellectuals wishing to work for socialism.

Although Brecht at one time promised a detailed theory of pedagogy, he seems never to have committed more than a few notes to writing. The central idea that informs these sketches is that the participant in a _Lehrstück_ learns by actually performing certain actions and imitating certain attitudes. He learns, by implication, more than the mere spectator who remains passive. Since active participation is the important thing, it is not necessary to have an audience to justify performance. One of Brecht's clearest and most succinct explanations of these ideas is the following:

_Das Lehrstück lehrt dadurch, daß es gespielt, nicht dadurch, daß es gesehen wird. Prinzipiell ist für das Lehrstück kein Zuschauer nötig, jedoch kann er natürlich verwertet werden. Es liegt dem Lehrstück die Erwartung zugrunde, daß der Spielende durch die Durchführung bestimmter Handlungsweisen, Einnahme bestimmter Haltungen, Wiedergabe bestimmter Reden und so weiter gesellschaftlich beeinflußt werden kann._

_(Schriften zum Theater, IV, 78)_

Brecht never really explained why he considered
actual participation to be pedagogically effective, but there is a suggestion in this passage that he regarded learning as a fairly mechanical process, at least as far as simple basic attitudes are concerned. Certainly, all the emphasis is placed on doing; critical reflection does not seem to play a part at all. Certainly, phrases like "die Durchfuhrung bestimmter Handlungsweisen," and "Wiedergabe bestimmter Reden," suggest a mechanical rather than a thoughtful process. This would be entirely in keeping with the behaviorist psychology of *Mann ist Mann*. Certainly there it is clear that it is a man's social role which influences and perhaps ultimately determines his consciousness, not his consciousness or character which determines his social role. As we shall see in the next chapter, there is a section in *Der Flug der Lindberghs* which also suggests very strongly that men's beliefs are formed and changed by what they do and not by theories or ideas.

Probably, Brecht was aware of the problems of such a mechanical view of learning, for there is another more thoughtful sketch in which he discusses the necessity of uniting action and reflection because they are two essential aspects of any social process. The separation of the two is dangerous:

*Zwischen der wahren Philosophie und der wahren Politik ist kein Unterschied. Auf diese Erkenntnis folgt der Vorschlag des Denkenden, die jungen Leute durch Theaterspielen zu erziehen, das heißt sie zugleich zu Tätigen und Betrachtenden zu machen.\ldots Die Lust am Betrachten allein ist für den Staat*
In the case of Lehrstücke written for young people, one can appreciate the special importance of integrating doing and reflecting in an actual musical and dramatic performance. Epic theater, which attempts to stimulate the spectator into thought and aims only much more indirectly at uniting the insights so gained with practical political action, looks to a much more mature and socially experienced audience. It is no accident that two of the four Lehrstücke to be considered in this study were explicitly written for young people.

Despite the rather mechanical view of learning implicit in the first passage above, Brecht insisted in the same sketch that the pedagogical value of the Lehrstück was not limited to the imitation of exemplary models. While conceding that such models play an important role, he added:

"Es braucht sich keineswegs nur um die Wiedergabe gesellschaftlich positiv zu bewertender Handlungen und Haltungen zu handeln; auch von der (möglichst großartigen) Wiedergabe asozialer Handlungen und Haltungen kann erzieherische Wirkung erwartet werden."

(Schriften zum Theater, IV, 78)

Both sketches insist that the Lehrstück is not to be judged aesthetically:

"Ästhetische Maßstäbe für die Gestaltung von Personen, die für die Schauspiele gelten, sind beim Lehrstück außer Funktion gesetzt."

(Schriften zum Theater, IV, 78)
The second sketch goes on to suggest that the *Lehrstück* is to be judged in terms of its usefulness to the state:

"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."

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 129)

It is important to note the degree to which Brecht emphasizes the importance and even primacy of the state in this sketch. One-sided emphasis on action or reflection is said to be harmful to the state, and not, as one might expect it to be formulated, to the young person in question. Similarly, here we are not told that the pedagogical goal of the *Lehrstück* is to produce better and more mature men who will also be better citizens. The goal is purely and simply to benefit the state, and one is left with the feeling that the individual is definitely of secondary importance. This certainly reflects very accurately the position of most of the actual *Lehrstücke* as we shall have opportunity to see.

Although the *Lehrstück* is primarily intended for the instruction of the participants, this does not exclude the possible presence of an audience. In fact, all the *Lehrstücke* seem to have been performed before spectators: sometimes for conventional theater audiences, often for groups of high school students or of workers. In notes to *Die Maßnahme* Brecht gave a very good general statement of the purpose of these plays:
Die Vorführenden (Sänger und Spieler) haben die Aufgabe, lernend zu lehren.

(Schriften zum Theater, III, 137, my emphasis)

This takes the interests of both performers and spectators into account. If Brecht was to advance the cause of socialism, he had to reach as many people as possible. In the notes to this work, which requires a mass chorus of singers, Brecht manages to emphasize his concern with reaching large numbers even while stressing the importance of the work for the performers:

Da es in Deutschland eine halbe Million Arbeiter-sänger gibt, ist die Frage, was im Singenden vorgeht, mindestens so wichtig wie die Frage, was im Hörenden vorgeht.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 137)

The formula, that the performers are to teach others while learning themselves, applies equally to all the didactic pieces to be discussed in the following chapters.

Many characteristics of the Lehrstücke make them independent of the large commercial theaters and suitable for amateur or semi-amateur performance. They are all relatively short with simple plots, and can therefore be put on with only limited technical resources. Neither expensive costumes nor elaborate sets are needed. Where a small orchestra is called for, trained musicians are, of course, necessary; but the choral singing common in the pieces does not require professional skill.

Writing of the sort of acting he envisaged, Brecht
emphasized that a simple, deliberate style was not only permissible but even desirable:

Wenn Ihr ein Lehrstück aufführt, müßt Ihr wie Schüler spielen. Durch ein betont deutliches Sprechen versucht der Schüler, immer wieder die schwierige Stelle durchgehend, ihren Sinn zu ermitteln oder für das Gedächtnis festzuhalten. Auch seine Gesten sind deutlich und dienen der Verdeutlichung. Andere Stellen wiederum müssen schnell und beiläufig gebracht werden wie gewisse rituelle, oft geübte Händlungen.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 128)

He admitted, however, that there were passages which would require more skill:

Dann gibt es Teile, die Schauspielkunst benötigen ähnlich der alten Art. So wenn typisches Verhalten gezeigt werden soll.

(Schriften zum Theater, II, 128)

However, even for Die Maßnahme, which was produced with trained actors in the dramatic roles, Brecht insisted that expressive, highly differentiated performances were unnecessary:


(Schriften zum Theater, II, 136-137)

This means that the characters are not to be presented as rounded individuals. The performance is to concentrate on that aspect of their behavior which is sociologically typical. This applies not just to Die Maßnahme but also to the other Lehrstücke, with the exception of Der Flug der Lindberghs. This is true even where an unusual situation is
portrayed, as in Der Jasager, where a sick boy must be killed on an expedition in the mountains, or a young Communist is shown who rejects the standards of the Party as in Die Maßnahme. The sick boy is not shown as a unique, private person, but as an exemplary figure. Although the behavior of the young comrade in Die Maßnahme differs from that of the other agitators, it is not the behavior of a unique individual but typical of a certain sort of emotional, humanitarian revolutionary. The two plays do not lead so much to an understanding of the boy or the young comrade as private persons as to an understanding of the social or political dilemmas in which they become involved.

This impersonality of the didactic plays gives them an element of coldness and distance which Brecht realized would disturb people accustomed to having human problems treated in a warmer and more individual way. Psychological intricacies and nuances of feeling were important to the cultured bourgeoise who had the leisure and inclination to explore them. But, Brecht insisted, in a time of class warfare and revolution they were private indulgences. If the process of history disregarded such irrelevancies, then Brecht, who wanted nothing more than to be the poet of reality, would create works which dealt equally coldly with them. As he expressed it in the "Lesebuch für Städtebewohner" (#10):
Wenn ich mit dir rede
Kalt und allgemein
Mit den trockensten Wörtern
Ohne dich anzublicken
(Ich erkenne dich scheinbar nicht
In deiner besonderen Artung und Schwierigkeit)

So rede ich doch nur
Wie die Wirklichkeit selber
(Die nüchterne, durch deine besondere Artung unbestechliche
Deiner Schwierigkeit überdrüssige)
Die du mir nicht zu erkennen schelnst.
(Gedichte, I, 171)

Brecht later explained this rationalistic tendency
of the Lehrstücke as a reaction against fascism and against
certain developments in Marxist thought:

Der Faschismus mit seiner grotesken Betonung
des Emotionellen und vielleicht nicht minder ein
gewisser Verfall des rationellen Moments in der
Lehre des Marxismus veranlaßte mich selber zu einer
stärkeren Betonung des Rationellen.
(Schriften zum Theater, III, 25)

It would, however, be a mistake to think that these
pieces lack emotional appeal, as Brecht himself conceded:

Jedoch zeigt gerade die rationellste Form, das
Lehrstück, die emotionellsten Wirkungen.
(Schriften zum Theater, III, 25)

The Lehrstücke have an element of passion, sometimes even a
cold fanaticism, which was generated by the crisis of
bourgeois society and the desperate need Brecht felt to
align individuals like himself with the forces working to
accomplish the revolutionary transformation of the old order
into the new and just society of Communism.
NOTES, CHAPTER III

1 Later, in a note for the post-war edition of his plays, Brecht included Die Außnahme und die Regel and Die Horatier und die Kurlatler in this group (Stücke, V, 276). However, since they are not thematically linked with the other Lehrstücke, they will not be considered in this study.

2 See, for example, Schriften zum Theater, III, 280. Brecht did refer to Die Mutter as being "Im Stil der Lehrstücke aber Schauspieler erfordernd" (Schriften zum Theater, II, 146), but this is, of course, not quite the same thing as saying that it is a Lehrstück.

3 Neither this nor the previous passage is dated in the Schriften zum Theater, although the fact that this one appears in volume two (writings to 1933) and the previous one in volume four (writings from 1933 on) implies that the editors have reason to believe the present passage to be the earlier. This is somewhat surprising as the present passage reveals a much less mechanical attitude to learning and thus seems to represent a more mature view.
CHAPTER IV

DER FLUG DER LINDBERGHS

Der Flug der Lindberghs, the first of the Lehrstücke, is a radio play for boys and girls with music by Kurt Weill and Paul Hindemith. It is a transitional piece with respect to both form and content, and was written in the years 1928-1929. Brecht was sufficiently dissatisfied with the results to omit it from the standard edition of his plays, Stücke, issued after the war. The reasons for this omission are not clear. In 1950 he granted the Süddeutscher Rundfunk permission to broadcast the play, provided the title was changed to Der Ozeanflug and the name Lindbergh everywhere removed from the text. A new short prologue as well as Brecht's covering letter explained the reason for this: Lindbergh had been pro-Nazi and an enthusiastic admirer of the Nazi Luftwaffe. However, this is not an adequate explanation for the rejection of the play. An admittedly much more important piece, Die Maßnahme, was included in Stücke, despite the fact that Brecht would not permit it to be performed. Though a simple question of quality may have been decisive for him, this is hard to believe in view of the sharp criticisms he made of other pieces that were included.

Der Flug der Lindberghs was published in the first
Charles Lindbergh's flight in 1927 from New York to Paris in a single-motored biplane aroused the interest and enthusiasm of the whole Western world. It was a landmark of technological progress to which many men had contributed, and, at the same time, a feat of courage and endurance by a remarkable young man. Both aspects were important to Brecht when he wrote the play. His admiration for Lindbergh, the competent, modest, quietly heroic representative of a scientific age, is unmistakable. However, very soon, certainly long before Lindbergh developed Nazi sympathies, Brecht came to feel that he had greatly exaggerated the importance of the individual and his contribution to social progress. In his next play, Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, which also deals with flying and the question of technological progress, he sharply revised his position and turned the individual into a negative figure. It is with the figure of Lindbergh and the relation of his flight to the technological and social developments of his time that this chapter is primarily concerned.

Since the story of Lindbergh's flight was well known, Brecht did not have to retell it in detail. He was able to present the basic facts in a schematic way and concentrate
on what was essential to him. The play starts with the plane's departure from New York. (The tone throughout is dry and factual, but conceals a strong undercurrent of emotion and tension.) Lindbergh introduces himself and gives the basic facts about the preparations for the flight. We then hear Lindbergh's struggle over the Atlantic against the elements and his own exhaustion. In a section entitled "Ideologie," Lindbergh reflects on the significance of his undertaking. The continents of America and Europe give their reactions to the flight. America is full of confidence that it will succeed, but shows a facile optimism in trusting too much to good luck. Europe is more pessimistic. Finally, there is the triumphal arrival in Paris and Lindbergh's modest, unemotional reaction to his success. The play closes with a chorus in praise of man's conquest of the air.

The central figure is, of course, that of Lindbergh himself. All the other voices are either impersonal, like those of the Atlantic liner and the two continents, or are depersonalized like those of the elements. All bear directly on the flight.

Lindbergh introduces himself in the most matter-of-fact way:

Mein Name ist Charles Lindbergh
Ich bin 25 Jahre alt
Mein Großvater war Schwede
Ich bin Amerikaner.
Meinen Apparat habe ich selbst ausgesucht.
Er fliegt 210 km in der Stunde
Sein Name ist "Geist von St. Louis"
Die Ryanflugzeugwerke in San Diego
Haben ihn gebaut in 60 Tagen.

The emotion which this cool tone conceals gradually becomes evident:

Ich fliege allein
Statt eines Mannes nehme ich mehr Benzin mit.

3 Tage habe ich gewartet auf das beste 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

The tone also suggests Brecht's own high esteem for Lindbergh. Indeed, it soon becomes clear that Lindbergh is intended as an exemplary figure through whom the young listener is to learn the attitudes and feelings which enable a man to help advance science and technology and improve the world we live in. The play's tone of understatement is not just a mannerism, but is very appropriate to a hero whose virtues are all tempered by moderation, and whose heroic individuality is complemented by a strong sense of community with those who have made his flight possible. He has all the personal qualities which a man needs if he is to succeed in a difficult and lonely enterprise. He has pride:

Vor 2 Jahrzehnten der Mann Blériot
Wurde gefeiert, weil er
Lumpige 30 km Meerwasser
Überflogen hatte.
Ich Überfliege
3000.
But this pride is not excessive, and its strongest expression is reserved for the final chorus, in which his voice merges with all the others to express modern man's pride in his power of flight. In the struggle with the elements he shows courage and determination, but he does not pursue heroism for its own sake. He shows common sense:

Wenn keine Aussicht da ist
Kämpfe ich nicht weiter.
Entweder mit dem Schild oder auf dem Schild
Mache ich nicht mit.
Aber jetzt
Kehre ich noch nicht um.
(p. 10)

Despite his heroic undertaking he is modest; he knows that the men who built his plane have played an essential role in the flight, and he does not feel superior to them. On the contrary, he wishes to live up to their example. Fighting sleep, he says:

Oftmals 24 Stunden ohne Pause
Haben meine Kameraden in San Diego
Diesen Apparat gebaut. Möge ich
Nicht schlechter sein als sie. Ich
Darf nicht schlafen.
(p. 13)

Upon his triumphant arrival in Paris he does not seek the limelight, but tries to share the credit with the men back home:

Aber meldet meinen Kameraden in den
Ryan-Werken von San Diego
Daß Ihre Arbeit gut war.
Unser Motor hat ausgehalten
Ihre Arbeit war ohne Fehler.
(p. 21)

Most important of all in view of the marked anti-individualism to which Brecht was to turn later is Lindbergh's
sense of community which these passages reveal. Despite
the extreme loneliness of his ordeal, he sees himself as
a member of a team, in no way set apart:

Sieben Männer haben meinen Apparat gebaut in San Diego
Sie haben gearbeitet, ich
Arbeite weiter, ich bin nicht allein, wir sind
Acht, die hier fliegen.

(p. 11)

Though he knows the excitement with which his flight is
being followed by the world, he does not have any exagger­
ated notions about the greatness of his accomplishment:

Ich fliege schon als erster über den Atlantik
Aber ich habe die Überzeugung: schon morgen
Werdet ihr lachen über meinen Flug.

(p. 14)

He knows that technological progress will overtake his
achievement and he welcomes this.

In short, we have a man who is both an admirable
individual and a conscious, willing member of a society ad­
vancing into the future. Nothing in the play establishes
any critical distance from him; his qualities can be emulated
without reserve, for all the correcting factors are included
in the character of the man himself. Briefly described,
Lindbergh sounds a little too good to be true. Yet Brecht
has managed to avoid any sort of hollow idealism, because
his matter-of-fact tone is without pathos or sentimentality.
He has created a believable figure.

It is fairly clear, I think, that the young people
for whom the play was written were intended to regard Lind­
bergh as an ideal upon whom to model themselves. Der Flug der Lindberghs is the most striking example in the Lehrstücke of a play through which one is to learn by what Brecht called the "Nachahmung hochqualifizierter Muster" (Schriften zum Theater, IV, 78).

We can see how strongly the play encourages the listener to identify with the figure of Lindbergh if we consider the rather curious manner in which Brecht wanted to have the play performed. In his notes on the text he indicates that the young people are to take an active part in the performance, as the theory of the Lehrstück requires, rather than being just listeners. Because the piece is a radio play, this participation takes an unusual form. Brecht divides the text into two parts. One consists of all the sounds and the voices other than Lindbergh's and is to be broadcast by the radio; the other, the part of Lindbergh, is to be performed by the young people. Brecht describes this as follows:

Der eine Teil . . . hat die Aufgabe, die Übung zu ermöglichen . . . was am besten durch einen Apparat geschleht. Der andere pädagogische Teil (der Lindberghpart) ist der Text für die Übung: der Übende ist Hörer des einen Texttelles und Sprecher des anderen Telles.

(p. 23)

The listener co-ordinates his performance with the voices and music supplied by the radio in order to achieve a complete recreation of the play. Brecht seems to have considered the possibility of either individual listeners
or whole school classes taking the part of Lindbergh. He probably got this curious idea from the practice common in the twenties of broadcasting chamber music with one part missing so that the listener could join his unseen partners with his own instrument. Of course, nothing in the text of *Der Flug der Lindberghs* itself would prevent its being presented as an ordinary radio play without active listener participation. And, indeed, it was broadcast in this way on a number of occasions. On the other hand, there is no record of its having been put on in the way Brecht envisaged apart from the model performance given as a demonstration at the music festival in Baden-Baden in 1929.

I would contend that Brecht intended the listener to identify with Lindbergh despite the fact that his own notes on the play warn against just such identification. A cautious approach to these notes is more than justified by the fact that they were obviously written after the music festival in Baden-Baden at which both *Der Flug der Lindberghs* and *Das Badener Lehrstück* were performed. An examination of the latter play in the next chapter will show how quickly Brecht abandoned the position of *Der Flug der Lindberghs*. In the notes Brecht says of the singer who took the Lindbergh part in Baden-Baden:

> Die zu sprechenden Teile las er, ohne sein eigenes Gefühl mit dem Gefühlsinhalt des Textes zu identifizieren, am Schluß jeder Verszelle absetzend, also in der Art einer Übung.  

(p. 24)
In contrast to Ernst Schumacher, I find little in the diction or meter of the text that would discourage identification and necessitate such a style of performance. On the contrary, there is, as I have indicated, a strong undercurrent of feeling in the play despite its cool, controlled tone. The objective, unsentimental approach of the play is not designed to keep the listener at his distance, but to attract and involve, emotionally as well as intellectually, a generation of young people keen on scientific advances and out of sympathy with the pathos of Expressionistic rhetoric.

In the notes Brecht also warned against a conventional theatrical or concert performance:

... die Figur eines öffentlichen Helden im "Flug der Lindberghs" könnte dazu benutzt werden, die Hörer etwa eines Konzertes zu veranlassen, sich durch Hineinfühlen in den Helden von der Masse zu trennen. In einer konzertanten, also falschen Aufführung muß wenigstens damit der Sinn des Ganzen nicht völlig zerstört werden, der Lindberghpart von einem Chor gesungen werden.

(p. 24)

Here Brecht, by implication, misrepresents his own hero. By identifying with Lindbergh the listener would not separate himself from others, as Brecht suggests, because Lindbergh is conscious of, and accepts his community with, all the men who have made his flight possible. Furthermore, it is hard to see what would be gained by not identifying with Lindbergh. Given the text that Brecht has written, there is nothing whatsoever that the listener would gain by maintaining a critical distance between himself and Lindbergh.
All that would be achieved is a weakening of the play's impact. The maintenance of critical distance makes sense only when it enables the listener to reject or correct in his own mind certain of the dramatic figure's attitudes and actions. As I tried to show above, this is not necessary in Der Flug der Lindberghs because Brecht has already included all the possible corrections to Lindbergh's attitudes in the conception of the figure itself.

Once he had decided that he was opposed to the emulation of and identification with Lindbergh, Brecht was no longer able to concede any didactic function to the content of the play. The learning experience could only result from the act and manner of the performance itself. Brecht virtually admits this when he stresses the formal discipline involved in participation:

Diese Übung dient der Disziplinierung, welche die Grundlage der Freiheit ist.
(p. 24)

Moreover, Brecht sees the manner of performance he advocates as a reflection of the proper relation of the individual to the state:

In Verfolg der Grundsätze: der Staat soll reich sein, der Mensch soll arm sein, der Staat soll verpflichtet sein vieles zu können, dem Menschen soll es erlaubt sein wenig zu können, soll der Staat, was die Musik betrifft, alles hervorbringen, was besondere Apparate und besondere Fähigkeiten verlangt, aber der einzelne soll eine Übung hervorbringen. . . .

(p. 23, original entirely in bold face)

The last phrase shows especially clearly how formally Brecht
now conceived the didactic purpose of the play—the listener does not create a character or learn from the figure; he "brings forth an exercise." The passage also implies a clear preponderance of the state over the individual who "is to be permitted to have limited abilities." This is quite out of keeping with the spirit of Der Flug der Lindberghs but very close to that of Das Badener Lehrstück.

The central section of Der Flug der Lindberghs called "Ideologie" presents the key ideas which Brecht wishes to inculcate in the listener. It takes the form of a long meditation by Lindbergh on the significance of his flight. The central theme is the spread of atheism as a result of technological progress. Lindbergh begins by viewing his transatlantic flight as a small contribution to the fight against what he calls the primitive:

Ich
Fliege gegen die Dampfschiffe
Im Kampf gegen das Primitiv.
Mein Flugzeug schwach und zittrig
Meine Apparate voller Mangel
Sind besser als die bisherigen, aber
Indem ich fliege
Kämpfe ich gegen mein Flugzeug und
Gegen das Primitiv.

(p. 14)

Now Lindbergh makes a slightly startling leap to the question of atheism:

Also kämpfe ich gegen die Natur und
Gegen mich selber.
Was immer ich bin und welche Dummheiten ich glaube
Wenn ich fliege, bin ich
Ein wirklicher Atheist.

(p. 14)
He is not saying simply that he is both a flyer and an atheist. He implies that as an ordinary man he inclines to all sorts of stupid beliefs just like many other people, but that when he is flying these notions dissolve, and he becomes a real atheist. This process throws some interesting light on Brecht's theory of learning in these years. Lindbergh does not become an atheist by thinking about theology but by engaging in the practical activity of flying. One learns by doing, not by reflecting. The more ordinary way of looking at this would be to say that technological and scientific progress yields insights into the nature of the world that lead one logically to atheism. But Brecht is not thinking of such an inductive process; he is saying that the act of flying itself naturally generates an attitude toward the world which results in atheism. The natural correlative of this view for Brecht is the conviction that belief in God is not originally a philosophical or theological tenet but a superstition arising out of a primitive mode of living in and looking at the world. Primitive man sees God whenever he does not understand and cannot control his environment:

Zehntausend Jahre lang entstand
Wo die Wasser dunkel wurden am Himmel
Zwischen Licht und Dämmerung unhinderbar
Gott. Und ebenso
Über den Gebirgen, woher das Eis kam
Sichteten die Unwissenden
Unbelehrbar Gott. . .

(pp. 14-15)

This belief is destroyed by modern science and technology
because they eliminate the ignorance from which God has sprung:

Unter den schärferen Mikroskopen
Fällt er.
Es vertreiben ihn
Die verbesserten Apparate aus der Luft.

What man does and how he lives determines what he believes.

The implications of this for Der Flug der Lindberghs as a Lehrstück are clear. If one learns by doing, then one must be a performer, not a spectator. Furthermore, if the young people identify with Lindbergh, as I have suggested they will, they identify not just with a person but with an action. Through their performance they participate in the struggle for progress and will be led, like Lindbergh, to atheism and a scientific, rational attitude to life. Brecht obviously believed that intellectual study was not the best way of learning; active involvement in deed as well as thought was necessary both in real life and in the theater.

A consideration of the location of the section on ideology supports this interpretation of Brecht's theory of learning. The section is not introduced at the end of the play, after the flight has been successfully completed, in the manner of a conclusion in which the significance of the action is abstracted and generalized. Instead, it seems generated like Lindbergh's atheism by the energy and "logic" of the flight itself. Coming just after Lindbergh has overcome the greatest hazards of his trip, it follows one of
the two emotional climaxes of the play (the other being the triumphant landing). However, it does not seem intended to break the developing tension of the action as we might expect in the light of Brecht's later theory of epic theater. Instead, it is meant to harness the emotional energy created by the preceding scenes and to transform this energy into ideological insights.

The various didactic aspects of the play are well co-ordinated. The way the young people learn to be citizens of a scientific age by taking part in the performance of the play is analogous to the way Lindbergh learns about atheism and progress by actually flying. The way the performers of the Lindbergh part work together with the voices and music supplied to them through the radio by other performers is analogous to the way Lindbergh has worked and continues to work with the engineers and mechanics who built his plane. The young people learn co-operation and modesty by emulating Lindbergh's attitudes but also through the discipline of singing with the voices supplied by the radio.

In the previous chapter it was suggested that Brecht's theory of learning was fairly mechanical at this period. This has been confirmed at least by the analysis of Der Flug der Lindberghs and especially by a consideration of the way Lindbergh becomes an atheist. (The didacticism of the other Lehrstücke is not so obviously mechanical.) There is, of course, the question whether such a view is at
all tenable. It is certainly not without its problems and would seem easier to attack than to defend. Does the performer really learn more than the attentive listener (apart from the fact that the performer will probably be more intensively exposed to the work)? Does flying a plane across the Atlantic—or some similar technical activity—really incline a man to atheism? It is not my purpose to do more than raise these questions here. Brecht's eventual abandonment of the Lehrstück as a form, which he confirmed in the Kleines Organon für das Theater, suggests that he eventually gave up the idea that the performer learns more or learns better than the Intellectually alert spectator.

The view of human nature implicit in Der Flug der Lindberghs seems closely related to the quite mechanical, behavioristic theory found in Mann ist Mann. Galy Gay's transformation suggested that a man did not really feel like a soldier until he put on a uniform and acted like one. The process in Mann ist Mann involved additional factors, but actual doing played an important part. The behavioristic ideas of Mann ist Mann have now been displaced, or rather assimilated, by the Marxism which Brecht has been studying since 1926. In the section on "Ideologie" we find explicit references to Marxist ideas for the first time in Brecht's dramatic work. Marx's dictum that man's social existence determines his consciousness clearly forms the basis of the
Ideas expressed in this section. A further difference between Mann ist Mann and Der Flug der Lindberghs is that in the former Brecht is concerned with the manipulation of men and in the latter with teaching them. Unfortunately, the interest in manipulation has not been given up, and we will have occasion in the next chapter to consider the somewhat disquieting combination of teaching and intimidation found in Das Badener Lehrstück.

Der Flug der Lindberghs is a play filled with the pride aroused by man’s conquest of the air signalized so dramatically in this first successful crossing of the Atlantic. The final chorus sung by Lindbergh in conjunction with all the other voices of the play is filled with a naive and boyish joy at this triumph over nature. The speed of the airplane is double that of the hurricane, and its motor is stronger than a hundred horses though smaller than a single one. The flight is, above all, without parallel:

1000 Jahre fliel 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.
Gegen Ende des 3. Jahrtausend unserer Zeitrechnung
Erhob sich unsere
Stählerne Einfalt
Aufzeigend das Mögliche
Ohne uns vergessend zu machen: das
Unerreichbare.
Diesem ist unser Bericht gewidmet.
(p. 22)
Brecht later wished to change the word "das/Unerreichbare" in the second last line to "das/Noch nicht Erreichte" (footnote on p. 117) in order to make his belief in man's perfectibility clear. It has been suggested that the phrase "das Unerreichbare" was meant to indicate some sort of absolute limit to man's knowledge. However, nothing in the play suggests the existence of a limit to human progress. On the contrary, Lindbergh's flight itself was something many men once considered impossible. A fisherman, urged to look up at Lindbergh's passing plane, refuses:

Wie soll da ein Flugzeug sein?
Niemals
Kann ein solches Ding aus Stricken
Leinwandfetzen und Eisen
Über das Wasser!

Wozu da schauen, wo es
Doch niemals sein kann?

(p. 20)

This fisherman is made to look ridiculous for setting a priori limits to man's technical accomplishments. It seems inconceivable that Brecht should have dedicated the final chorus of a work that celebrates the triumph of practical knowledge over ignorance and superstition to what is in principle unknowable when no prior hint has been given to the existence of such an unknown. The belief in progress revealed in the play is much too great to tolerate restriction. It is much more likely that "das Unerreichbare" was simply meant to designate what was still unattainable for man at present. I would suggest that Brecht's
later change of phrase was a verbal clarification and does not represent a shift in position.9

The optimism of Der Flug der Lindberghs lies not merely in the belief in continuing scientific and technological progress (which Brecht treats as different aspects of the same process) but in the conviction that this progress will necessarily lead to advances in other areas of human life. In the section on "Ideologie" Lindbergh sees a close link between flying and Communism, or, as he calls it, "dialectical economy":

Aber es [his flight] ist eine Schlacht gegen das Primitiv
Und eine Anstrengung zur Verbesserung des Planeten
Gleich der dialektischen Ökonomie
Welche die Welt verändern wird von Grund auf.
(p. 14)

Both are a fight against all that is primitive, and for Brecht social backwardness is just as primitive as ignorance. Lindbergh suggests that disorder in the cities produces belief in God just as ignorance does:

In den Städten wurde er [God] erzeugt von der Unordnung
Der Menschenklassen, weil es zweierlei Menschen gibt
Ausbeutung und Unkenntnis, aber
Die Revolution liquldirt ihn... (p. 15)

Here it is the revolution which is the key to progress and will lead to atheism. Brecht strengthens the parallel between Communism and scientific or technological progress by suggesting that social disorder is actually a product of
Ignorance and can be eliminated by new knowledge just as superstition can.

But Brecht goes farther than merely positing a partnership between Communism and science. He implies that technical or scientific progress inevitably leads to social progress as well. Lindbergh the flier appears to be naturally disposed to "dialectical economy." There seems to be an unspoken assumption on Brecht's part that young people who take Lindbergh as a model of enlightened, scientific man will also become social revolutionaries. It is for this reason that the whole section ends with a call to the listeners to take part in the fight for social rather than just scientific progress:

So auch herrscht immer noch
In den verbesserten Städten die Unordnung
Welche kommt von der Unwissenheit und Gott gleicht.
Aber die Maschinen und die Arbeiter
Werden sie bekämpfen, und auch ihr
Beteiligt euch an
Der Bekämpfung des Primitiven!
(p. 15)

The call to continue Lindbergh's work is, thus, a call to revolution. Brecht seems convinced that Der Flug der Lindberghs will help educate young socialists.

We can see now why Brecht felt so discomfited when Lindbergh, far from expressing an interest in socialism, later proved publicly sympathetic to Nazism. This hard truth did not strike at an incidental feature of the play but at the very roots of its optimism. If Lindbergh could
become a fascist, then it was a serious mistake to present him, or indeed any similar man, as a model for young people simply because he was in the forefront of scientific, technological advance. Simply eliminating the name of Lindbergh would not save the piece if there was in fact no intrinsic connection between scientific and social progress.

However, Brecht did not need Lindbergh's pro-fascism to make him rethink his position. Der Flug der Lindberghs, with its celebration of a particular hero and its uncritical praise of flying as a progressive activity, stands somewhat alone in his work. His next play, Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis, represents a sharp reaction against it. It re-examines the credentials of technological man and finds him lacking in social responsibility and concern. This pessimistic conclusion necessitates a new evaluation of the social role of the individual and a fresh approach to his social education.
NOTES, CHAPTER IV

1Versuche 1-12, pp. 355-356.

2Stücke, V, 276.

3See "Bei Durchsicht meiner ersten Stücke" (Schriften zum Theater, VI, 390-399). Der Flug der Lindberghs is the only published play which Brecht suppressed. Happy End (1929) was disowned by Brecht as being primarily the work of Elisabeth Hauptmann and was never published. He did, however, suppress a poem "Gesang des Soldaten der roten Armee" from the Hauspostille because it was politically embarrassing for the Communists.

4Heinz Schwitzke, Das Hörspiel: Dramaturgie und Geschichte, p. 96.

5Ibid., p. 94.

6Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 303.

7Schriften zum Theater, VII, 7-9. The Kleines Organon does not, however, contain a specific discussion of the deficiencies of the Lehrstück or the theory that underlies it.

8Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 302.

9Schumacher believes that the new phrase "das noch nicht Erreichte" in Das Badener Lehrstück shows, "daß Brecht sich intensiver mit dem Marxismus beschäftigt hatte. . . ." (Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 306).
CHAPTER V

DAS BADENER LEHRSTÜCK VOM EINVERSTÄNDNIS

The key to the new social role of the individual advocated in Das Badener Lehrstück is consent (Einverständnis), a concept which Brecht introduces in this play and which remains central to all the subsequent Lehrstücke dealt with in this study. The idea does not grow out of Der Flug der Lindberghs or any of the immediately preceding plays but has its roots in Mann ist Mann. The brainwashing of Galy Gay was not just a mechanical process in which a man was rebuilt like a car (as Brecht claimed in the interlude) but a transformation which required a distinct, albeit forced, act of consent from Galy Gay. In Mann ist Mann this act of consent was simply one part of the process by which Galy Gay is turned into a soldier and was not singled out for special attention. In Das Badener Lehrstück and the following works, Einverständnis becomes the key to understanding and solving the whole problem of the individual's relation to society.

In Das Badener Lehrstück a group of fliers are brought to subordinate their interests to society and are turned into the instruments of a revolutionary collective. The whole play is extremely abstract in conception but
there is little doubt that in a slightly veiled form Brecht is declaring his allegiance to the Communist struggle against capitalism and for the establishment of socialism. This new political and social allegiance constitutes the important difference between *Mann ist Mann* and *Das Badener Lehrstück*. Brecht intended the transformation of Galy Gay as a demonstration of his thesis about the malleability of human nature, but he was not much concerned with the use made of the new insights he was illustrating. Despite a certain admiration for the new collectivized man produced in the course of the action, Brecht remained socially uncommitted. *Einverständnis*, on the other hand, is a social and political concept and implies commitment to the revolutionary transformation of society and not just adaptation to the dominant social forces of the environment.

*Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis* was written in 1929 and first performed at the music festival in Baden-Baden together with *Der Flug der Lindberghs*. The festival version, scored by Paul Hindemith, was incomplete, and Brecht described it as "einen unabgeschlossenem und mißverständlichen Textteil" in notes to the completed text published in 1930 in *Versuche*. It is from the 1930 version reprinted in *Versuche* 1-12 in 1959 that all subsequent quotations are taken.

*Das Badener Lehrstück* is a cantata rather than a
play or opera and has a very simple action, which is quite undramatic in character. It consists of eleven sections, which fall into two main parts. In the first, four fliers, a pilot and three mechanics, have crashed and ask for help from the chorus ("der gelernte Chor"). This group, instead of giving immediate aid, examines the request in the light of the more general question: does man help man? A stage crowd, originally in favor of giving help, is forced by the chorus to recognize man's basic inhumanity to man. As a result, the fliers are refused help, and we are told that it is really the whole of society which must be changed instead. The pilot and the three mechanics are apparently doomed, and cry out in terror that they cannot die.

In the second and more important part of the play the chorus instructs the fliers in the art of dying. The pilot, who rejects these teachings, is driven from the stage. The three mechanics accept them and submit to the will of the chorus. In the final scene they are invited to rejoin society and take up their work again in its name. The death that threatened the fliers is shown to have a double symbolic meaning: expulsion from the living community for the pilot and subordination to the collective for the mechanics.

Das Badener Lehrstück opens with the same passage in praise of man's conquest of the air that brought Der Flug der Lindberghs to a proud close. The words are
virtually unchanged, yet the function of the passage is
now very different. In Der Flug der Lindberghs it marked
the triumphant completion of Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic
flight and was sung by all the voices in unison; now it is
sung only by the fliers who have crashed and need help.
Furthermore, this "Bericht vom Fliegen," as it is now
called, is coldly rejected by the chorus:

Fliegt jetzt nicht mehr.
Ihr braucht nicht mehr geschwind zu werden.
Der niedere Boden
ist für euch
Jetzt hoch genug.
Daß ihr reglos liegt
Genügt.

(p. 118)

The reasons for this implied rebuke are only gradually made
clear.

In Der Flug der Lindberghs the flight of Charles
Lindbergh was the symbol of a scientific and technological
progress which was in harmony with, and the natural ally of,
social progress. Now this harmony is rejected and another,
more skeptical, view put forward—a view which has radical
implications for the whole piece. It becomes apparent that
the crash represents a failure of the fliers' sense of
social responsibility and not just a technical accident.
They concede that their fascination with technology blinded
them to all other considerations:

Uns hatte erfaßt das Fieber
Des Städtebaus und des Öls.
Unsere Gedanken waren Maschinen und
Die Kämpfe um Geschwindigkeit.
Wir vergaßen über den Kämpfen
Unsere Namen und unser Gesicht
Und über dem geschwächeren Aufbruch
Vergaßen wir unseres Aufbruchs Ziel.
(p. 118)

Nevertheless the filers ask the chorus for assistance; they cannot live without the help of the society they have ignored.

The full significance of the crash is made clear only in the first of three investigations into the question of whether man helps man. Here the whole history of the "progress" of western civilization from the time of Columbus is weighed and found wanting. The discovery and colonization of America, the Industrial revolution and the growth of scientific knowledge are all touched on and their importance acknowledged. But each advance is dismissed with the same laconic criticism: it did not make bread cheaper. Summing up its dissatisfaction, the chorus says:

Das Brot wurde nicht billiger.
Sonder
Die Armut hat zugenommen in unseren Städten
Und es weiß seit langer Zeit
Niemand mehr, was ein Mensch ist.
Zum Beispiel: während ihr flogt, kroch
Ein euch Ähnliches vom Boden
Nicht wie ein Mensch!
(p. 120)

What we call progress has ignored man's real social and economic needs and even triumphed at his expense. It is this long history of failure which the crash is made to symbolize. The image of a technological elite flying its planes while other men crawl forgotten in the dust is only
a new and dramatic instance of the old failure of men to help their fellows. The fliers' request for first aid is thus a plea that the present relation of science and technology to the rest of society be allowed to continue unchanged. It is also an admission that this relation can be maintained only so long as society as a whole agrees to it.

Brecht presents this whole problem in a very elliptical form. He obviously regards it as the dramatist's prerogative to omit the judicious qualifications one would expect from a historian or a social scientist. For all the dryness and apparent objectivity of his manner, he writes as a bitter polemicist. The deliberate calm conceals an intense, even fanatical passion. Behind a chilling remark such as:

Über die Erkaltenden hinweg wird untersucht, ob
Es üblich ist, daß der Mensch dem Menschen hilft.
(p. 119)

there lies the cold anger of a man ready to countenance very extreme measures to overcome the inhumanity he sees in the world.

The two further investigations of the question, does man help man, are much more emotional than the relatively calm historical examination just discussed. One consists simply of a series of pictures which show "wie in unserer Zeit Menschen von Menschen abgeschlachtet werden" (p. 121). In the other, human brutality is demonstrated
In a clowns' number in which two small clowns saw a large clown apart, limb by wooden limb, on the pretext of assisting him. The stage crowd which originally wished to aid the fliers now cries out in anguish that man does not help man, and agrees that the fliers should therefore be denied help too.

This conclusion may at first sight seem a little puzzling, for it is clear that both the chorus and the stage crowd deplore inhumanity. Why should they now appear to advocate it? The answer is, of course, that the logic of the action is to be sought on the symbolic and not on the literal level. Brecht is not really suggesting that a group of injured fliers ought to be allowed to die because they have neglected their social responsibilities. One must grasp the symbolic meaning of the crash before the meaning of the refusal of help becomes clear. What Brecht is saying is that a technological elite such as the fliers represent cannot be tolerated in its present form.

The crowd closes the first part by reading a commentary which justifies the refusal of help in terms of a general social philosophy. The passage is unfortunately abstract to the point of obscurity and therefore much less effective than it ought to be. It is, nevertheless, very important, because it is Brecht's first unequivocal dramatic statement of the need for social change:
Let me give a somewhat expanded paraphrase of the passage.

Brecht begins by conceding the occasional occurrence of human helpfulness (lines 1-2) but suggests that it is not a basic feature of our society. It is a palliative made necessary by the violence which is the basis of the present social order (3-5). (The word Gewalt is made to carry a heavy freight of meaning throughout; it means violence, power based on violence, and even exploitation.) Rather than requesting or offering help, it is better to attack society's ills at the roots even if this means acting ruthlessly rather than charitably (6-11). Charity alone changes nothing; as long as the old power structure remains intact, man will continue to behave inhumanly to his fellows (12-14). Once society is no longer based on violence and exploitation,
charity will no longer be necessary (15). Therefore, one should not call for such charity (Hilfe), but work to transform the whole of society (16-18). Brecht does not specifically state that this transformation will be revolutionary, but the advice "to counter a cruel reality with even greater cruelty" (6-8) implies that it will involve violence. The final section of the play shows that the "revolution" Brecht is thinking of would be a continuous and lengthy process.

The second part of the play, however, does not deal with the transformation of society itself but with a very special part of the preparation for it: the indoctrination of the men who will participate in it. The fliers must be made to recognize their proper role in the collective and must learn to serve the real needs of society. This is what is meant by the term Einverständnis.

After the refusal of help, the chorus shows the fliers large pictures of dead men and makes them contemplate them until they cry out in fear that they cannot die. As in Mann ist Mann, the threat of death is feigned; no one dies physically, not even the pilot who rejects the teaching of the chorus. But the fear of death is used in the scenes that follow to encourage radical changes in the fliers' social attitudes and in their sense of identity,
Just as it was used to brainwash Gay Gay. The intimidation is more subtle in *Das Badener Lehrstück* than in the rousta-bout proceedings of *Mann Ist Mann*, but the unsmiling solemnity of the new work is more frightening.

The indoctrination of the fliers consists of three steps: theoretical instruction in the art of proper dying by the speaker of the chorus, an examination by the chorus in which the fliers must put these teachings into practice, and, finally the initiation of the fliers who have learned Einverständnis into the revolutionary collective represented by the chorus. The whole process is presented as if it were a religious ritual, and in a sense it is just that. It concerns the total dedication of human lives to an authority and a purpose (albeit a secular one) which transcends their individual existences and gives them a new form and meaning.

The instruction given to the fliers consists of a commentary on dying read by the speaker of the chorus much as a minister might read and elucidate a Biblical text. The fliers listen and repeat the key point he makes like children trying to grasp and remember a difficult lesson.

The central passage is a brief parable about the thinker and the storm:

2) Als der Denkende in einen großen Sturm kam, saß er in einem großen Fahrzeug und nahm viel Platz ein. Das erste war, daß er aus seinem Fahrzeug stieg, das Zweite war, daß er seinen Rock ablegte, das Dritte war, daß er sich auf den Boden legte. So Überwand er den Sturm in seiner kleinsten Größe. (p. 130)
The thinker provides the fliers with the model they are to emulate: they must overcome death as he overcame the storm:

4) Wenn der Denkende den Sturm überwand, so überwand er ihn, weil er den Sturm kannte und er einverstanden war mit dem Sturm. Also, wenn Ihr das Sterben überwinden wollt, so überwindet Ihr es, wenn Ihr das Sterben kennt und einverstanden seid mit dem Sterben.

(p. 130)

The analogy between the storm and death gives us the first indication that the death to which the fliers must learn to consent is not a physical one. The thinker overcomes the storm; he does not succumb to it. But he does not escape it either; he must endure it. The thinker submits to the storm and survives because he understands it and is willing to adapt his behavior to its forces. So, too, death in its symbolic sense can be overcome but not avoided; the fliers can only insure that they will undergo it properly. Einverständnis, the key term in this process, is introduced here for the first time. It means consenting to and even being in agreement with the necessity of "dying." What does this dying involve? The thinker overcame the storm "in seiner kleinsten Größe." The fliers must do likewise and be prepared to accept poverty, to sacrifice their lives, and even to give up their thoughts. Thus, "dying" implies the surrender of one's separate identity and of one's personal prerogatives. We may guess here that these things are to be surrendered to the chorus in the interests of society as
a whole, but this is actually confirmed only in later sections of the play. One thing is made clear now, however; the process is voluntary only up to a point. While Einverständnis in this play implies a certain amount of human freedom, it is clearly only the freedom to accept what is necessary and inevitable. What is not freely surrendered will be taken anyway.

Upon completion of the theoretical instruction, the fillers are examined by the chorus, which questions them about their past accomplishments. Slowly and painfully the fillers learn to apply the lesson just learned. What remained almost completely abstract in the commentary is made at least partially concrete in this and the following sections.

The first set of questions and answers shows the fillers struggling to reduce themselves to their "kleinste Größe":

**DER GELERNTE CHOR:**
*Wie hoch seid Ihr geflogen?*

**DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:**
*Wir sind ungeheuer hoch geflogen.*

**DER GELERNTE CHOR:**
*Wie hoch seid Ihr geflogen?*

**DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:**
*Wir sind viertausend Meter hoch geflogen.*

**DER GELERNTE CHOR:**
*Wie hoch seid Ihr geflogen?*

**DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:**
*Wir sind ziemlich hoch geflogen.*
DER GELERNTEN CHOR:
Wie hoch seld ihr geflogen?

DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:
Wir haben uns etwas über den Erdboden erhoben.

DER FÜHRER DES GELERNTEN CHORS WENDET SICH AN DIE MENG:
Sie haben sich etwas über den Erdboden erhoben.

(p. 131)

The pattern of question and answer is typical and is repeated several times. At first, the mechanics are proud and boastful. Then under the reproachful eye of the chorus they gradually reduce their claims. Significantly, the chorus rejects not only the initial exaggeration but also the neutral, objective statement, "We flew at four thousand meters." It insists here and in subsequent exchanges on an expression of slavish obsequiousness. Each time the pilot refuses to accept this reduction of his importance and insists that the initial boast represents the correct evaluation of his work.

The chorus, however, is not satisfied with mere modesty; it demands complete self-abasement from the mechanics:

DER GELERNTEN CHOR:
Wer seld ihr?

DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:
Wir sind die, die den Ozean überflogen.

DER GELERNTEN CHOR:
Wer seld ihr?

DIE DREI GESTÜRZTEN MONTEURE:
Wir sind einige von euch.
They are forced to surrender every claim to importance until they lose all identity. Again, however, the pilot insists on his individuality, saying: "Ich bin Charles Nungesser" (p. 133). So ruthless is the chorus that it is prepared to deny the mechanics even the most basic family ties, forcing them to "admit" that no one awaits them, not even father and mother (p. 133). The chorus concludes the examination by summing up:

Jetzt wisst ihr:
Niemand
Sterbt, wenn ihr sterbt.
Jetzt haben sie
Ihre kleinste Groesse erreicht.

Here the ways of the pilot and the mechanics part for good. They acquiesce and become nonentities, but he continues to defy the chorus with a final egotistical assertion of his importance:

Aber ich habe mit meinem Fliegen
Meine groeste Groesse erreicht.
Wie hoch immer ich flog, hoher flog
Niemand.
Ich wurde nicht genug geruhmt, ich
Kann nicht genug geruhmt werden
Ich bin fur nichts und niemand geflogen.
Ich bin fur das Fliegen geflogen.
Niemand wartet auf mich, ich
Fliege nicht zu euch hin, ich
The pilot thus appears egotistical and arrogant, a sort of ridiculous parody of Lindbergh. All the moderation and modesty of the earlier hero is gone; indeed, one is tempted to say that Brecht is making the problem of man and society too easy for himself by simply disregarding the type of mature individuality that was his ideal in Der Flug der Lindberghs. It is much easier to dismiss the claims of this egotist and demand total submission to the collective than it would have been to reject the earlier Lindbergh. Still I think it is clear that Brecht would now reject even him. The chorus is certainly unwilling to accept even the modest claims of the mechanics which represent a just evaluation of their flying and which thus represent a close analogy to the position of Lindbergh in the earlier play. Nothing short of complete self-obliteration will do.

I have already suggested one reason for this. The optimism of Der Flug der Lindberghs was based on the assumption that a man would automatically be socially progressive if he were in the forefront of technological or scientific progress. In Das Badener Lehrstück this hope is shown with some bitterness to be an illusion. The individual left to pursue his own interests will forget the needs of his fellows. He must therefore be kept under close
control by society so that he and his work will serve society's needs.

However, the humbling of the mechanics and the rejection of all personal claims to significance can only be fully understood in the light of Brecht's new and very extreme views on the relation of man and society. These are fully revealed only in the next section (IX) of the play. There the chorus confiscates the wreck of the airplane over the protest of the pilot, who demands to know what a plane is without a filler. Suddenly, the pilot, who has so vigorously insisted on his individuality, undergoes a strange transformation; he becomes faceless:

Völlig unkenntlich
Ist jetzt sein Gesicht
Erzeugt zwischen ihm und uns, denn
Der uns brauchte und
Dessen wir bedurften: das
War er.

(p. 136)

He loses his identity because his individuality, upon which he so prided himself and which he felt owed nothing to anyone else, was an illusion, from the beginning a product of his relation to society. He was a parasite taking his being (without knowing it) from the community and refusing the community what it needed and expected in return. The leader of the chorus says:

Dieser
Inhaber eines Amts
Wenn auch angemäßt
Entriß uns, was er brauchte, und
A man's face and his office are virtually equated in the last three lines. This seems to go considerably beyond the initial claim that a man's face is "erzeugt zwischen ihm und uns," which implies a much more reciprocal relation between man and society than Brecht has in mind. (There is little doubt that the chorus expresses Brecht's own views.) In fact, the collective becomes a sort of absolute out of which everything is generated, and the individual is reduced to a nonentity who exists only in so far as the collective calls him into being:

Wie sichtete man ihn?
Indem man ihn beschäftigte.
Indem man ihn anruft, entsteht er.
Wenn man ihn verändert, gibt es ihn.
Wer ihn braucht, der kennt ihn.
Wem er nützlich ist, der vergrößert ihn.
Und doch ist er niemand.

(pp. 136-137, distribution of lines among chorus members omitted)

Lest there be any misunderstanding of what is meant, the equation of man's individuality with his office is confirmed in the most brutal terms:

Was da liegt ohne Amt
ist nichts Menschliches mehr.
Stirb jetzt, du Kleinmenschmehr!

(p. 137)

This is clear enough, but Brecht's position is so extreme that it is hard to grasp its full import. He is not just
claiming that man is a political animal who finds his fulfillment only in society; he is saying that man is nothing but the function he is given by the collective, and that without such a function he is not really human at all. Such an extreme and one-sided view makes it clear why total subordination can be demanded of the individual. "Dying," which at first seemed a rather extravagant image for this process, is in reality very appropriate. It catches perfectly both the absolute character of the act of consent and its irrational, mystical overtones, which will be discussed later.

The way Brecht plays with the possible meanings of "dying" is particularly clear in the case of the now faceless pilot. When the pilot says, "Ich kann nicht sterben" (p. 137), he is not only expressing a fear of physical death. He is claiming undying fame for his accomplishments and at the same time admitting that he cannot submerge himself in the collective. This multiplicity of meanings accounts for the apparently paradoxical answer his protest receives:

\begin{verbatim}
Du bist aus dem Fluß gefallen, Mensch.
Du bist nicht im Fluß gewesen, Mensch.
Du bist zu groß, du bist zu reich.
Du bist zu eigentümlich.
Darum kannst du nicht sterben.
\end{verbatim}

(p. 137)

There are two sorts of death: submersion in the collective is a positive death, while the extinction caused by a
separation from it is a negative one. Whoever does not accept the authority of the collective will be exiled from the community: "Wer nicht sterben kann / Stirbt auch" (p. 137).

The pilot's extinction, it should be noted, is a direct result of his egotism and his own rejection of the collective. The formal expulsion described in Section X, which follows his loss of identity, is not what turns him into a nobody; the expulsion is only the public recognition of what has already happened. It is carried out in sorrow by the chorus, not vindictively, though one cannot help feeling that the chosen weep somewhat self-righteously for their lost brother.

The view that the collective is everything and the individual nothing is clearly a rejection of Brecht's position in Der Flug der Lindberghs. In that play there was productive co-operation between the individual, Lindbergh, and the collective represented by the men of the Ryan works who built his plane. Both were considered important and neither was glorified at the expense of the other. Now this balance has been destroyed. Moreover, as we have seen, the new view cannot be explained merely in terms of Brecht's disenchantment with the implications of science and technology for real progress. It would have been possible to give up the optimism of Der Flug der Lindberghs and to call for close social control of the technological elite without
demanding the absolute subordination of the individual to
the collective.

In addition, Brecht does more than demand the
subordination of man to the good of society; he claims that
man's individuality is an illusion, that man, viewed quite
objectively, derives his whole being and significance from
the collective. For the chorus (and for Brecht), the self-
abasement of the fliers does not represent just a psycho-
logically necessary humbling but a true estimate of their
worth.

Thus, the call for Einverständnis combines two quite
different appeals. One is a moral appeal that says that
the individual ought to subordinate his interests to society.
The other calls on men to recognize the fact that society
is the source of all things human. These two positions are
not incompatible, but complementary. Their linking does,
however, create certain dangers. A belief that man ought
to subordinate himself to society can lead to an exaggera-
tion of his actual dependence on it, while a belief in such
dependence will strengthen the demand for overt submission.
It would be my feeling that some such mutual reinforcement
of the two related views led to an exaggeration and dis-
tortion of Brecht's position in this play.

The extreme views of Das Badener Lehrstück on the
Individual and society clearly go back to those expressed
in Mann ist Mann. But there are important differences.
In *Das Badener Lehrstück* the chorus represents a collective which is never clearly defined but which claims to represent the interests of the whole of society. Its counterpart in *Mann ist Mann* was the army, a collective which is clearly distinct from the rest of society. While it was possible to turn Galy Gay into a soldier totally determined by his military function, it was never claimed that he ceased to be a real human being outside the collective. On the contrary, he was the packer Galy Gay—a very definite if not very impressive person. Man had a malleable nature rather than a fixed character, but he was not presented as totally socially determined. Before he became a soldier, for example, Galy Gay was represented as a private, unformed individual rather than as, say, a worker molded by the social conditions of his class. In *Das Badener Lehrstück*, on the other hand, the collective has become all pervasive. The chorus represents the interests of the whole of society; no institutions and no men live outside of the one collective. The personal glory the pilot demands would at least have been possible in the world of *Mann ist Mann*; in the world of *Das Badener Lehrstück*, such private existence is an illusion.

As soon as the mechanics have submitted to the chorus and accepted self-abasement, the chorus' attitude toward
them changes markedly. While the wreckage of the plane is being confiscated, the chorus sings the praises of the fliers in words almost identical to the ones with which they themselves expressed their pride in their accomplishments at the beginning of the play:

Erhebt euch, Flieger, ihr habt die Gesetze der Erde verändert.
Tausend Jahre fiel alles von oben nach unten Ausgenommen der Vogel.
... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Aber ihr habt euch erhoben
Gegen das Ende des zweiten Jahrtausends unserer Zeitrechnung.

(p. 135, cf. p. 117)

This is a curious repetition because these words were originally sharply rejected by the chorus. It is as if not only the plane were being confiscated by the collective, but the accomplishments of the fliers as well. Such praise is clearly regarded as the prerogative of the collective alone; coming from the fliers themselves it was evidence of unacceptable arrogance. Once the fliers have been humbled and brought under control, their work regains its importance.

This idea is further elaborated in the final section (XI) of the play, entitled "Das Einverständnis." After the egotistical pilot has been driven away, the three mechanics are received into the collective, to which they have shown their readiness to subordinate themselves. Their consent is represented by the chorus as both a death and a
simultaneous rebirth through the collective:

Ihr aber, die ihr einverstanden seid mit dem Fluss der Dinge
Sinkt nicht ruck in das Nichts.
Löst euch nicht auf wie Salz im Wasser, sondern Erhebt euch
Sterbend euren Tod wie
Ihr gearbeitet habt eure Arbeit
Umwälzend eine Umwälzung.

(p. 138)

The necessity for the physical death of the filères, which has hung as a threat over much of the play, is now specifically rejected:

Richtet euch also sterbend
Nicht nach dem Tod
Sondern übernehmt von uns den Auftrag
Wieder aufzubauen unser Flugzeug.

(p. 138)

The goal of the collective, the real reason for the consent demanded of the mechanics, is, at last, spelled out somewhat more specifically than it was in the very abstract section (IV), "Die Hilfeverweigerung":

Denn
Euch
For dern wir auf, mit uns zu marschieren und mit uns Zu verändern nicht nur
Ein Gesetz der Erde, sondern
Das Grundgesetz
Einverstanden, daß alles verändert wird
Die Welt und die Menschheit
Vor allem die Unordnung
Der Menschenklassen, weil es zweierlei Menschen gibt Ausbeutung und Unkenntnis.

(pp. 138-139)

The last three lines (almost identical to those in Der Flug der Lindberghs, p. 15) refer to class struggle and exploitation. The terms make it clear that Brecht is thinking of
a socialist transformation of society. However, the mechanics are not to be turned into professional revolutionaries; instead, they are ordered to return to their old tasks and to continue the work that was interrupted by the crash:

Beginnt!
Um für uns zu fliegen
An den Ort, wo wir euch brauchen
Und zu der Zeit wo es nötig ist. . . .

Und wir bitten euch
Verändert unseren Motor und verbessert ihn
Auch vergrößert Sicherheit und Geschwindigkeit
Und vergeßt auch nicht das Ziel über dem geschwinderen Aufbruch.

(pp. 138-139)

By flying under the guidance of the collective and in order to achieve its goals, the mechanics will play their part in the work of the revolution. Only as an obedient member of the collective can the individual contribute to the progress of society. After giving specific directions to the fliers the chorus begins to speak of the transformation of the world in general terms and clearly addresses everyone—the audience and the performers, as well as the fliers—who must learn to take his place in the collective and help change and improve the world.

Brecht's views in this section of the play on the transformation of society do not correspond to those of orthodox Marxism. We hear of class struggle and exploitation, but the chorus does not speak of a unique revolution which will overthrow the old order and initiate a Communist
society under the leadership of the Party. Instead, the transformation is described as both gradual and continuous:

Habt ihr die Welt verbessert, so
Verbessert die verbesserte Welt.
Gebt sie auf!
Marschiert!

Habt ihr die Wahrheit vervollständigend, die
Menschheit verändert,
So verändert die veränderte Menschheit.
Gebt sie auf!
Marschiert!
Ändernd die Welt, verändert euch!
Gebt euch auf!
Marschiert!

(pp. 139-140, division of lines between leader and chorus omitted)

Every stage of development reached is itself an imperfect preliminary to the next and higher stage. The mechanics' submission to the collective is seen as merely the first of many acts of self-surrender in which man will have to give up what he has become in order to transform reality and adapt himself to the new world he has created. It should be noted, however, that there is no suggestion that the basic relation between individual and collective will be affected by this process.

Underlying this passage there is a metaphysical view of reality as a "Fluß der Dinge" (p. 138), an eternal flux, in which neither man nor his world can remain unchanged. This is an element in Brecht's thought which has certain affinities with the Hegelian and Marxist dialectic but which has older and perhaps more primitive roots. One of the clearest examples of this view in
Brecht's work of this period is the "Lied vom Fluß der Dinge" which replaced the original "Mann-ist-Mann Song" in his 1931 production of Mann ist Mann. Everything changes, the Widow Begblick sings, adapt yourself and accept the transitoriness and meaninglessness of life and the world. Since everything is uncertain, her final position is one of extreme scepticism:

Da sagte ich mir: von den sicheren Dingen
Das Sicherste ist der Zweifel

(Gedichte, II, p. 190)

The basic image is that of the Heraclitian river of life and time which bears all things away:

Wie oft du auch den Fluß ansiehst, der träge
Dahinzieht, nie siehst du dasselbe Wasser
Nie kehrt es, das hinunterfließt, kein Tropfen von ihm
Zu seinem Ursprung zurück.
Beharre nicht auf der Welle
Die sich an deinem Fluß bricht, solange er
Im Wasser steht, werden sich
Neue Wellen an ihm brechen.

(Gedichte, II, 188)

This is not the way historical materialism views change.
For the Marxist there is a form and direction to historical change which man can understand and modify by his efforts.

In Das Badener Lehrstück Brecht tries to combine the view of reality as a continual flux with a belief in the need for and the possibility of social progress. That such progress is not automatic is made abundantly clear in the first part of the play, which deals with the social irresponsibility of science and technology. In the last
section it becomes clear that the collective regards it as its task to impose genuine social advance upon the otherwise directionless flow of history. The flux is not denied; there is no reference to Communism as a specific, final goal. But we are urged to work unceasingly to improve the world, our knowledge, and ourselves. Widow Begbick regarded the "Fluß der Dinge" with resigned skepticism; there was nothing for her to do but adapt passively to changing circumstances in order to survive. In Das Badener Lehrstück Brecht is more optimistic; human effort can and must make the world a better place. It is, however, not the effort of individuals which counts, but the effort of the collective to which the individual must submit with much the same passivity that Widow Begbick advocated toward life itself. Through the collective, however, man is able to become active and form the world in which he lives.

Even in the last section, Brecht formulates his social and political views very abstractly. As in Der Flug der Lindberghs, he does not talk specifically of Communism or of the Communist Party, although it is clear that this is what he is thinking of. The chorus ("der gelernte Chor") is never identified or defined. I have referred to it simply as the collective, but this is not quite precise enough, for the chorus is clearly not identical with the whole of society; neither the fliers nor the stage crowd are part of it. The chorus' role is analogous to that of
the Communist Party. It represents a group which provides enlightened leadership for the mass of men; it is the vanguard of society just as the Communist Party claims to be. Like the Party, it claims absolute control of the revolutionary movement; those who work for social progress work at its behest and carry out its measures. If we take into consideration what we know of Brecht's political development from biographical sources as well as from other plays, such as Die Maßnahme (where the Party appears in the guise of a "Kontrollchor"), the conclusion seems inescapable that Brecht intends the chorus to be likened in our minds to the Communist Party.

Why, then, does he not make the identification explicit? The reason is, I suspect, to be found in the level of generality at which the play is written. The action does not deal with specific contemporary conditions or events, but abstracts from them, in an attempt to reach general social principles. The chorus represents the Communist Party in its role as a collective in relation to the individual, but not as a definite political party in a particular country in the twenties. It is clear that Brecht regards this relation of man and the collective as a basic, perhaps the basic, problem of Communism. By omitting everything that raises other, more specific political questions, he is able to isolate this one problem
and concentrate all the resources of his short play on it.

The analogy between the Communist Party and the chorus is especially important because of the light it throws on Brecht's conception of the Party's role in society. We have already considered his conception of the individual and his relation to the chorus in some detail. A more radical devaluation of the individual man is not imaginable. The collective represented by the chorus is without doubt a totalitarian one which demands complete control of the lives of its members. The individual becomes an instrument entirely at the disposal of the collective, which puts his talents to use in order to achieve society's goals. The emphasis placed on the worthlessness of man as an individual suggests that there is to be no aspect of life which does not fall under collective control.

There are two aspects of the play which especially emphasize this totalitarian character and which make the play extremely disquieting to the thoughtful reader. The first is the fact that the subordination of the fliers to the collective takes priority over their dedication to the work of transforming society. They are not assigned their new tasks—indeed, there is no talk of social goals at all—until after they have submitted to the collective. The discussion of the need to learn proper "dying" and the reduction of the fliers to their kleinste Größe all takes place without any references to the social obligations of
the fliers or to the aims of the collective. The subordina
tion of the fliers is not justified in revolutionary terms
but solely in terms of the inherent nature of the proper
relation between individual and collective. It is important
in this connection that the justification of the refusal of
help to the fliers (section IV)--which does deal with the
need for social change--is read by the crowd to itself, not
addressed to the fliers. This would have been the logical
place to appeal to their sense of social responsibility.
Nothing of the sort is done, and in the scenes that follow
the fliers are treated as creatures to be manipulated and
intimidated, not as free men. The submission of the fliers
is in no way conditional and has no reference to their
commitment to any specific social purpose. In short, they
put themselves absolutely at the disposal of the collective;
whether or not it puts them to decent and progressive use
is something over which they have no control. For Brecht it
was a matter of course that the chorus, representing in an
abstract way the Communist Party, was a progressive collec-
tive. There is, however, nothing in the individual's
relation to this collective that guarantees that he will be
employed in the cause of real human progress. The collective
has absolute authority; its goodness must be taken on trust.
The individual, as Brecht portrays him, cannot appeal to any
authority--neither to a social ideal nor to his own
consience—that transcends the will of the collective.

Just how absolutely this collective is conceived becomes clear once we consider the religious overtones of the play. Through them the collective takes on the aura of the divine. Both in language and in conception Das Badener Lehrstück, despite the obvious and enormous differences, reveals close parallels to the Bible and to Christian thought. It has already been pointed out how much the commentary on dying, which is read to the fliers, reminds one of a Biblical text and its elucidation. More important than the language of the play are its basic ideas on the relation of the individual to the collective, and these very much resemble the Christian interpretation of man's relation to God or Christ. Brecht's idea of "death" is an almost exact analogue of the familiar words of Christ in Matthew 16:25:

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it:
and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

In Das Badener Lehrstück the collective takes the place of Christ. Whoever wishes to save his individuality will "die," as does the pilot, by severing himself from the collective and the society it represents. Whoever surrenders his life to the collective, as do the mechanics, finds a new and truer existence. The Biblical words could serve as an epigraph for the whole play.

In the last section of the play the initiation of
the mechanics who have consented to "die" into the collective reminds one unmistakably of resurrection after death. The symbolic death and rebirth are part of the same process, and the mechanics are exhorted to "Arise / Dying your death" (p. 138). There are suggestions of salvation as well in the play; the mechanics are "saved" from the fate of the expelled pilot and are rewarded for shunning the "sin" of egotism. If one thinks of Mahagonny, which ends with the moral and economic bankruptcy of capitalism and the death and funeral of Paul Ackermann, the symbol of the vanity of man's life in a corrupt society, one can see the ending of Das Badener Lehrstück as a release from this nightmare into a new hope for man in this world.

However much one can appreciate this birth of hope after the increasing bitterness and despair of Brecht's works in this period, one cannot help being disquieted by the particular form that this hope takes. Ernst Schumacher, who has traced the religious parallels of Das Badener Lehrstück in some detail, quotes a passage from St. Augustine which applies all too well to Brecht's conception of man's relation to the collective:

"Das ist alles in allem, die erhabene Wissenschaft: Der Mensch wisse, daß er aus sich selbst nichts ist; und wenn er doch etwas ist, so ist er es durch Gott und Gottes wegen."

Schumacher goes on to comment:

Belm Materialisten Brecht ist an die Stelle Gottes das abstrakte Kollektiv getreten.
It is entirely in keeping with the godlike character of the collective that the submission of the mechanics to It should be absolute and that It should be prior to the assignment of specific tasks to them. Like God, the collective is an end in itself, and the cultivation of a proper relation to It becomes an important duty. As an absolute, the collective tends like God to be beyond the control of human (especially individual) reason.

This was not necessarily Brecht's intention, since the investigation of whether or not man helps man is meant to supply a reasonable basis for the chorus' indoctrination of the fliers and to relate their case to more general social problems. Unfortunately, because of the abstractness of the play's dramatic situation and of the demonstration of man's inhumanity, this basis in reason remains very flimsy. For example, the play's action coheres better on the symbolic than on the literal level. That is to say, if we regard the crash as a symbol of the social failings of a technological culture, it is reasonable to refuse aid to the fliers and demand instead that their social attitudes be radically changed. On the other hand, on the purely literal level it is hard to see why the general and regrettable cruelty of man to his fellows justifies the chorus in behaving similarly toward the fliers. The fact is that at the literal level the action has a strong irrational element, and this irrationality tends to infect the whole
Brecht tries to persuade us that a belief in the absolute primacy of society over the individual is based on an objective study of reality. Most readers (including Marxist ones) are likely to be convinced that behind the play's show of cool reason there lies an irrational, almost fanatical commitment to the glorification of the collective and the humbling of the individual.  

This irrational element in the play is reinforced by the analogy between God and the collective. There is a necessary connection between the Christian conception of God and the attitude toward him required of man. If one believes in a God who has infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, it is natural to expect man to submit himself absolutely to him. (Whether belief in God can itself be rationally based is, of course, a different question.) If one is an atheist like Brecht, it seems quite irrational to transfer something similar to the devotion due to God to a collective which is a finite group, and, by definition, cannot share the attributes of the Divine.

The religious overtones and the irrationalism make Das Badener Lehrstück a more extreme apology for totalitarianism than any other work of Brecht, including Die Maßnahme, which has gained greater notoriety in this respect because it tells of the actual liquidation of a young comrade by the Party. Curiously enough, the refusal to link
the chorus explicitly with the Communist Party makes the play more rather than less noxious politically. For, instead of being a defense of Communism, it tends to become a generalized apology for totalitarianism. The precedence that the submergence of the individual in the collective takes over the specific social goals particular to Communism contributes to this unfortunate generalization of the play's meaning. It is a frightening spectacle to watch Brecht, a bitter opponent of Nazism, advocate, in the years of its rise, an absolutism potentially just as terrible.
NOTES, CHAPTER V


2 This is pointed out by Ernst Schumacher, who shows that consent thus tends to become an end in itself. It is worth noting that this Communist writer is very critical of the whole play and finds its positions irreconcilable with those of orthodox Marxism-Leninism. He sees the play as being in many respects closer to the spirit of Christian moral theology (Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 322, and throughout the chapter on Das Badener Lehrstück, pp. 305-329).

3 Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 323.

4 These remarks apply to Das Badener Lehrstück; to what extent they represent Brecht's own personal development is much more difficult to say. Two quite contradictory views of Brecht's own development have been put forward by Martin Esslin (in Brecht) and by Wolfdietrich Rasch ("Bertolt Brechts marxistischer Lehrer: Zum ungedruckten Briefwechsel zwischen Brecht und Karl Korsch" in Zur deutschen Literatur seit der Jahrhundertwende, pp. 243-273). Esslin sees Brecht as needing and seeking the discipline of the Communist Party and its orthodox ideology in the late twenties as a solution to the anarchy and nihilism of his early years. Though Esslin stresses the influence of personal psychological factors almost to the exclusion of social and political factors, he is nevertheless right in suggesting that Brecht was strongly drawn to the authoritarian Communist Party and that he came to distrust all anarchic individualism. Esslin relies heavily on the Lehrstücke for evidence and he is too free in applying what he finds there to Brecht's own personal development (Chapters 2, 7, 9, and 10). Rasch, in his interesting essay on Brecht and Korsch, points out that Brecht chose as his mentors in political and social questions two men—Karl Korsch and Fritz Sternberg—who were both unorthodox Marxists. Korsch, for example, was actually excluded from the Party in 1926. Rasch makes it clear that Brecht never submitted mindlessly to the discipline of the Party and never subordinated himself, as Esslin suggests, to the arbitrary dictates of intellectually inferior functionaries (Esslin, p. 338; Rasch, p. 252). Instead, it was precisely the unorthodox and independent Marxists to whom Brecht was attracted. However, Rasch gives too little weight to the evidence of the Lehrstücke in evaluating Brecht's position. He is clearly wrong when he dismisses Esslin's reading of them, claiming that they are dialectical theater and were
not written to praise and advance Party discipline (Rasch, pp. 257-258). I hope my analysis has shown that Das Badener Lehrstück unfortunately does just that. Die Maßnahme was surely intended to do the same; its purpose is to justify the liquidation of the young comrade and not just to discuss it as a painful and questionable measure (Rasch, p. 256). How the positions of Rasch and Esslin are to be reconciled is today still unclear. Both are based upon solid if partial evidence. It looks as if Brecht explored and experimented with attitudes in the Lehrstücke which he may have been prepared to recommend to others but which he never fully adopted as his own in real life. Only the publication of Brecht's letters and note­books could supply us with adequate evidence for a complete intellectual biography.
CHAPTER VI

DER JASAGER AND DER NEINSAGER

The idea of consent, introduced in Das Badener Lehrstück, continued to claim Brecht's attention for some time; and the two following didactic plays, Der Jasager and Der Neinsager, reflect his attempt to reach an adequate formulation of it. In Das Badener Lehrstück consent was linked with the Communist movement, but in a very loose and abstract way. In the present plays Brecht makes no attempt to make this link more concrete; on the contrary, he removes the idea of consent from the political sphere altogether and examines it simply as a basic social virtue governing the relation of the individual to the community.

Brecht came to undertake the new works as a result of his encounter with the Japanese No theater through the translations of the English orientalist Arthur Waley. The play Taniko proved particularly interesting to Brecht because it described a situation which could be used to demonstrate consent. Brecht decided to adapt it, and in collaboration with Kurt Weill wrote a school-opera ("Schuloper") to be performed by high school boys for audiences of young people. As often with Brecht, the textual history is somewhat complicated, but in this case it is
very revealing.

There are three versions to be considered. The original *Jasager*, written 1929-30, remains close to Das *Badener Lehrstück* in its treatment of consent. Brecht became dissatisfied with this version after discussing it with school boys of various ages, many of whom were quite critical of the work. He undertook not just to revise it but to write two new pieces—one retaining the title *Der Jasager*, the other called *Der Neinsager*. In both he rejected the conception of consent as an absolute, and tried, instead, to base the relation of the individual to society on the demands of reason and practical necessity. The idea of consent was not discarded, but transformed into a more reasonable ideal. Simple and unpretentious as they are, these plays are thus important documents from a critical period of Brecht's development.

The two new plays superseded the original *Jasager*, which was not reprinted after its publication in 1930. They were issued in *Versuche* in 1931 and in *Stücke* after the war, together with extracts from the comments of school boys on a performance of the first version. Brecht suggested that *Der Jasager* and *Der Neinsager* should be performed together whenever possible. For many years the original *Jasager* dropped sufficiently out of sight for commentators to assume mistakenly that the two new versions represented the original *Jasager* and a sort of anti-play,
Per Neinsager, written to reject the original idea of consent. This was a completely false interpretation of the development of Brecht's views. The two revised plays are complementary and not antithetical, and both present part of the truth as Brecht saw it.

Today there is an excellent edition, Der Jasager und Der Neinsager: Vorlagen, Fassungen und Materialien, which unites all the relevant textual material under one cover and which is a first step toward the much-needed but still distant critical edition of Brecht's works. All subsequent quotations from the three versions as well as from Taniko will be taken from this volume.

The No play Taniko which Brecht adapted provides the simple plot which, with certain variations, forms the basis of all three versions. It is divided into two parts. In the first, a teacher, about to leave on a ritual mountain-climbing expedition, comes to say goodbye to a pupil and his sick mother. The boy decides to accompany the teacher in order to pray for his mother's health. Because the ritual climb is dangerous, both plead with him to remain behind but finally bow to his pious resolution. The second part describes the journey. The boy, unused to the exertion, becomes ill and cannot continue. Thereupon the other pilgrims insist on the observance of a great custom, which prescribes that all those who fall on such a climb are to be cast into the valley. Informed of the custom by the
teacher, the boy accepts his fate stoically and goes to his death without protest.

A comparison of Waley's text with a literal translation of the Japanese shows that Waley's version is itself an adaptation of the original. As he himself indicates, he has not translated the final part of the play in which the boy is restored to life by a spirit in response to the prayers of the pilgrims. Furthermore, he has not attempted to make clear to his English readers the religious significance which the great custom and boy's sickness have for the Buddhist lay order, the Yamabushi, to whom the pilgrims and the teacher belong. In the original, the sickness, for example, is clearly the outward mark of the boy's spiritual condition, and has its ultimate root for the Buddhist in one of the boy's earlier incarnations. In Waley's version, the sickness seems merely accidental, and the great custom, whose religious origin is left unclear, appears to be either an ossified or an irrational tradition. The transformation of the valley-hurling from a crisis into a final catastrophe, and the obscuring of the religious significance of the action, make Waley's version considerably harsher and more arbitrary than the original. The tendencies of this adaptation are important for us, because they are even more strongly accentuated in Brecht's original Jasager.
Of Brecht's three versions, the original Jasager remains closest to Taniko; indeed, many of the passages are nothing more than translations of Waley's text. Brecht did make a number of important changes, however, and the principal purpose of his adaptation was to introduce the idea of consent explicitly in order to make it the focal point of the play.

In Waley's Taniko, the boy accepts his fate as something natural and necessary. His attitude is one of resignation rather than consent in Brecht's terms. No attempt is made to give special emphasis to the boy's acceptance of death or to recommend it to the audience for emulation. The important thing is the great custom and what it decrees, not the boy's reaction. In Brecht's version just the opposite is true. The boy's consent is of central importance, whereas the custom is merely the occasion for demonstrating it. In order to draw attention to the question of consent from the very beginning, Brecht introduced the play with the following chorus:

Wichtig zu lernen vor allem ist Einverständniss
Viele sagen ja, und doch ist da kein Einverständniss
Viele werden nicht gefragt, und viele
Sind einverstanden mit Falschem. Darum:
Wichtig zu lernen vor allem ist Einverständniss.
(p. 19)

Nothing is said about the nature of consent yet, but it is made clear that the purpose of the play is to teach us both what consent is and how it is to be used. From the action
It is clear that the play does not show the boy learning this difficult art; he has already fully mastered it. It is the audience and the performers who are to learn from his example.

In order to introduce the idea of consent into the action itself, Brecht expanded the great custom, which, in Taniko, consisted simply of throwing into the valley those who failed on the climb. Brecht retained this, but had the teacher add:

Das ist ein großen Brauch. Ich kann mich ihm nicht widersetzen. Aber der große Brauch schreibt auch vor, daß man den, welcher krank wurde, befragt, ob man umkehren soll sinetwegen.

(p. 25)

But the new custom does not just prescribe that the boy be asked this question; it prescribes his answer too:

Und der Brauch schreibt auch vor, daß der, welcher krank wurde, antwortet: ihr sollt nicht umkehren.

(p. 26)

As in Das Badener Lehrstück the individual is expected to submit to the will of the group, which, in the present play, is embodied in the custom. In order to emphasize further that submission to necessity (again as in Das Badener Lehrstück) rather than free moral choice is demanded of the individual, the student members of the party make it clear that the boy will be killed no matter how he answers:

Wir wollen ihn fragen, ob er verlangt
Daß man umkehrt sinetwegen.
Aber auch, wenn er es verlangte
Wollen wir nicht umkehren
Sondern ihn in das Tal hinabwerfen.

(p. 25)
The boy, however, gives the required answers without hesitation and goes to his death as stoically as the one in Taniko.

As has already been mentioned, Taniko is a religious play, and remains so, despite modifications, in Waley's version. Brecht, as a declared atheist, wished to secularize the action. This seems easy enough at first sight. The ritual climb becomes a research expedition; the teacher has his school in the city rather than in a temple; and the boy joins the expedition to get medicine and medical advice for his sick mother rather than to pray for her. It is only with the great custom that a problem arises. Brecht retained, and, as we have seen, expanded the custom, but he does not explain or justify it in any satisfactory way. A religious justification is no longer possible, and, as a result, the custom tends to become an arbitrary, irrational survival in an enlightened world where men go on scientific expeditions rather than ritual climbs.9

In the discussion of Das Badener Lehrstück we saw that Brecht's conception of consent paralleled one Christian interpretation of the relation of man to God, and thus retained the overtones and much of the pathos of a religious ideal. In Der Jasager, consent also retains a religious aura, and this is due in part to the nature of the great custom, which cannot be wholly understood rationally but must be accepted on faith. This is, of course, not a
religious faith, but a trust in the validity of the traditional wisdom and will of society as it is embodied in the custom.

The extent to which consent has religious roots is nowhere more obvious than in the parallel passages in which the mother and the teacher accept the boy's decision to accompany the expedition. In Waley's version we read:

"Alas for such deep piety
Deep as our heavy sighs."

(p. 9, my emphasis)

Brecht replaces this with:

Oh, welch tiefes Einverständnis!
Viele sind einverstanden mit Falschem, aber er
ist nicht einverstanden mit der Krankheit, sondern
Daß die Krankheit geheilt wird.

(p. 22, my emphasis)

For the religious ideal of piety the one of consent has been substituted. 10

However, this passage also shows that by the time he wrote Der Jasager Brecht was moving away from the blind, unconditional consent of Das Badener Lehrstück, and was trying to turn it into a more practical ideal directed at achieving certain specific goals. In the above passage consent becomes a resolve to cure sickness. Furthermore, at the end of the play the boy suggests, at least by implication, that one of the reasons he accepts death is that the others may continue and bring medicine to his mother:

Nehmt meinen Krug
Füllt ihn mit der Medizin
Und bringt ihn meiner Mutter
Wenn ihr zurückkehrt.

(p. 27)
The question is whether the interpretation of consent suggested by these passages is really compatible with the great custom and the acquiescence it demands of the boy. This is vital, because the boy's acceptance of the great custom is the central act of consent in the play, not his resolve to cure his mother's sickness. The answer to this question will depend on how the custom itself is interpreted.

The custom is formulated by the students in words almost identical to those used by Waley:

> Wir sprechen es mit Entsetzen aus, aber seit alters her herrscht hier ein großer Brauch: die nicht weiter können, werden in das Tal hinabgeschleudert.

(p. 25, cf. pp. 10-11)

In Taniko, the meaning of this statement was clear; in Der Jasager it is ambiguous. Does it mean that those who cannot continue are to be killed so that the others may go on, or are they to be killed simply because custom demands it (as in Taniko)? Brecht has introduced a new motif into his adaptation which points to the former interpretation. Discussing the situation after the boy has been taken ill, the students say:

> Gleich nach der Hütte aber kommt der schmale Grat. Nur mit beiden Händen zufassend an der Felswand Kommt man hinüber. Wir können keinen tragen. Sollten wir also dem großen Brauch folgen und ihn in das Tal hinabschleudern?

(p. 24)
In other words, if it were possible they would carry the sick boy with them rather than kill him. Similarly, in explaining the custom to the boy, the teacher makes it clear that the choice is between killing the sick person and terminating the expedition. The custom prescribes that the individual accept death rather than requesting the others to turn back (p. 26). Thus, the custom has at least a limited practical purpose and finds a partial justification.

Brecht has not, however, succeeded in eliminating all the arbitrary and irrational elements from the great custom and from the idea of consent. Indeed, it is not certain that he really wanted to. Two points must be made. The first is that the custom does not in any way allow for or take into consideration the boy's desire to help his mother. It would demand his death whether or not this helped to procure medicine for her. If the demands of the custom and the needs of the mother happen to be in harmony, that is a fortunate coincidence; but this has nothing to do with the reasonableness of the custom and the consent demanded by it. Moreover, the custom, which is said to have existed from ancient times ("seit alters her," p. 25), makes no reference to the particular purpose of the expedition, and demands, in effect, that the individual must be sacrificed whether or not this purpose is important. In Taniko the custom was associated with a ritual climb, and the
expedition into the mountains was necessarily of a sacred character. The expedition, in the original Jasager, is devoted to unspecified research, and nothing is said to suggest that it is of sufficient urgency to justify the sacrifice of a life. (It must be remembered that in this original Jasager the expedition has nothing to do with the relief of sickness as it does, by contrast, in the revised and better-known version.)

What the great custom does suggest is that the interests of the group must always take priority over those of the individual, and that the individual ought to recognize and accept this fact even at the price of his life. Brecht partially obscures this state of affairs by suggesting that the boy's wishes, though different, are in harmony with those of the group, since the others can bring back the medicine for him. We must not forget that the students have made it plain that the boy would be killed even if this were contrary to his wishes. Thus, the first version of Der Jasager remains very close to Das Badener Lehrstück in spirit, although one can see Brecht gradually moving toward a new and more reasonable position in which the demands of society on the individual are more precisely and directly related to the real needs of society.

It is interesting to look at some of the criticisms that stimulated Brecht to revise Der Jasager. Most of the
boys whose remarks are recorded objected to the great custom and found it unjustified. Those who saw its purpose as being to enable the expedition to continue either asked whether research was really as important as a human life (p. 59) or complained that no real effort was made to help the sick boy (pp. 59-60). These attitudes are summed up in the following passage:

... Mehrere Stimmen schließen sich der Ansicht an, daß das Schicksal des Jasagers nicht so dargestellt ist, daß man seine Notwendigkeit sieht. Warum ist nicht die ganze Gesellschaft umgekehrt und hat das kranke Glied gerettet, anstatt es zu töten?

(p. 62)

Others obviously felt that the practical justification offered for the custom was so inadequate that it really became an end in itself, and that the boy was killed simply because the custom existed and not because the expedition had to continue. At least, this is how I would interpret those remarks referring to irrational or mystical elements in the play:

Die Mystik, die die Oper durchzieht, wird nicht angenehm empfunden. ... Die Motivierung der Handlung ist nicht deutlich (real) genug ... .

(p. 62)

One boy went so far as to see a negative lesson in the play:

... Man könnte das Stück gerade dazu benutzen, die Schädlichkeit des Aberglaubens zu zeigen.

(p. 63)

Brecht took all these criticisms into consideration in the revision, but the criterion set up by a young worker became
central for him:

Die Frage ist zu prüfen, ob der Vorteil des Gewonnenen so groß ist, daß der Opftod des Knaben notwendig ist.  

(p. 63)

This firmly posits the social goals of human action as the necessary context in which alone the problem of consent and sacrifice can be meaningfully discussed. Put in the simplest terms, the two new plays Brecht wrote illustrate the two possibilities implied here: one shows a situation in which the sacrifice of the boy's life is not justified, the other a situation in which it is.

The same young worker also formulated very clearly another standard to which *Der Jasager* and *Das Badener Lehrstück* in no way conform:

Die übrige Gesellschaft darf auf keinen Fall einen moralischen Druck auf den Knaben ausüben, um seine Einwilligung zu erlangen.  

(p. 63)

The great custom, which not only decrees the valley-hurling but prescribes the victim's consent, is, of course, a prime example of such moral pressure. As was suggested in discussing *Das Badener Lehrstück*, the demand for consent is a sort of intimidation characteristic of totalitarian society, and seems to have had a particular attraction for Brecht as a recent convert to Communism. He was, as we shall see, very reluctant to follow the advice of his young critic, and, though the pressures on the individual are reduced in the new versions, they are not eliminated.
altogether, any more than they are in the subsequent work dealing with consent, Die Maßnahme. Brecht obviously felt that a certain amount of pressure had to be brought to bear on the individual (even an unselfish one) in order to make him subordinate himself to the interests of society.

The titles of the two new pieces, Der Jasager and Der Neinsager, suggest that they form an antithetical pair, though this, as will be seen later, is not the case. However, the first version of Der Jasager and Der Neinsager really are antithetical; they present opposing solutions to identical problems. The two pieces are, with minor changes in wording, the same up to the point where the sick boy is asked whether he consents to being cast into the valley, or whether he demands that the party turn back on his account. In both plays the party is on a research expedition that the boy has joined in order to obtain medicine for his mother. In both, the sacrifice is demanded by custom, so that the party may continue its trip. What has changed in Der Neinsager is the boy’s answer: he refuses his consent and successfully defends himself against the protests of the more conventional students.

The justification the boy gives for his refusal is perhaps more important than the refusal itself. It is based on a rational analysis of the practical exigencies of the specific situation in which the party finds itself.
The boy wished to obtain medicine for his mother, but, now sick himself, he feels this is no longer possible, and wishes to return home. The scientific knowledge which the others had hoped to gain can, he claims, easily await a better opportunity. The boy ignores the possibility suggested at the end of the original Jasager: that the others could, if they went on, bring back the medicine for his mother. Brecht wished to eliminate all considerations that would weaken the strong case the boy makes for turning back.

The boy does not direct his arguments primarily to the custom, but considers instead the actual situation of the party and the results of the various possible courses of action. The implication is that, if this process of analysis is carried out carefully, reason itself will indicate what should be done. The great custom, which was the core of the original Jasager, is dismissed out of hand because it was without basis in reason: "Und was den alten großen Brauch betrifft, so sehe Ich keine Vernunft an ihm" (p. 49). It had fixed right action before the fact, and therefore ignored the demands of the specific situation. In its stead, the boy demands a new custom:

Ich brauche vielmehr einen neuen großen Brauch, den wir sofort einführen müssen, nämlich den Brauch, in jeder neuen Lage neu nachzudenken.

(p. 49)

Practical reason is to be made the basis of all action. In order to demonstrate its persuasive power, Brecht has the
students accept the boy’s arguments and take him home, despite their earlier resolution to kill him regardless of his response, and despite the fact that they find his attitude distressingly unheroic.

This principle of practical reason represents a clear rejection of the conception of consent in the original Jasager and at least a partial rejection of the position in Das Badener Lehrstück. If every new situation is to be considered on its own merits, it should be difficult to regard the demands of the collective as an absolute to which the interests of the individual must always be subordinated. To regard the collective as an absolute would be to prejudge situations similar to that in Der Jasager as much as the great custom does.

Refreshing as the appeal to common sense is in Der Neinsager, it must be asked whether the appeal to practical reason really solves the problems raised by the boy’s sickness. The new custom of examining every situation afresh will reveal the choices available and the results of each course of action. But reason alone can never determine which of these options should be chosen. The choice can be made only in accordance with values which assign priorities, and tell us, for example, that the life of a boy is more important than the immediate pursuit of knowledge, but perhaps less important than the health and welfare of
a whole city. That such values are widely held and consonant with common sense should not be allowed to conceal the fact that they are not ultimately derived from reason and cannot be justified by it alone. However, by suggesting in Der Neinsager that reason will lead men to adopt true values, Brecht makes the rational and the good appear to be harmonious aspects of the same reality.

Although the sacrifice of the boy is rejected, Der Neinsager should not be interpreted as a plea for the sanctity of the individual. The boy does not appeal to his personal rights, but to reason alone, to which both the individual and society must make their actions conform. The others do not spare him out of respect for his person, but because they are persuaded by his impersonal arguments.

The revised version of Der Jasager makes it clear that Brecht was far from rejecting the sacrifice of the individual to society on principle. The new version shows that reason can be harsh as well as merciful. Brecht was aware, of course, that practical decisions concerning human lives involve a difficult calculus of values, and, in the new Jasager, he altered the basic situation sufficiently so that the boy's life could be reasonably demanded.

The main change, from which all the others flow, is in the nature of the expedition. In the new Jasager the
whole city is suffering from a plague, and the expedition is
a mercy mission to obtain medicine and medical advice, where-
as in the original Jasager and in Der Neinsager only the
mother was sick and only the boy was concerned with obtain-
ing medicine. Now the welfare of all the sick (including,
of course, the mother) depends on the success of the mission.

There is now no mention of a great custom which
demands the sacrifice of those who fall on the trip. Instead,
the motif of the narrow ridge ("Grat") has been expanded,
and the students make a serious attempt to carry the sick boy
over the difficult section of the trail. Only when this
proves impossible do they decide to abandon him in order to
continue. The boy consents to this, but, fearing a slow
death, demands that they throw him into the valley. With
some reluctance, the students accede to this request, be-
cause they realize that they must shoulder the responsibili-
ity for the terrible thing they are forced to do.

The decision of the students to abandon the boy is
not in any way arbitrary, and is arrived at without any
reference to tradition or custom:

Wir können ihn nicht hinüberbringen, und wir können
nicht bei ihm bleiben. Was auch sei, wir müssen
weiter, denn eine ganze Stadt wartet auf die Medizin,
die wir holen sollen. Wir sprechen es mit Entsetzen
aus, aber wenn er nicht mit uns gehen kann, müssen
wir ihn eben hier im Gebirge liegenlassen.
(p. 37)

In accordance with the new custom proposed by the boy in
Der Neinsager, this decision is reached by rational analysis
of the specific situation in which the party finds itself.

Although Brecht eliminated all reference to custom in the decision to sacrifice the boy, he retained it in the process of consent. The teacher tells the boy that he must be left behind, and asks if he agrees to this. (As in the other versions, the students declare that they will act, no matter how he answers.) The teacher adds that custom prescribes that the person so asked shall tell his companions not to turn back for his sake. This the boy does. At first sight, this vestige seems inconsistent with the new emphasis on reason and common sense, but perhaps there is wisdom in it nonetheless. When it becomes necessary to sacrifice a man to the welfare of others, it is, perhaps, difficult to persuade him to accept this by reason alone. Help from other sources becomes welcome and important. Thus, custom helps support a set of values at that point where self-interest and the interests of society are in conflict. In such a situation, it is questionable whether common sense really dictates self-sacrifice. Only in Der Neinsager, where reason and self-interest are in complete harmony can the boy himself become the spokesman of reason.

There is another important way in which the boy's consent is made easier and more credible. The mercy mission has a specific practical goal that he shares with the others.
Insofar as his interests go beyond self-preservation they become identical with those of the group. This common goal, moreover, presents itself to the boy in personal terms: he wishes to obtain medicine for his own mother. His consent is not just a recognition of the priority of society as a whole over the individual, but also a means of reaching his own greatest goal. His last words with which he asks the others to bring the medicine to his mother (p. 39) are much more effective here than in the original Jasager, where they seemed the seed of a new, but very imperfectly realized, conception of consent. In the new Jasager Brecht was able to combine the iron necessity of the sacrifice with a genuinely free act of consent on the part of the boy, making the sacrifice a genuine self-sacrifice.

The new Jasager and Der Neinsager were intended by Brecht to be performed together. As the preceding interpretation has shown, they do not form an antithetical pair, one reflecting a correct and the other a mistaken position on consent. Instead, they are complementary, both reaching correct solutions to somewhat different problems. Neither of the pieces is complete in itself, the way the original Jasager was, for each requires a consideration of the other if one is to gain a correct understanding of the use of consent. Taken alone, the new Jasager might suggest that the individual ought always to be sacrificed to the
interests of society and that his uncritical acceptance of his fate is desirable. Der Neinsager makes it clear that the actual situation must always be critically examined to see whether the need of the group is sufficiently great to justify such an extreme measure. Sometimes it is, as Der Jasager shows us, but when it is not, as in Der Neinsager, neither custom nor dogma ought to lead to a false decision. On the other hand, Der Neinsager alone might suggest that such a sacrifice is never justified, or never necessary. Brecht shows no sign of such superficial optimism.

It would thus appear that the real didactic purpose of the plays is not to supply us with clear-cut answers to these problems, but to encourage us to make our own efforts to learn consent. Brecht uses the differences between the two plays to create an intellectual tension which stimulates us to independent thought. The rationally assessed interest of society is presented as the criterion which is to decide whether an individual is to be sacrificed or not. The plays present the limits within which a solution must be sought, but Brecht makes no attempt to define that delicate point at which the interests of the group begin to outweigh those of the individual. Our attention is directed to the problem, and we are left to reflect on it.
NOTES, CHAPTER VI

1 In Arthur Waley, The Nō Plays of Japan, pp. 229-235. According to Ernst Schumacher, Elisabeth Hauptmann translated a number of pieces from this volume for Brecht, who selected Taniko for adaptation (Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 336). For the edition actually cited in the present chapter, see note 6.

Taniko did not attract Brecht simply because he saw something akin to his idea of consent in it, but also because it embodied many of the epic elements he was trying to incorporate into his own dramatic work. The example of Japanese Nō drama must have confirmed his belief that the dominant European tradition of illusionistic theater represented only one limited concept of drama. In Nō he found a dramatic and theatrical style of great antiquity which was based on entirely different principles but which nonetheless formed a coherent and consistent artistic whole. He must have felt reassured that the rejection of illusion and emotional identification did not mean the end of the drama, that epic theater was a valid conception and not just a deviation from the normal.

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3 Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche, pp. 337-338.


5 e.g., Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 339, and Martin Esslin, Brecht, pp. 78-79.

6 Bertolt Brecht, Der Jasager und Der Neinsager: Vorlagen, Fassungen, Materialien, ed. with a postscript by Peter Szondl. Hereafter cited as Der Jasager. For further bibliographical information, see pp. 51-53 of this edition. Szondl's illuminating postscript (pp. 103-112) touches on many of the points dealt with in this chapter.


8 Der Jasager, p. 12.


10 For at least one contemporary critic the religious overtones remained so strong that he did not see the original Jasager as a secular piece at all. For him it
was—Intentionally or not—a Christian play:

"Schlichter, gradliniger, unzucldeutiger haben wir christliche Grundwahrheit seit Jahrhunderten nicht mehr singen hören als in diesem von den ersten Takten an fesselnden, ja erschütternden Stücke. Einverständnis, consensus, und Opfer auch des Lebens für die leidende Mitwelt, dabei nicht als Sonderleistung und Heroismus, sondern als schlichtester Brauch, der uns überkommen ist—wir kennen keinen, der uns das sonst so gegenwarts-vernehmlich zu predigen gewußt hätte wie dieser Atheist."


11Szondi emphasizes the irrational element more strongly than I have done but does not give sufficient weight to Brecht's limited attempt to give the custom a practical function. He is certainly right to point out that the boys who criticized the first version saw primarily the arbitrary and mythical side of the custom ("Nachwort" in Der Jasager, pp. 107-108).

12In this and the three subsequent quotations the special emphasis Brecht used to indicate those comments he made use of in his revision has been omitted.
Brecht's next Lehrstück, Die Maßnahme, seems at first glance to mark a new departure in his work, because it was the first play in which he openly aligned himself with the interests of the Communist Party. As such it was welcomed by Communist critics, who especially admired its choral passages, although they expressed the strongest reservations about the controversial measure of the title: the killing of a young agitator by his own Party comrades. This open commitment to Communism was, however, not so abrupt as it may have appeared at the time. The seeds of it were already evident as early as the reflection on atheism in Der Flug der Lindberghs with its somewhat vague references to dialectical economy, class struggle, and the revolution. The following piece, Das Badener Lehrstück, was not much more specific, but the collective represented by the chorus plays a role in many ways analogous to that of the Communist Party. In Der Flug der Lindberghs Brecht still seemed to be groping his way toward a new political commitment; in Das Badener Lehrstück one feels that he arrived at a new conception of the relation of individual and society but still chose not to declare his new
allegiance to Communism too openly. Der Jasager and Der Neinsager continue the exploration of the idea of consent begun in Das Badener Lehrstück, though without any explicit reference to Communism. Die Maßnahme grows directly out of Der Jasager and Der Neinsager and relates the idea of consent to the problems of the revolutionary struggle.

The play was written in 1930 and scored by Brecht's new musical collaborator, Hanns Eisler. It was to have been given its first performance at a music festival that summer, but was rejected by the artistic directors of the organization, Hindemith among them, because of its radical political content. It finally received its première in the fall, when it was performed by a working class choral group assisted by professional actors in the roles of the agitators.

The text published by Brecht in his Versuche in 1931 represents a revision of an earlier version in the light of Communist criticism. This first version was published as a Vorabdruck from the forthcoming volume of Versuche, and is today virtually unobtainable. However, Ernst Schumacher gives a fairly clear idea of this version and the changes Brecht made by quoting in detail from contemporary reviews. Eric Bentley has published an English translation of Die Maßnahme, which is based on the first version and helps round out our picture of this text. The attempt to accommodate Party critics was not entirely
successful, and it is fairly clear that Brecht did not really alter the basic meaning or the structure of the play. The following discussion is, therefore, based on the revised version published in Versuche.6

Although the story of Die Maßnahme appears at first to be quite new, it is in fact a further and much freer adaptation of the one that caught Brecht's interest in Taniko. In Der Jasager and Der Neinsager he remained as close to Waley's version of Taniko as possible. In Die Maßnahme he used the same basic plot, but handled it with complete freedom and gave it a form entirely his own.

A comparison with the revised Jasager will show the basic similarities. In that play a boy joins a medical relief mission going to obtain help for his city. In Die Maßnahme a young comrade at a Party post near the Chinese border is ordered to join a group of agitators on their way to the city of Mukden, where they are to build a revolutionary organization. The boy in Der Jasager becomes ill in the mountains; the young comrade commits a number of increasingly serious errors in his work for the Party. Both thus endanger the success of the mission of which they are a part. The sickness of the boy in Der Jasager merely occasions a crisis and is not of any interest in itself. The nature of the young comrade is important and is one of the crucial questions explored in the play. He fails because he is unable to carry out his agitational assign-
ments in a cool and rational manner, but is continually overwhelmed by his feelings of pity for the exploited and of indignation at injustice. His "failures" lay bare problems that go to the root of his relation to the Party and his commitment to the revolution.

The two plays move to crises that create almost identical dilemmas. In Der Jasager the medical mission can continue only if the boy is left behind on the trail. In Die Maßnahme the young comrade's most serious error is to encourage a premature uprising which leads to a sharp persecution of the Party. The fleeing agitators find that they can return to their work in the city only if the comrade is shot and his body thrown into a pit of quick lime so that the police will find no trace of him. In both plays the victim is asked if he consents to his fate, though in both it is made clear that he must die whether he consents or not. Like the boy, the young comrade goes willingly to his death and in this way reaffirms his devotion to the revolution. In each case, the victim is helped almost tenderly by his comrades, and the line "Lehne deinen Kopf an unsern Arm" (p. 349 and Der Jasager, p. 39) occurs in both texts. Brecht tries to present the death as a joint act of the whole group: neither a murder nor a suicide, but a genuine sacrifice.

In a sense, Die Maßnahme could even be considered a reworking of Der Neinsager, for, in instigating the uprising,
the young comrade rejects the Party's arguments and defies its authority. There is, of course, an important difference. In Der Neinsager the boy refuses his consent in the name of reason and common sense, while the young comrade breaks with the Party because he is blinded by the emotions stirred in him by the suffering of the people and can no longer judge the situation rationally.

Die Maßnahme takes the form of a report by the three surviving agitators after the successful completion of their mission. They are troubled by the killing of their comrade and wish to submit the problem to the judgment of a control chorus, a Party body whose exact status remains ambiguous. They re-enact for it the young man's mistakes and his final break with them so that the problem may be seen in the context of the whole revolutionary struggle. In each scene one of the agitators takes the part of the young comrade, while the others represent whatever other figures are called for. There is little attempt at realistic portrayal. The figures introduce themselves to the chorus (and thus to the audience) and even comment on their function. In the strike scene, for example, the policeman says:

Ich bin ein Polizist und bekomme von den Herrschenden mein Brot dafür, daß ich die Unzufriedenheit bekämpfe.

(p. 333)

The emotional reactions of the figures seem also to be reported rather than acted out. The young comrade watching
the barge towers says:

Schwer ist es, ohne Mitleid diese Männer zu sehen.  
(p. 329)

In his notes Brecht stresses the dry, demonstrative character of the presentation when he describes the appropriate style of acting (pp. 353-354). The job of the actor is not to create a character but to demonstrate the behavior of a figure so that it can be understood. The agitators openly take whatever parts the situation requires. That there can be no dramatic illusion and no identification of the actor with the role he plays is particularly clear in the case of the young comrade. Brecht continues his above remarks by suggesting:

Jeder der vier Spieler soll die Gelegenheit haben, einmal das Verhalten des jungen Genossen zu zeigen, daher soll jeder Spieler eine der vier Hauptszenen des jungen Genossen spielen.  
(p. 354)

The young comrade's role is thus acted by each of the people responsible for his death, by people who are showing his actions in order to prove that his liquidation was necessary. As a result we are always aware of the distance between the actor and the young comrade. No identification of the two is possible.

The little scenes the agitators present do not form a continuous action and are linked by narrative passages that give the setting and indicate very sketchily the progress of the Party's work. After some of the early
scenes there is also some brief discussion with the chorus about the nature of the young comrade's mistakes. More extensive comment on the action, however, is found in the passages sung by the chorus ("Lob der U.S.S.R.", "Lob der illegalen Arbeit," "Andere die Welt, sie braucht es," and "Lob der Partei"). Here some of the most important insights of the play are formulated.

Die Maßnahme is the last and most important of the Lehrstücke that examine the idea of consent. Although this idea is still central to the play and although the words Einverständnис and einverstanden occur with great frequency, consent is no longer the almost technical term it was in Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnис and in Der Jasager and Der Neinsager. Now einverstanden sein is very often used in its weaker colloquial sense of "to be in agreement" or "to approve," so that the term becomes quite general and diffuse. Perhaps this is so because Brecht found that when he applied the idea to actual problems of revolutionary work it became so complex that consent could no longer be limited to one specific act or process and so lost its usefulness as a special term. In any case, first the term and then the problem disappear from Brecht's work altogether in the next few years.

In Die Maßnahme there are two main acts of consent which must be analyzed. The one occurs at the beginning of the mission to China when the agitators are dedicated to
their revolutionary task. The other occurs at the end when the young comrade accepts the necessity of his own liquidation in an effort to help make good the damage done by his earlier rupture with the Party.

The first is rather ominously called "Die Auslöschung" (the "extinguishing" or "obliteration") and is a complex process which takes place at the Chinese border just before the agitators go on to the city of Mukden. It consists of a number of steps which represent in highly elliptical form a development which would in actual fact begin at least as early as the training of the agitators by the Party and not just on the eve of a particular assignment. First, the agitators indicate their willingness to accept the conditions of undercover work. For the Communist this means a readiness not just to accept hardship and possible death, but to submit to a discipline which makes the individual into a blind instrument of the Party. The local Party leader spells this out for the agitators:

Dann seid ihr nicht mehr ihr selber, du nicht mehr Karl Schmitt aus Berlin, du nicht mehr Anna Kjersk aus Kasan und du nicht mehr Peter Sawitsch aus Moskau, sondern allesamt ohne Namen und Mutter, leere Blätter, auf welche die Revolution ihre Anweisung schreibt.

(p. 326, my emphasis)

The agitators are officially assigned their new roles only after they have specifically accepted this Auslöschung of their personality. This takes place in an extremely important, though silent, ceremony in which the Party
Inscribes its will upon these "blank leaves" by giving each agitator a mask which symbolizes his revolutionary task.

The local leader comments:

 Dann seid ihr von dieser Stunde an nicht mehr Niemand, sondern von dieser Stunde an und wahrscheinlich bis zu eurem Verschwinden unbekannte Arbeiter, Kämpfer, Chinesen....

(p. 326)

By surrendering their personal identity the agitators have become "Niemand" just as the mechanics in Das Badener Lehrstück did. In both cases the role supplied by the Party or the collective becomes a new existence in the service of the revolution. The young comrade is explicitly said to have given his consent to these steps together with the others.

In fact, this whole scene is strongly reminiscent of the process of consent in Das Badener Lehrstück. The Auslöschung corresponds to the symbolic death which the mechanics had to accept and the distribution of masks to their "rebirth" into the collective. In both cases the individual is treated as if he were (or ought to be) a blind instrument of the Party or the collective. The difference between the two plays is that this consent is the culminating point of Das Badener Lehrstück, but merely the starting point of Die Maßnahme, which is primarily concerned with showing the uses to which consent is put and the problems to which it gives rise.

There is an even more important difference between the two pieces in the conception of human nature which they
reveal. In Das Badener Lehrstück man in himself was literally nothing and his apparent individuality merely a collective product of society. The pilot's attempt to claim as a personal feat what was really the accomplishment of the collective, and his insistence on his uniqueness and his fame, were treated as the most contemptible sort of egotism. By contrast, the young comrade in Die Maßnahme is introduced as a humane, just, and altruistic man:

Mein Herz schlägt für die Revolution. Der Anblick des Unrechts trieb mich in die Reihen der Kämpfer. Der Mensch muß dem Menschen helfen. . . . Ich glaube an die Menschheit.

(p. 323)

Only after he has established this more general attitude does he go on to indicate his adherence to Communism:

Und ich bin für die Maßnahmen der kommunistischen Partei, welche gegen Ausbeutung und Unkenntnis für die klassenlose Gesellschaft kämpft.

(p. 323)

Clearly this is a good man; and his goodness, far from being an illusion, is actually the basis of his commitment to Communism. The egotistical pilot could be expelled from the collective without hesitation, but the young comrade who falls into error because of his humane and generous nature cannot be dismissed so lightly. He is liquidated with real regret and misgivings. His case demands a careful hearing. In Die Maßnahme, becoming a blank leaf for the Party seems to involve a free choice, a personal decision. In Das Badener Lehrstück, submission to the collective was
not a moral or political commitment but simply a recognition of one's non-entity, one's total dependence on the collective. The mechanics in the latter play acquire a true identity only in the collective, and when the pilot insists on his separate individuality he suddenly and quite literally becomes faceless. On the other hand, in Die Maßnahme the agitators are given masks by the Party which symbolize the role they must play, and they are told that they must identify completely with their role so that they become Chinese workers, "geboren von chinesischen Müttern, sprechend in Schlaf und Fieber chinesisch" (p. 326). In fact, the agitators remain throughout the play what they have been from the beginning--Party agents and nothing else. The young comrade who is unsuccessful in playing the role assigned by the Party actually identifies more closely with the Chinese workers than any of his colleagues. However, when he breaks with the Party later in the play, he tears off his mask and bares his real face, "sein nacktes Gesicht/Menschlich, offen und arglos" (p. 345). He does not suffer a loss of identity like the pilot in Das Badener Lehrstück, but reveals his true self, which was never obliterated by his party role. Thus Brecht now concedes what he explicitly denied in Das Badener Lehrstück--namely that there is a human essence lying outside the social sphere, however much this essence may be molded by environmental forces.
If the purpose of consent is to produce reliable and pliant agents of the Party, then the young comrade's first act of consent is a failure. In the scenes that follow his initiation he fails in various tasks assigned to him, for he is incapable of becoming an unquestioning instrument of the Party. His own feelings and his moral conscience always break through and blind him to purely political or tactical considerations. His errors do not, at first, involve a withdrawal of consent, nor is there any indication that he had any conscious reservations during the Auslöschung. We are told that after each failure he realized and regretted his mistake, promising to do better the next time. Finally, he even suggested, so we hear, that he be relieved of his duties by the Party. Brecht thus admits that a subjectively honest act of consent does not in itself guarantee right action.

As the political situation in Mukden develops, a direct conflict between the comrade and the Party gradually becomes inevitable. He becomes convinced that the time for revolutionary action has come and quarrels with the agitators, who recognize that there is still not sufficient support for the Party, even though the condition of the masses is intolerable and there is widespread unrest. In the argument between them it becomes clear that the young comrade is not listening to the voice of reason, but is
swayed by his emotions. The dispute finally comes to a head and forces the young comrade to make a clear choice:

DER JUNGE GENOSSE:
So frage ich: dulden die Klassiker, daß das Elend wartet?

DIE DREI AGITATOREN:
Sie sprechen von Methoden, welche das Elend in seiner Gänze erfassen.

DER JUNGE GENOSSE:
Dann sind die Klassiker nicht dafür, daß jedem Elenden gleich und sofort und vor allem geholfen wird?

DIE DREI AGITATOREN:
Nein.

DER JUNGE GENOSSE:
Dann sind die Klassiker Dreck, und ich zerreiße sie; denn der Mensch, der lebendige, brüllt, und sein Elend zerreißt alle Dämme der Lehre.

(p. 343)

So overwhelming is this desire to help the miserable that he goes on to reject all the claims of Party discipline and solidarity and withdraws the consent that he gave at the beginning of the mission:

... Im Anblick des Kampfes verwerfe ich alles, was gestern noch galt, kündige alles Einverständnis mit allen, tue das allein Menschliche.

(p. 345)

His consent has thus never really implied the willingness or ability to make himself a blind instrument of the Party, and his unwillingness to do so is now made explicit. Yet this rejection of the Party and of dogmatic Marxism does not mean he rejects the revolution. He intends to go on fighting. He concludes the above declaration with these words:

(p. 345)

It is easy for Brecht to show in what follows that the young comrade is wrong and that his premature uprising means a setback for the Party. It is much harder to offer a solution to the problem of consent, because the young man does not break with the Party in the name of false values but rather in the name of those values that motivated his consent in the first place. To suppress them would strike at the very root of his commitment to the revolution. In Das Badener Lehrstück it was easy to make man an instrument of the collective, since he was held to be simply a product of society in the first place. If, however, man has an essential nature that is good and must not be suppressed, he cannot so easily be turned into a *tabula rasa* upon which the Party inscribes its will.

Communist critics have suggested that Brecht creates an artificial dichotomy between reason and emotion in his portrayal of the young comrade, and that he wishes to counteract the young comrade's errors by establishing the primacy of reason over feeling. The relation of reason and emotion does indeed lie at the core of the play, but Brecht does not suggest that reason can solve everything. The young comrade's basic commitment to the revolution is clearly an emotional one, and there is no suggestion that this can or should be changed.
Does Brecht then offer an adequate solution? I am not sure he does. He sets himself the difficult task of showing that the revolutionary must suppress the natural expression of his feelings of decency and justice, not because there are higher values to which they must be sacrificed, but precisely so that decency and justice may ultimately be realized in a changed world. Whether one can be ruthless and unjust even in the best cause without perverting the values with which one starts is a question which Brecht does not consider, but clearly his answer would have been: one can and one must. In the play's two most important choral passages, "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es," and "Lob der Partei," he gives the substance of an answer and tries to teach a better understanding of the demands of revolutionary action and of the individual's relation to the Party. The first of these passages is sung by the chorus just after the scene in which the young comrade has refused to eat with the merchant because of the latter's brutal attitude toward the workers. As a result, an agreement to arm the workers for a struggle against foreign Imperialists falls through. The chorus asks:

Mit wem säße der Rechtliche nicht zusammen
Dem Recht zu helfen?
Welche Medizin schmeckte zu schlecht
Dem Sterbenden?
Welche Niedrigkeit begingest du nicht, um
Die Niedrigkeit auszutilgen?
Könntest du die Welt verändern, wafür
Wärest du dir zu gut?
In this passage the chorus comments on the young comrade's errors, and it attempts to formulate the general principles which should guide the actions of revolutionaries in similar situations. The first two lines do not just imply criticism of the comrade's refusal to eat with the unjust merchant; they also formulate the lesson to be learned from this failure. The shift from the abstract third person to "du" in the fifth line indicates that the passage is addressed to the audience. The young comrade embodies tendencies common to us all, and we must learn from his failures. It is not enough to be just and good oneself; one must eliminate injustice and meanness from the world. In order to do this, one must be willing to sacrifice one's own integrity and to act ruthlessly or meanly if necessary. To refuse to do so and to maintain one's personal integrity at all costs is represented as a subtle form of egotism (esp. lines 7-9). The young comrade is thus, by implication, condemned for just such selfishness despite his desire to help others, while the agitators who have killed him are by the same token already justified. The ultimate basis of the argument of the passage is the overriding need to change a world which is corrupt and unjust. The wrong done in the course of revolution is
nothing compared to the evils of the status quo and will be more than justified by a better world. The chorus does not, of course, attempt to prove the need for revolution. This is assumed just as Brecht assumes and appeals to a desire to change the world. Such a desire lies beyond reason and grows out of basic values which are just as emotional as those of the young comrade. Thus Brecht, however much he stresses the importance of reason and the dangers of blind emotion, ultimately rests his whole scheme on an emotional commitment to decency and goodness.

The argument of the choral passage is repeated somewhat later by the agitators, who use it to explain and justify their killing of the young comrade:

Also beschlossen wir: jetzt
Abzuschneiden den eigenen Fuß vom Körper.
Furchtbar ist es, zu töten.
Aber nicht andere nur, auch uns töten wir, wenn es nottut
Da doch nur mit Gewalt diese tösende Welt zu ändern ist, wie
Jeder Lebende weiß.
Nicht vergönnt, nicht zu töten. Einzig mit dem Unbeugbaren Willen, die Welt zu verändern,
begründeten wir
Die Maßnahme.

(p. 348)

The agitators try to show us that it was as difficult for them to carry out the measure as it was for the young comrade to tolerate or appear to tolerate suffering and injustice. They compare the killing to an injury inflicted to their own body (line 2) and reinforce this by declaring
their willingness to sacrifice their own lives if necessary (line 4), thus anticipating their comrade's ultimate consent to his own liquidation. The agitators also stress the fact that revolutionary change can be brought about only by violence. The parallel between this passage and "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es" makes it clear that the problem posed by the liquidation for the agitators is basically the same as the problems faced by the young comrade in his Party work. The difference is that the agitators recognize and accept the necessity of violence, whereas the young comrade fails as a revolutionary because he will not grasp the harsh truths that are expressed in these two passages. Thus it is clear, I think, that although the case of the young comrade is an extreme one, it illustrates principles involved in all revolutionary work, at least as Brecht saw it. Party critics, of course, refused to accept the problem of violence in the form Brecht presented it as a legitimate one. They saw it as a part of the bourgeois intellectual's struggle to overcome class-determined moral inhibitions and to align himself with the Communist cause.

The desire to change the world and a readiness to employ ruthless methods are not, however, sufficient in themselves. The good Communist must also learn to submit to the judgment of the Party—whether he agrees with it or not. This is emphasized in the second crucial choral passage, "Lob der Partei": 
Denn der Einzelne hat zwei Augen
Die Partei hat tausend Augen.
Die Partei sieht sieben Staaten
Der Einzelne sieht eine Stadt
Der Einzelne hat seine Stunde
Aber die Partei hat viele Stunden.
Der Einzelne kann vernichtet werden
Aber die Partei kann nicht vernichtet werden
(p. 344)

The Party is superior to the single person in every respect—it has broader experience, more knowledge, and is indestructible. The individual should, therefore, accept its judgment and bow to its authority. The agitators also emphasize the need for solidarity even if the Party should err, imploring the young comrade:

Gehe nicht ohne uns den richtigen Weg
Ohne uns ist er
Der falscheste.
Trenne dich nicht von uns!
(p. 344)

This means, of course, that the young comrade would be betraying the Party and erring as a revolutionary by going his own way and starting an uprising even if his analysis of the situation in Mukden were correct and the Party’s wrong.

This seems straightforward enough. These passages would appear to plead for a return to the conception of the individual as a blank leaf upon which the Party writes its orders. But Brecht is, in fact, groping for a more flexible formula. When the young comrade asks who and where the Party is, he receives the following interesting answer from the agitators:
Wir sind sie.
D u und ich und ihr--wir alle.
In deinem Anzug steckt sie, Genosse, und denkt
In deinem Kopf
Wo ich wohne, ist ihr Haus und wo du angegriffen
wirst, da kämpft sie.

(p. 344)

If we take this seriously, then it becomes obvious that something other than blind subordination is called for in the individual. The individual is not just an instrument of the Party, but must be a creative member of it. He must not only defend its interests but also help interpret its policies. At the time of the premature uprising, the other agitators are not acting automatically on orders from Moscow; they, like the young comrade, are trying to understand and deal with the situation in the city. The difference is not that they follow the dictates of the Party while the young comrade goes his own way, but that they base their decision on reason and a respect for the experience of the Party as expressed in Marxist writings, whereas he does not. They do not suggest that the young comrade is wrong to argue with them, but merely that his arguments are inadequate. Even from an orthodox Communist point of view, the problem does not become any simpler when we consider that Communist critics have not only objected to the killing, but have gone so far as to suggest that it is the young comrade who is following the correct line in encouraging and supporting the uprising (even though it is premature) and that the agitators are wrong to oppose him.
The second act of consent, the decision by which the young comrade accepts his own liquidation, does not solve the general question of the relation of the individual to the Party. It does, however, resolve the young comrade's own problem. He has now realized that his uprising was a mistake, and he sees that the Party's work is in danger. By accepting his death, he can enable the agitators to return to their work and can reaffirm both his solidarity with them and his devotion to the revolution:

Er sagte noch: Im Interesse des Kommunismus
Einverstanden mit dem Vormarsch der proletarischen Massen
Aller Länder
Ja sagend zur Revolutionierung der Welt.

(p. 349)

But, as we have seen, the problems involved in consent have become so complex that a simple affirmation of allegiance and even a readiness to give up one's life do not really represent an adequate formula for the individual's relation to the revolutionary movement.

Brecht's views on consent in Die Maßnahme are marked by some ambivalence and uncertainty because his attitude toward the individual is itself uncertain. He clearly sympathizes with the young comrade and respects his idealism, but he just as clearly distrusts his reliability as a revolutionary. This creates a delicate problem because the comrade's idealistic hatred of suffering and
Injustice is both the root of his unreliability and the basis of his commitment to Communism. Without destroying these fundamental values, Brecht tries to show that the revolutionary struggle demands a form of self-sacrifice and self-discipline which will hold these values in abeyance while retaining them as an ultimate goal for the time when the revolutionary reorganization of society has taken place. Only then can genuine social justice be achieved at all. This self-sacrifice, which is one aspect of consent, is formulated in the passage "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es" and illustrated in the agitators' controversial measure. Brecht is somewhat less successful in showing just what the proper relation of the individual to the Party ought to be. This is the other aspect of consent. The scene called "Die Auslöschung" demands a total subordination of the individual, but the subsequent action shows that this is close to impossible and perhaps even undesirable (though it is not explicitly repudiated). The agitators and the chorus grope for a more adequate and flexible formula without really finding one. Brecht obviously still advocates the ascendancy of the Party over the individual, but recognizes, at the same time, that the Party is ultimately made up of individual men and women who must be something more than automatons.

One way out of this difficulty would be to emphasize the identity of interest and outlook of the individual
and the Party by stressing the class character of Communism and the revolutionary struggle. If the typical Communist were a class-conscious worker and the Party were regarded as the leader of the working class' struggle, then the conflict that exists in Die Maßnahme would not so readily arise.

In Die Maßnahme this simple identity of interest between exploited worker and Party member does not exist. The reason for this is that the Party, with its agitators sent by Moscow, acts as an outside agent in China. It tries to organize the workers, but its efforts are not a spontaneous expression of their struggle. This is, no doubt, in the best tradition of socialist internationalism. At the same time, Brecht has created a situation that bears a strong resemblance to that of the left-wing intellectual who comes from the middle class and makes the cause of the workers his own. The agitators are Europeans among Chinese, and, no matter how much they try to adopt the outlook of Chinese, they remain strangers. Part of the process of consent in "Die Auslöschung" is aimed at overcoming this difficulty. The agitators are told to become "Chinesen, geboren von chinesischen Müttern, gelber Haut, sprechend in Schlaf und Fieber chinesischt" (p. 326). Since it is not possible for Europeans to become Chinese in the literal sense of these words, this passage must be read either as deliberate hyperbole or as a symbolic description of the
middle-class radical's acceptance of the proletarian outlook. How much the agitators are outsiders is especially clear in the case of the young comrade. He watches the barge-towing coolies with the sort of surprised shock with which a northern college student might view black sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta. And he has equally little notion how to deal with them. The motivation of the agitators, like that of the middle-class radical, is quite different from the motivation of the workers they are trying to help. They are not fighting their own battles but someone else's. A worker becomes a revolutionary because he and his family are exploited and deprived. A middle-class radical becomes a revolutionary because of a sense of justice and moral outrage (combined, no doubt, with a study of Marxism). This is exactly the case of the young comrade. He tells us that it was the "sight of injustice" ("der Anblick des Unrechts," p. 323) that made him a revolutionary.

The problem of the left-wing intellectual was, of course, very much on Brecht's mind in these years because it was his own problem too. I would not like to suggest that *Die Maßnahme* is a simple allegory on the problems of the radical intellectual. Yet, I think Brecht saw a real parallel between his personal situation and that of the professional revolutionary. Like the middle-class radical, the revolutionary must be motivated by more than self-interest or class consciousness. A certain idealism is
essential because the sacrifices demanded of the revolutionary are often so great. At least so Brecht saw it, and he later gave the altruism of such men special praise in *Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe*:

Keiner von diesen da
hat nur für sich gesorgt.
Sondern für fremder Leute Brot
liefen sie ruhlos.

Obgleich sie
um geringen Lohn arbeiten und für viele nützlich sind
lebt keiner von ihnen seine Jahre zu Ende

(Versuche 13-19, p. 90)

Thus, Brecht has good reason to stress the importance of a basic emotional and moral commitment to transforming an unjust world. No matter how suspicious he may be of moral idealism, he wishes to redirect and discipline it, never to eliminate it.

To instill in us the attitudes of good revolutionaries is the goal of *Die Maßnahme*. Brecht hopes to realize it by showing us the mistakes of the young comrade and suggesting how they might have been avoided. His death is presented as an unfortunate necessity, unavoidable under the circumstances but by no means inevitable. If the young comrade had understood what the play tries to teach us, the need for such a measure would never have arisen.
I would now like to consider an interpretation of the play, which, if correct, would force a radical re-evaluation of the didactic effect Brecht clearly intended the play to have. It is the contention of Reinhold Grimm, who has written the most stimulating and perceptive analysis of Die Maßnahme,¹³ that the play is a tragedy in which the young comrade is faced with an irreconcilable conflict between two absolutes: the need and desire to give immediate help to suffering individuals, and the need to better the lot of a whole people or of mankind generally through the Communist revolution. These two ends prove, in the course of the play, to exclude each other. If the young comrade helps the suffering individual, he betrays the revolution, as the agitators demonstrate; if he were to follow the directives of the Party and set his eye only on the final goal, then he would have to accept the toleration of misery and injustice for an indefinite period of time.

Grimm sums up his analysis as follows:

_Was geschieht denn eigentlic\textsuperscript{h} in Brechts Lehrstück der kommunistischen Parteipraxis, das sich so weit von aller herkömmlichen Dramatik zu entfernen scheint? Doch nichts anderes, als daß ein Mensch durch Charakteranlage und Zwang der Umstände, mithin durch ein unauflöschliches ineinander von Freiheit und Notwendigkeit in einen Widerspruch zweier absoluter Werte gerät, der ausweglos ist. Beide Werte treten als unabweisbare ethische Forderungen an ihn heran: nie kann er die eine erfüllen, ohne gegen die andere zu verstoßen; er muß daher schuldig werden, wie er sich auch entscheiden mag. So wird der Tod zur einzigen Lösung aus dem unheilbaren Zwiespalt._

("Ideologische Tragödie," p. 402)
Such a situation, says Grimm, is tragic in the strict classical sense of Goethe and Schiller; and he suggests that Die Maßnahme is not, to be sure, an Ideallistic tragedy, but an ideological one. Such a view has, as he points out, the most far-reaching consequences for the didactic nature of the play:

If Grimm is correct, in short, Die Maßnahme must fail almost completely as a didactic piece. I submit that the play is not a tragedy in the sense proposed. Grimm notes that Brecht, at least later, rejected the very concept of tragedy and tried, not always with complete success, to avoid the presentation of insoluble conflicts in his later work. I would like to suggest that in the present work, too, Brecht does his best to evade the tragic possibilities of his material.

Is the young comrade really caught in the conflict of two absolute values, as Grimm claims? Let us look at the objective situation first. The young man wishes to give immediate help to the suffering and at the same time
wishes to work for the ultimate revolution. The two goals, according to Grimm, are incompatible. But are there, in fact, two roads open to the young comrade? One of the things the agitators try to show is that immediate alleviation of distress is largely or entirely impossible. To attempt to give such help, as the young comrade does, is, according to them, to surrender to illusion. This is shown most clearly in the scene with the barge towers. The comrade, not satisfied with encouraging the coolies to demand better working conditions as the Party has told him to do, tries to give immediate assistance to those coolies who are too weak for the work and who stumble under the lash. The result, however, is not what he intended, for he succeeds only in making the foreman suspicious and is driven off. Even the coolies, rather than being grateful, find him ridiculous and laugh at him. Asked by the chorus if it is then not right to help the exploited worker, the agitators answer tersely:

Er hat ihm nicht geholfen, aber er hat uns gehindert, Propaganda zu treiben. . . .

(p. 332, my emphasis)

The same thing is true in the case of the premature uprising, which causes the split with the Party. The young comrade wanted to act because the lot of the workers was intolerable; but they gain absolutely nothing from it, and the Party again suffers a setback. There is no real way to help the miserable short of the true, long-range, Communist
revolution. Brecht thus shows that the young comrade is never faced with a choice between two genuine alternatives, that is, between furthering the revolution and giving immediate help to the suffering and exploited. The choice is an illusion, because such immediate help is represented as impossible. Brecht here somewhat exaggerates the Communist position, which is that charity does not fundamentally alter and improve the workers' lot, not that it is impossible; but the very fact that he does exaggerate suggests that he did not wish to put the young comrade in a tragic dilemma.

Nevertheless, the conflict Grimm has in mind could still exist at a subjective level, in the heart and mind of the young comrade. To be a tragic figure he would have to experience the agony and despair of desiring to help the suffering and at the same time of desiring to further the revolution, only to discover that it was impossible to do both. But this is just what the young comrade does not do. Instead, he splits, as it were, into two quite different personalities, one dominated by emotion and the other by reason. The young man who tries to help the coolies and refuses to tolerate injustice even temporarily does not suffer from such a conflict; he is simply carried away by his feelings and loses sight of the revolution altogether or refuses to recognize that he is no longer pursuing it. His failures, of course, force him to recognize that his
efforts were mistaken, but it is here that Brecht does something odd if we are expecting a tragedy from him. We are never shown those moments of potential tragic conflict when the young comrade realizes that what he wished to do was impossible, those moments when he tries to come to terms with himself. The agitators simply report that the young comrade came to his senses, recognized his error, and promised to do better. No conflict remains, because each time he accepts the Party position completely and apparently makes no effort to defend his actions (pp. 332-333 and p. 340). I would agree with Grimm that there is, or rather could be, a tragic conflict here. But I think Grimm fails to recognize the extent to which it remains latent, and he does not see what care Brecht takes to prevent it coming into the open.

Only the episode of the premature uprising seems at first to involve the awareness of a tragic dilemma. The passage already quoted (page 185 above), in which the young comrade rejects the classical teachings of Marxism because they do not call for immediate assistance to those in need, seems, at last, to show his agonized awareness of an irreconcilable conflict. However, a careful reading of the comrade's argument with the agitators shows that this is not quite correct. The young comrade is in conflict with the Party, and this conflict certainly causes him pain. Yet, his primary loyalty has never been to the Party but always to the revolution. When first introduced, he says, "Mein
Herz schlägt für die Revolution," and it is only because of this commitment that he can then go on to say that he is "für die Maßnahmen der kommunistischen Partei" (p. 323). This primary loyalty is never questioned and never endangered in his fight with the Party. He is not, as he sees it, facing a choice between helping the suffering and advancing the revolution. Carried away by his feelings at the sight of so much misery, he becomes convinced that the time for the revolution has come. Party policy is, in his eyes, simply wrong, and he rejects it because it will neither help the people nor further the revolution. He says quite clearly:

Well ich recht habe, kann ich nicht nachgeben. Mit meinen zwei Augen sehe ich, daß das Elend nicht warten kann. (p. 344)

He is certainly determined to act humanely at all costs, but he remains convinced, however mistakenly, that in so doing he acts as a good revolutionary. There is no tragic conflict because he has no doubt whatsoever what he must do:

Hier ist eine Aktion. Ich stelle mich an ihre Spitze. Mein Herz schlägt für die Revolution. Hier ist sie. (p. 345)

The conflict Grimm professes to find is and remains only a potential one. Even when the moment of truth comes for the young comrade and he is forced to recognize that his uprising was a mistake, we are given no indication that he faces his dilemma squarely. Brecht simply evades the problem by not
showing us his reaction. The agitators report only that when he realized what had happened he said, "Wir sind verloren" (p. 346). This can easily refer to the situation of the Party and need not be taken as an expression of tragic despair. For the rest, the young comrade now once again appears to side entirely with the Party and accepts his death in the interests of the revolution without any signs of inner conflict. His death is presented as an unfortunate practical necessity, not as the only "Lösung aus dem unheilbaren Zwiespalt," as Grimm suggests (see above, page 199).

Thus it is clear, I think, that Die Maßnahme cannot be described as a tragedy. It is true that the young comrade is in a situation in which one cannot be charitable and work for the revolution at the same time; this Grimm sees quite correctly. But Brecht has sidestepped the tragic possibilities of this situation in two ways. First, he suggests somewhat unconvincingly that all attempts to give direct relief to the suffering of the exploited are futile and illusory. And, second, he gives the young comrade an artificially compartmentalized personality. The young comrade never says to himself: "simple, direct humanity and revolutionary agitation are incompatible, but I by nature and insight desire both and I cannot sacrifice either my humanity or the revolution without being rent by anguish." He cannot, or will not, face the conflict
directly. Instead, he is either all emotion or all reason, but never both at once. Normal people do not suffer from this sort of dissociation, and Brecht's unwillingness to integrate these aspects of the comrade's personality could he held to weaken the poetic quality of the play.  

There are two main reasons for Brecht's avoidance of the tragic potentialities of his play. One has already been mentioned: the desire not to undercut the didactic effectiveness of the piece, as he certainly would have done if he had suggested that it was impossible for the young comrade to act correctly. The other reason is that Brecht fairly obviously does not believe that the demands of direct humanity and charity have anything like an absolute claim on the individual, as Grimm's interpretation requires. As we saw, it is the essential burden of the passage "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es" that personal integrity and goodness are not absolute values but must be subordinated to the revolutionary transformation of the world. In so far as the young comrade does not understand this, he is in error; and his tragedy, if it had been realized, would necessarily have been a private one without general validity. Brecht did not believe that the conflict he faced involved a choice between two absolute values. Indeed, the passage "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es" is a polemic against those who regard humaneness and moral purity as an absolute value. From his own point of view
Brecht was quite right to play down the young comrade's "tragedy" even at the expense of psychological realism, which, in any case, is not what Brecht is striving for.

The agitators are faced with a problem very similar to that of the young comrade. They must choose between helping the young man escape and returning to their revolutionary work. Indeed, their choice is even more radical because they face the prospect not merely of tolerating wrong but of actually committing it in killing their comrade. This, too, is a potentially tragic situation, but, as Grimm points out, no real conflict arises for the agitators. However little they relish the killing, there is never any doubt that the revolution takes absolute precedence over everything else for them. It is clearly their position which represents Brecht's own views and which is held up as the example from which we are to learn.

It was suggested above that Brecht comes close to presenting the young comrade as a split personality, and it is interesting to note that in two later major plays, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Herr Puntilla und sein Knecht Matti, he was to make interesting and effective use of such a split. The difference is that the split, which is slurred over in Die Maßnahme in order to conceal a problem, is used in the later plays to draw explicit attention to a human and social dilemma and to demonstrate its nature with particular clarity. Unlike the young comrade, Shen Te in Der gute
Mensch is fully aware of her problem, the impossibility of being good and surviving with her child. She suffers intensely from the need to call upon her ruthless, imaginary cousin, Shui Ta, in order to maintain the material basis for a decent existence. By dissociating the two sides of Shen Te's nature, Brecht does not obscure the basic conflict (as happens in Die Maßnahme), but dramatizes it in order to convince us of the necessity of transforming society so as to make the goodness of a Shen Te a viable way of life. For Puntila the split between his generous, drunken personality and his hard-driving, ruthless, sober one is not so much a means of surviving in this world (as Shen Te's split is). Rather, it is a means of evading a full recognition of the mean realities of being a rich land owner. Whether he is drunk or sober at a given moment he suppresses one aspect of himself, either his tough-minded realism or his warmth and generosity. However, Puntila's refusal to confront the incompatibility of the two sides of his nature is not a flaw in the play, because it is exploited for comic purposes and makes the audience all the more aware of what Puntila never quite grasps about himself and about the demands put on him by his position as a landlord.

I would now like to examine more closely the didactic form of Die Maßnahme, in order to see what attitude Brecht adopts toward his audience and his learner-performers.
In a didactic play like Die Maßnahme the role assigned to the spectator (or performer) in the learning process will necessarily reflect and perhaps even reveal what the author believes about the relation of the individual and society. Is the learner encouraged to be independent and critical or to be passive and unquestioning; does the author appeal to his reason or to his emotions? A play like Das Badener Lehrstück is quite straightforward in this respect. In it Brecht advocates the subordination of the individual and gives the piece, appropriately enough, the form of a religious initiation or indoctrination. The audience, which identifies with the fliers because both must learn consent, could take up a critical attitude only if the play provoked it to opposition or outright rejection. If the audience learns what Brecht wishes it to, it will do so "plausibly" and passively. The original Jasager encourages much the same unquestioning acceptance of consent. The two revised versions, Der Jasager and Der Neinsager, on the other hand, stimulate a thoughtful and reflective attitude in the audience, which—at least within certain limits—is encouraged to look for its own solution. In Die Maßnahme the situation is considerably more complex than in any of these plays. The form is ambiguous; it seems at first to encourage an independent attitude in the spectator, but ends by making him fall into line and accept the arguments offered to justify the "measure."
Die Maßnahme has the form of a rudimentary court scene. The control chorus functions as a tribunal which is asked to pass judgment on the killing and which must hear the evidence of the case in order to do so. These arrangements remain informal in the sense that we are never told exactly whom the chorus represents, what authority it has over the agitators, or what the consequences of its judgment will be. Despite this informality, though, certain expectations are clearly raised. We expect the chorus to analyze the facts of the case and reach a well-founded judgment on the measure. From the beginning, the audience quite naturally tends to identify with the chorus: like the chorus, it hears of the killing for the first time at the beginning of the play and must learn the attendant circumstances from the agitators' report. Like the chorus, the audience will quite naturally want to decide whether the liquidation was justified or not, and to do this it must consider the evidence that is presented on stage. Brecht further encourages this identification by having the chorus formulate certain questions about the young comrade's mistakes which would naturally occur to the spectators too. In this connection it must be remembered that Brecht did not think that an audience was essential to his Lehrstücke; they were to be instructive to the performers themselves. In Die Maßnahme it was primarily in the chorus that the performers were to learn because the chorus enabled the
most extensive participation and was to be sung by workers' choral groups. This was especially clear at the première, where the parts of the agitators were played by professional actors, and where, as a result, it was clear that the workers' chorus also represented a sort of audience.

In his notes, Brecht remarks:

Die Vorführenden (Sänger und Spieler) haben die Aufgabe, lernend zu lehren. Da es in Deutschland eine halbe Million Arbeiterängler gibt, ist die Frage, was im Singenden vorgeht, mindestens so wichtig wie die Frage, was im Hörenden vorgeht.

(p. 354, my emphasis)

Die Maßnahme assumes an audience (or performers) who are either Communists or sympathetic to the Communist cause. The chorus, however, does not just represent the rank and file of the Party. It also gives the impression of representing the authority of the Communist Party itself. The term Kontrollchor, although it is deliberately undefined, certainly tends to give this impression, as does the fact that the agitators report to it after their mission and ask for its judgment. Moreover, the chorus on occasion (particularly in the longer choral passages) speaks with the authority and understanding of the Party, giving praise and formulating the basic principles by which the case is to be judged.17

The form of a court scene would seem to give Die Maßnahme all the characteristics of the epic theater, as it was envisioned by Brecht in these years. It seems an
excellent illustration of some of the most important tendencies listed in the well-known tabular confrontation of traditional and epic theater from the notes on Mahagonny:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dramatische Form des Theaters</th>
<th>Epische Form des Theaters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 handelnd</td>
<td>erzählend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Der Zuschauer steht mittendrin miterlebt</td>
<td>Der Zuschauer steht gegenüber studiert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ermöglicht ihm Gefühle</td>
<td>erzwingt von ihm Entscheidungen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Suggestion</td>
<td>Argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 der unveränderliche Mensch</td>
<td>Der veränderliche und verändernde Mensch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Versuche 1-12, pp. 103-104, my numbering and order)

The agitators report a story rather than dramatizing it (as in 1). The audience is prevented from identifying with the young comrade and instead observes his behavior and studies his mistakes (2). The audience, like the chorus, is encouraged to reach its own conclusion on the measure (3). Psychological and emotional nuances are neglected in order to bring out the basic structure of the incidents. The scenes thus become steps in an argument (3 and 4). The task of man is to change the world through revolution, and to do this he must learn to control his own behavior and to direct his feelings (5). Brecht's stated purpose—"politisch unrichtiges Verhalten zu zeigen und dadurch richtiges Verhalten zu lehren"18—is also entirely in the
spirit of epic theater and suggests a critical, intellectually independent audience.

The fact is, however, that the play disappoints almost all the expectations raised by the use of the court hearing as the basic model of the action. The epic qualities just discussed are only partially realized. We expect, I think, that the chorus will analyze all the evidence presented to it and reserve its judgment until all the relevant questions have been weighed. Instead, the chorus gradually abdicates its responsibility as a tribunal, acceding more and more to the views of the agitators until, in the end, it gives virtually unquestioning approval to the liquidation. The most striking point in this process is marked by the closing lines of the choral passage "Andere die Welt, sie braucht es." The passage occurs after the third failure of the young comrade, his refusal to deal with the rice merchant, but before either his death or the actions which make it necessary have been presented. The chorus tells the agitators:

Lange nicht mehr hören wir euch zu als Urteilende. Schon Als Lernende.

(p. 340)

The chorus no longer regards itself as a tribunal, but as a group privileged to learn from the experience of the agitators. It is not the emphasis on learning that surprises us here, but the fact that the chorus apparently sees an
opposition between judging and learning. By stating that they are no longer judges, but learners, the members of the chorus do not just express respect for the practical experience of the agitators, but they also suggest that the validity of the agitators' analysis of this experience should not be questioned. As "learners" they are ready to be passive and uncritical. The chorus, which spoke with the authority of the Party in that part of the passage analyzed earlier, now suddenly speaks with the modesty and self-effacement appropriate before a higher authority.

Up until this point the chorus has entered into discussion with the agitators about the young comrade's mistakes, but these discussions have never been long or searching. The chorus asks a question, which the agitators answer briefly and with authority. The first instance concerns the comrade's attempt to help the barge towers:

**DER KONTROLLCHOR:**
Aber ist es nicht richtig, zu unterstützen den Schwachen
Wo immer er vorkommt, ihm zu helfen
Dem Ausgebeuteten, in seiner täglichen Mühsal
Und der Unterdrückung!

**DIE VIER AGITATOREN:**
Er hat ihm nicht geholfen, aber uns hat er gehindert,
Propaganda zu treiben im unteren Stadtteil.

**DER KONTROLLCHOR:**
Wir sind einverstanden.

(p. 332)

One cannot help feeling that this is a little perfunctory. Why, one would like to ask, could help for the exploited
not be combined with revolutionary propaganda? The two subsequent discussions are still shorter; the chorus' questions become more hesitant while the agitators speak with greater authority. The third and last, which takes place after the comrade's refusal to eat with the merchant, can scarcely be called a discussion at all:

DER KONTROLLCHOR:
Aber ist es nicht richtig, die Ehre zu stellen
über alles?

DIE VIER AGITATOREN:
Nein.

(p. 340)

But it is not so much the inadequacy of these discussions that surprises us—a short piece does demand a great economy of means. What surprises us is, rather, that these discussions cease at the very point where they should start in earnest. It is the killing of the comrade and the events which make his death necessary that constitute the real problem; it is these that should be fully and critically considered. Up to the end of the scene with the cotton merchant the chorus is perhaps in a position to conclude that the young man was a most inadequate agitator, but as yet they have no evidence whatsoever to indicate that the agitators were justified in killing him. (The killing, it should be remembered, is not presented as the purging of an unreliable Party member but as a practical necessity.) Nevertheless, from this point to the end of the report the chorus ceases to think critically and
contents itself with expressing sympathy for and approval of the agitators. Just before the liquidation itself is described, the chorus assures them:

Erzählt weiter, unser Mitgefühl
ist euch sicher.
Nicht leicht war es, zu tun, was richtig war.
Nicht ihr spracht ihm sein Urteil, sondern
Die Wirklichkeit.  

(p. 348)

By the end of the play the chorus' approval is such a matter of course and the measure itself sufficiently beyond criticism that the closing choral passage makes no direct mention of the young comrade at all, but limits itself to expressing general praise of the agitators' work. By clear implication, of course, the chorus declares itself "einerverstanden" with the liquidation of the young comrade:

Und eure Arbeit war glücklich
ihr habt verbreitet.
Die Lehre der Klassiker
Das ABC des Kommunismus
Den Unwissenden Belehrung über ihre Lage
Den Unterdrückten das Klassenbewußtsein
Und den Klassenbewußten die Erfahrung der Revolution.
Und die Revolution marschiert auch dort
Und auch dort sind geordnet die Reihen der Kämpfer
Wir sind einerverstanden mit euch.  

(p. 350)

These words emphasize once more the decisive importance of advancing the revolution, and, by implication, they subordinate the question of the liquidation to higher considerations. By deliberately echoing the opening words of the play ("Eure Arbeit war glücklich, auch in diesem Lande / Marschiert die Revolution. ...." p. 322), the chorus also reminds us that we have known from the beginning that the
agitators' mission was successful. But only now is the full significance of this fact apparent: namely, that the revolutionary cause justifies whatever measures are taken to ensure the success of the mission. The chorus goes on to conclude with a general summation of the qualities necessary to transform the world:


(p. 350, italicized in original)

This is a generalization of what we have learned from the whole report, from the young comrade's various mistakes as much as from the measure itself. As a result, the question as to whether it is permissible to kill a comrade in the interests of the revolution is placed into context as merely one aspect of the larger problem of the struggle for a Communist world.

This gradual surrender by the chorus of its responsibility as a Party tribunal to deliver a judgment is important primarily for its effect on the didactic character of Die Maßnahme. The listener and the learning performer are clearly intended to follow the lead of the chorus and to accept the justification given by the agitators as a correct analysis of the problem. Brecht's attitude toward his audience is ambivalent. He clearly
wishes to arouse its interest in revolutionary problems and to start it thinking about them. He wants the audience to learn correct revolutionary behavior from the comrade's mistakes. However, although he arouses the critical interest of his audience, he obviously does not trust its capacity to think through the problems to a satisfactory conclusion. He feels the need to guide it to the correct Communist answers. At the same time, he wishes to conceal, at least partially, the extent to which he is molding its attitudes. The reason, of course, is clear. Epic theater, as conceived by Brecht, is political, and it is Marxist, but it aims at creating a critical, active body of spectators. Passive indoctrination is quite alien to its professed spirit. Although Die Maßnahme comes closer in form to epic theater than any other Lehrstück, independent reflection and passive learning are joined in it in an uneasy partnership in which the passive elements predominate more and more as the piece progresses.

An incident in the last section of the play illustrates this quite clearly. The agitators have just told of their decision to kill the young comrade and to throw him into a lime pit. They then turn to the chorus and audience and ask them to think of a better solution:

Fünf Minuten im Angesicht der Verfolger
Dachten wir nach über eine
Bessere Möglichkeit.
Auch Ihr denkt jetzt nach über
Eine bessere Möglichkeit.

(p. 348)
There is a short pause before the agitators continue their story. On the face of it this looks like a typical technique of the epic theater to make the audience think about the problem. In fact, it is really a challenge which can be met only by embarrassed silence and tacit agreement. The reason is that the audience is asked, quite artificially, to reflect on the problem under the same sort of time pressure that the agitators themselves experienced. This paralyzes rather than encourages thought. It runs, furthermore, exactly counter to the demands of epic theater, since the spectator is being asked here to experience a particular situation in the same way as the protagonists, just as in traditional drama, instead of being encouraged to study it more objectively. ("Der Zuschauer steht mittendrin, miterlebt—Der Zuschauer steht gegenüber, studiert": Versuche 1-12, p. 104.) Two different questions are deliberately confused in the process: whether the agitators did their best under difficult circumstances, and whether they actually did the right thing.

Die Maßnahme is not the only instance of a departure from the critical spirit of epic theater. Brecht's distrust of his audiences in these years and his consequent desire to guide their reflections is shown very clearly in an unusual suggestion made in his notes on Die Mutter, written a year or two after Die Maßnahme:
Um das "Versinken" des Zuschauers, das "freie" Assozieren zu bekämpfen, können im Zuschauerraum kleine Chöre plaziert werden, welche ihm die richtige Haltung vormachen, ihn einladen, sich Meinungen zu bilden, seine Erfahrung zu Hilfe zu rufen, Kontrolle zu üben.

(Versuche 13-19, p. 232)

The expressions "sinking" and "'Free' association" betray something close to contempt for the spontaneous reflections of the spectator. The whole idea of placing trained choruses among the audience shows how unclear the line is between encouraging people to think and telling them what to think. Finding oneself next to such a chorus in the theater would be an extremely intimidating experience.

Brecht did not need to make such a suggestion for Die Maßnahme because the play itself contains choral passages whose function it is to comment on the action and guide the attitudes of the listeners. They are an epic device in so far as they interrupt and comment on the action, but quite contrary to the spirit of epic theater when they go on to dictate the audience's attitudes. It has already been noted that the chorus assumes the voice of the Party in such passages. The sort of learning process Brecht envisages is suggested in his notes to the play:

Beid den Stücken "Lob der USSR," "Lob der Illegalen Arbeit," "Ändere die Welt: sie braucht es," "Lob der Partei" wurden der Musik Theorien überliefert. Es handelte sich darum, den Chören nicht zu gestatten "sich auszudrücken," also waren Modulationen in der Tonstärke vorsichtig anzuwenden und auch melodische Buntheit zu
The manner in which the passages are sung is to determine the way in which the performers and listeners learn from them. The singers are not to be permitted to express themselves (they are not the Party) but are to become a vehicle for the expression of the Party's principles. The passages have a disciplinary function ("organisatorischen Charakter") and are to mold the attitudes and emotions of the performers and listeners. If the intended didactic effect is to be achieved, a state of mind equivalent or analogous to consent must be achieved. This is to be attained by having the singers employ their full resources without reserve: they are to sing "mit voller Stimmstärke unter Anstrengung."

This phrase belies Brecht's curious claim that these choral passages contain primarily "theories," when, in fact, they are clearly to be sung in a highly emotional way. It is as if he were unwilling to admit to himself how far he was from appealing to reason alone. The passages do not express personal feelings but try to arouse and organize the emotions of the singers and the listeners. Personal emotions such as those which endangered the young comrade's work are here transformed into impersonal, collective passions directed to the achievement of a common revolutionary goal.
The passages in praise of the USSR and of illegal work for the Party obviously do not contain "theories" in any sense of the word. Their function is to reinforce basic attitudes: the socialists' pride in the one country to have accomplished the revolution and their admiration for those, like the agitators, who are in the front line of the Communist struggle. The passages are intended to arouse feeling, not to stimulate thought. Even the last two passages, "Ändere die Welt" and "Lob der Partei," which are the only ones containing arguments that could be given logical formulation, have a rhetorical form that appeals more to emotion than reason. Furthermore, in "Ändere die Welt" the argument in favor of accepting unpleasant or "immoral" means is based, as we saw, on an emotional appeal to the desire to change an evil world and not on logic or "theory." Thus, the emotional character of these passages is not due simply to Brecht's distrust of the audience's capacity to reach the right conclusions without guidance. He obviously realized that rational argument alone is likely to be ineffective in molding or reinforcing people's basic values. Since he felt the need for such persuasion, it is not at all surprising that Die Maßnahme ultimately encourages passive acceptance of the agitators' analysis rather than critical judgment.

Despite his attempt to guide the spectator and to make sure he learned the right thing, Brecht was not happy
with the effect of the play. In his original notes he remarked uneasily that one should not try to derive formulas for political action from it without a knowledge of the ABC of dialectical materialism (Versuche 1-12, p. 354). This was probably directed against bourgeois indignation at the liquidation, since the remark was accompanied by a terse quotation from Lenin: "Unsere Sittlichkeit leiten wir aus den Interessen des proletarischen Klassenkampfes ab." In another brief note, apparently written for Stücker after the war, Brecht indicates that he would not permit performances of the work and tries to explain why:

Der Stücker schreiber hat Aufführungen der Maßnahme" immer wieder abgelehnt, da nur der Darsteller des Jungen Genossen daraus lernen kann und auch er nur, wenn er einen der Agitatoren dargestellt und im Kontrollchor mitgesungen hat. (Stücker, V, 276)

It is hard to take this at face value, since it is more than doubtful that Brecht ever believed that one can learn from a role only if one performs it oneself. When he was writing the Lehrstücke, his pedagogical theory never went this far, even at its most mechanical. By the time he wrote his mature plays and formulated the moderate and balanced views on epic theater found in Kleines Organon für das Theater, he most certainly did not believe anything of the sort. Brecht seems to be trying to express something he did not wish to say openly. What might this be? Brecht is particularly concerned with the young comrade, and says that
only the person who performs this role can learn from the play, and then only if certain conditions are met. Now, strictly speaking, there is no "Darsteller des Jungen Genossen"; there are only four agitators, who, taking turns, demonstrate his behavior to the chorus. Was this, then, Brecht's way of saying that one can only learn from the play if one identifies primarily with the young comrade? One can only try to read between the lines, and my own feeling is that Brecht, grown older and wiser, had come to realize the dangers of the sort of consent he had advocated in Die Maßnahme. For someone who, like the young comrade, is too inclined to give direct emotional expression to his humanness and kindliness, the play can be instructive if he learns to see the problems of revolution from the more hardheaded, strategical point of view of the agitators and the Party. But, Brecht seems to say, someone who does not identify with the young comrade will not learn from the play. Or will he learn the wrong thing? The killing of the young comrade is tolerable only if the agitators turn to it in anguish and sorrow as a last resort. But they are so sure of the necessity of the liquidation that they do not really experience any conflict. Is there not a danger that once one is persuaded of the absolute necessity of such a measure one will come to regard qualms and humane regrets as superfluous, possibly even undesirable? If a man's revolutionary commitment is not based on a deep and genuine humanity, then
Die Maßnahme might merely encourage a blind discipline and, ultimately, the corruption of the more Idealistic Communist goals. It is unfair to Brecht's play to suggest, as Martin Esslin does, that it anticipates the political show trials of the Stalinist era in all their details; it does not. But it is fair to suggest that the play could be easily misunderstood to encourage the sort of corrupt, ruthless expediency that is a danger inherent in a totalitarian movement such as Communism. I suspect that Brecht, who remained a Communist even though he was acquainted with the abuses of Stalinism, withdrew Die Maßnahme from the stage because it could be interpreted as supporting such corruption. His cautious, and even deliberately enigmatic, note seems to me to point in this direction.
NOTES, CHAPTER VII

1 See Brecht's notes to the play (Versuche 1-12, p. 351).
2 Ernst Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 376.
3 See Martin Esslin, Brecht, p. 378.
5 In Bertolt Brecht, The Jewish Wife and Other Short Plays, trans. Eric Bentley, pp. 75-108. A note on pp. 159-160 gives data on the text.
6 Die Maßnahme in Versuche, Heft 4 (Berlin: Gustav Kiepenhauer Verlag, 1931). All quotations are taken from the reprint of this edition in Versuche 1-12, pp. 322-354.
7 Clearly weak or colloquial uses of the term occur on pp. 322, 325, 328, 332, and 336. The line between such usage and the more technical sense of consent cannot be sharply drawn.
8 Schumacher, pp. 365-367.
9 Thus in a much subtler way the young comrade is portrayed in the same light as the pilot in Das Badener Lehrstück. If Eric Bentley's translation is accurate, then the first version of Die Maßnahme emphasized the unimportance, even worthlessness of the Individual much more strongly than the present one. In his translation (see note 5) the choral passage just quoted ends with the following lines: "But change the world: it needs it! Who are you? Stinking, be gone from The room that has been cleaned! Would that You were the last of the filth which You had to remove!" (p. 97)


11 In Bentley's translation of the earlier version of the play the passage just quoted is lacking and the agitators refer explicitly to Party orders instead (The Jewish Wife and Other Short Plays, p. 99).
12 Schumacher, p. 365, and Alfred Kurella, "Ein Versuch mit nicht ganz tauglichen Mitteln" (quoted in Werner Mittenzweil, Bertolt Brecht, p. 63).


16 "Ideologische Tragödie," pp. 419-420.

17 Werner Mittenzweil identifies the chorus with the revolutionary proletariat (Bertolt Brecht, p. 66). Grimm points out that it speaks both for the Party and for the spectator ("Ideologische Tragödie," pp. 395-396). Brecht himself speaks of a "Parteiengericht" in an undated fragment (Schriften zum Theater, II, 138).

18 Schriften zum Theater, II, 139. From an undated fragment which probably represents a sketch for an introduction to the original performance.

19 Martin Esslin, Brecht, p. 224. The circumstances of the young comrade's liquidation are very different from those of the show trials in the thirties. The comrade's errors are quite real, not false allegations invented by a corrupt Party hierarchy in order to provide a legal pretext for the elimination of men deemed to be unreliable. The comrade's death is not a punishment for real or imagined crimes, but a practical necessity—the agitators must choose between killing him and giving up their revolutionary work. The young comrade's acceptance of his own death is not the result of brainwashing or torture, as were the confessions made at the show trials, but represents a genuine willingness on his part to let his life be sacrificed to the cause of the revolution. The fact that he has no real free choice may make this decision rather distasteful to us, but this alone does not suffice to make his death an anticipation of the situation which later prevailed in Russia.

20 Brecht remained distrustful of the reaction of non-Communist audiences too. In 1956 he refused a request from Sweden for permission to put on the play, explaining that performances in his experience produced only "moral-ische Effekte für gewöhnlich minderer Art" in the audience (quoted by Werner Mittenzweil, p. 376).
Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe was written in the years 1929-30 and was finished at about the same time as Die Maßnahme; it marks, together with this play, Brecht's emergence as an openly Marxist writer. Unlike the Lehrstücke, it is a full-length stage play and is obviously designed for performance by trained actors in a fully equipped theater. In the last years of the Weimar Republic no commercial theater was willing to produce such a sharply anti-religious, Marxist work. Except in a shortened version broadcast as a radio play in 1932, it was not performed until 1959 when it was produced by Gustav Gründgens in Hamburg.

All the Lehrstücke, even the most complex, are relatively simple and austere in form. One central idea is presented and explored with great singleness of purpose. Die heilige Johanna, on the other hand, is one of the most complex and ambitious works Brecht ever wrote. The action of the play takes place on the eve of the 1929 crash and is set in a Chicago which owes much to Upton Sinclair's novel of social protest, The Jungle. It has an intricate double plot with carefully interwoven strands. There is, first, the story of Pierpont Mauler, who manipulates the
stock market and gains control of the meat packing business after having precipitated a major crisis in which thousands of workers are thrown into the streets. There is also the story of Johanna Dark of the Black Straw Hats (Salvation Army), who wants to relieve the misery of the masses and who believes that this can be done by appealing to the goodness and humanity of men like Mauler. In the end the packers, who have been at each others' throats throughout the play, are ready to co-operate in saving the meat packing business at the expense of the workers. Johanna experiences the shipwreck of her hopes of reforming capitalism and with her dying words advocates the violence she has always abhorred as the only hope for changing the world.

The central thesis of the play is thus that anyone who is really serious about helping the poor must ultimately come to accept revolution as the only effective means of overcoming the evils of capitalism. In the course of this demonstration Brecht casts his net very widely. The play contains an extensive Marxist analysis of the nature of capitalism, in which Brecht attempts to show the stages in the development of one of the recurrent crises, which, according to Marx, are endemic to a capitalist economy. He indicates the basic class character of society and shows how the interests of the proletariat are in irreconcilable conflict with those of the bourgeoisie. But this is not all. Brecht's attack on the Black Straw Hats is a Marxist
critique of religion and its function under capitalism. Finally, the whole play is an extended parody of German classical literature, in which Goethe's Faust and Schiller's Jungfrau von Orleans bear the brunt of the author's displeasure, while other staples of bourgeois culture like Shakespeare and the Bible receive their share of the author's scorn too.

To deal with all the problems raised by the play would go far beyond the scope of this study. I shall concentrate on the process by which Johanna is transformed from a peaceful social reformer into a nascent revolutionary.

The difficulties Johanna faces in the course of this development confront us once more with the problem of consent, although the term itself does not occur in the play. The basic question is the same as that of Die Maßnahme: How does the sensitive and moral individual learn to recognize and accept the ruthless, and, by non-Communist standards, even immoral measures necessary in the revolutionary struggle against capitalism? For Johanna this means agreeing to the use of violence, which she, as a gentle and idealistic person, has always abhorred. The young comrade, although he is an advocate of revolution from the first, finds it impossible to tolerate suffering and injustice in accordance with the strategy of the Party.
The situations in the two plays are somewhat different, but the two people are surprisingly similar. Both are deeply humane idealists who are concerned with helping others and think little of their own interests. Moreover, it is precisely these good qualities which make it so difficult for them to accept the methods of orthodox Communism.

This is not so much a problem of the militant worker as of the middle-class reformer or the left-wing intellectual who becomes part of the Communist movement. It was, of course, Brecht's own problem as well as that of many other intellectuals in the twenties. As noted in the previous chapter, the situation of the young comrade among the Chinese workers is in many ways analogous to that of the middle-class left-wing sympathizer. Now in Die heilige Johanna Brecht takes up the theme again, this time dealing with it openly and explicitly. Although it is hinted that Johanna, like Joan of Arc, is a country girl, she has in fact all the characteristics of a well-bred young woman of the middle class or lower-middle class. She has a more acute and independent mind than the other Black Straw Hats, and she never shares their petty class prejudices. But, though she has great sympathy with the poor and wants to share their sufferings, she can never become one of them any more than the young comrade can become a Chinese coolie.

There is one aspect of the problem of consent which is not dealt with at all in Die heilige Johanna. In Die
Maßnahme, and even more in Das Badener Lehrstück, the proper relation of the individual to the Party or the collective is a central concern. With a party as tightly organized and authoritarian as the Communist Party, this is a problem of considerable importance. In Die heilige Johanna, however, the Party plays only a marginal role and the problem of Johanna's relation to it scarcely arises. Even when she does not deliver an important message concerning the planned general strike, she falls the unemployed and the suffering rather than the Party. Indeed, it is suggested only indirectly that the labor leaders who entrust her with the letter are Communists. Even more important is the fact that it is Johanna who must recognize and come to terms with her own failure. The Party and the workers have nothing more to do with it. Here the play, of course, differs quite radically from Die Maßnahme. There the personal aspect of the comrade's failures is scarcely dealt with; we never see him, as we see Johanna, wrestling with his problems, though his inner struggle must be as severe as hers.

Interestingly enough, this does not mean that Die heilige Johanna is simply more subjectively and psychologically oriented than Die Maßnahme. In Die heilige Johanna, Brecht is more interested in economic conditions, and in Die Maßnahme more in personal values and attitudes than at first seems to be the case. Johanna's emotional
development can only be understood in the context of the social and economic circumstances of late capitalism. Her advocacy of violence is wrung from her by encounters with a reality she only gradually learns to see clearly. We are led from her personal problems to a consideration of the objective conditions of capitalist society. In *Die Maßnahme* an understanding of the basic principles of Marxism (such as we must assume in the young comrade) does not lead automatically to a real consent to the measures of the Communist Party. As a result, consent is made to depend on an inner emotional and moral decision, a readiness to sacrifice oneself and one's personal moral purity in order to achieve a better world.

These differences can be at least partially attributed to the fact that the plays were obviously intended for different types of audience. In *Die Maßnahme* Brecht assumes a certain class consciousness and an understanding of the basic principles of Marxism. It was written to show people already convinced of the need for revolution what sort of discipline and self-sacrifice is required of them. *Die heilige Johanna*, on the other hand, was written for the liberal middle class and perhaps for the democratic socialists among the workers. Brecht does not merely base the action on the Marxist analysis of capitalism; he tries to introduce the audience to the basic facts of political economy and of the class struggle. He
Is writing primarily for those who are close enough to Johanna to sympathize with her desire for reform and her rejection of violence, but who will also be ready to criticize her illusions and to learn step by step, as she does, from her mistakes and disappointments.

Johanna's development has three main stages, each of which must now be examined in some detail. She begins as a religious evangelist with the Black Straw Hats. Distressed by the condition of the workers, she then becomes a social reformer, bent on obtaining help for the poor from the rich and powerful. And, finally, she comes to despair of the possibility of reforming capitalism and advocates its overthrow. It is this transformation of the reformer into a revolutionary which Brecht is most interested in and to which he devotes his greatest attention. At each stage it will be important to note just what Johanna's position is, what values she holds, and how she views the world in which she wishes to realize them.

As a reformer, for example, she sees some things about the condition of the workers under capitalism quite clearly, while still entertaining serious illusions about other aspects of the system. Only by recognizing this changing mixture of insight and error can we come to understand how Johanna's experience forces her to change her socioeconomic view and ultimately even her moral beliefs.

We are first introduced to Johanna as a Black
Straw Hat at a revival meeting in the stockyards. Like a typical fundamentalist, she sees the solution of the workers’ problems in a rejection of material concerns and a renewal of belief in the Word of God. She regards the economic condition of the workers as irrelevant to their true well-being, and tries to persuade them that their misery does not come from Lennox & Co., as they matter-of-factly suggest, but from their lack of understanding for higher things:


(Versuche 13-19, p. 13)

These are religious clichés, and Brecht parodies them unmercifully--sometimes in even more extravagant phrases than those quoted here. Earthly misfortune, Johanna tells the workers, is man’s lot and comes "wie der Regen, den niemand macht" (p. 13), and the solution she offers them is quite simply:

Oben streben und nicht unten streben. Oben sich nach einem guten Platz anstellen und nicht unten.

(pp. 12-13)

Such otherworldliness is, of course, hostile to any meaningful social reform, and Brecht clearly regards the Black Straw Hats as a reactionary organization.
This is made fully clear only later in the play when Paulus Snyder, the major of the Straw Hats, spells out the social function of his organization with great clarity. Speaking to the packers, from whom he hopes to receive financial support, he says:

**Snyder:**
SteCdte Arbel+erU werden euch noch die Fabriken wegnehmen und sagen: wir wollen es wie die Bolschewiken machen und die Fabriken in unsere Hand nehmen, daß jeder arbeiten kann und sein Essen habe. Denn es hat sich herumgesprochen, daß das Unglück nicht entsteht wie der Regen, sondern von etlichen gemacht wird, welche ihren Vorteil davon haben. Wir Schwarzen Strohhüte aber wollen ihnen sagen, daß das Unglück wie der Regen kommt, niemand weiß woher, und daß das Leiden ihnen bestimmt ist und ein Lohn dafür winkt.

**Packherren:**
Warum von Lohn reden?

**Snyder:**
Der Lohn, von dem wir reden, wird nach dem Tode bezahlt. . . . Wir wollen Ihnen auch versprechen, daß die Reichen bestraft werden, und zwar wenn sie gestorben sind.

(pp. 48-49)

However, such conscious corruption—which is not shared by the majority of the Straw Hats and certainly not by Johanna—is not necessary to make otherworldly fundamentalism socially conservative. From a Marxist point of view it is quite sufficient that the Straw Hats remain neutral and stay "above" the fray in order for them to become aligned with the forces supporting the status quo:

**SLIFT:**
Die Hauptsache, wo stehen Sie, Mann? Diesseits oder jenseits der Barrikade?
Snyder:
Die Schwarzen Strohhüte stehen über dem Kampf,
Herr Sift. Also diesseits.
(p. 49)

At the same time Brecht recognizes that a militant
Christian movement like the Salvation Army, which seeks
to alleviate human suffering in addition to spreading the
gospel, has a progressive side as well. This is seen most
clearly in the Straw Hats' "battle song":

Obacht, gib Obacht!
Wir sehen dich, Mann, der versinkt
wir hören dein Geschrei um Hilfe

Sag nicht, es hilft nichts, denn jetzt wird es anders
das Unrecht dieser Welt kann nicht bestehen
wenn alle mit uns kommen und marshieren
und kümmern sich um nichts und helfen gehen.
(pp. 11-12)

The Straw Hats do not in fact make good this progressive
potential, but their song does anticipate unconsciously
another more radical revolutionary movement which will
bring an earthly salvation to the poor:

Denn ihr armen Leute
Ihr seid eine große Armee!
draußen muß es sein noch heute
daß jeder euch beisteh!
Vorwärts marsch! Richt euch! Zum Sturm an das
Gewehr!
Mut, ihr versinkenden Leute, wir kommen, schaut her!

(p. 12)

The Straw Hats are not, of course, thinking of the prole-
tarian revolution, but Brecht obviously wishes his listener
to do so.

At the beginning of the play Johanna combines
within herself both the reactionary and the progressive
elements of the Straw Hats' evangelism, but she combines them with a difference. The otherworldly, fundamentalist teachings appear to be merely a superficial, second-hand faith, uncritically accepted and without any deep intellectual or spiritual roots in her mind and heart. This fundamentalism she easily and painlessly sheds in the course of the play, and Brecht shows no interest in exploring the religious crisis which a development such as she undergoes might involve. Johanna's Christian charity, however, is deep and abiding; her real commitment is to practical Christianity, not to any doctrine. The moral vision of man which underlies her faith remains entirely intact even when Johanna gradually falls away from the church and comes to regard the Straw Hats with suspicion and even repugnance.

Although Johanna does not experience a religious crisis, she does suffer a moral one in the course of the play in dealing with the problem posed by the use of force as an instrument of social change. Her love of mankind makes her a pacifist, and she feels a genuine moral revulsion to violence. It is the deepest and most personal note that she strikes in her first encounter with the poor:

Wle aber wollt Ihr hinaufkommen, oder was Ihr in eurem Unverstand so "hinaufkommen" nennt, durch die roh Gewalt! Als ob Gewalt jemals etwas anderes ausgerichtet hätte als Zerstörung. Ihr glaubt, wenn Ihr euch auf die Hinterbeine stellt, dann gibt es das Paradies auf Erden. Aber ich sage euch: so macht man kein Paradies, so macht man das Chaos.

(pp. 13-14)
Johanna is convinced that violence is raw and bestial and can have only undesirable results. It cannot create a new order; it can only destroy the possibility of all order good or bad.

Brecht, the Marxist, is always very alert to the social implications of moral views. Despite a certain sympathy for Johanna's well-meant pacifism, he remains keenly aware that it necessarily implies a rejection of revolution. Hence, for him, Johanna's opposition to violence can and does become objectively (though not subjectively) reactionary. This negative side of Johanna's position is already suggested in her first speech, in which she declares that the Straw Hats have been drawn to the stockyards by rumors of imminent violence, and that they hope to prevent social upheaval:

\[
\text{damit nicht rohe Gewalt des kurzsichtigen Volkes}
\text{zerschlag das elgene Handwerkszeug und}
\text{zertrampele den eigenen Brotkorb}
\text{wollen wir wieder einführen}
\text{Gott.}
\]

(pp. 10-11)

It must be remembered, of course, that Johanna is not a calculating hypocrite like Major Snyder and that her love of decency and justice is fierce and genuine.

Thus from the very first there is a hidden conflict in Johanna's position. Her desire to help the poor and her abhorrence of violence eventually prove incompatible with each other. It is a long time, however, before she
becomes aware of her dilemma; long after she gives up her evangelism she remains convinced that she can achieve her goals by means of peaceful social reform. It is only after she has failed to obtain any real help for the workers from Mauler and the other packers that she slowly learns why such reform is (and for the Marxist must be) impossible.

The first step of Johanna's development, that from evangelist to social reformer, is quickly accomplished. Watching the workers at the revival meeting and listening to what they say, she soon realizes how inadequate her religious clichés are. She sees that the workers' indifference to the Straw Hats' message has nothing to do with spiritual obtuseness or crass materialism; it is determined by their desperate poverty and by their helpless dependence on the packing houses for even a meager subsistence. They live lives of such misery that they cannot concern themselves with anything beyond the satisfaction of the simplest material wants:

... Das glaubt an nichts mehr, was es nicht in seiner Hand hat—wenns an die Hand glaubt. Lebend von Minute zu Minute unsicher können die sich nicht mehr erheben vom niedersten Boden. Denen ist nur mehr der Hunger gewachsen. Sie berührt kein Lied mehr, zu ihnen dringt in solche Tiefe kein Wort.

(p. 15)

But if a secure job and sufficient food are necessary for a man to be a real human being, then the serious Christian must become a social reformer.
Johanna starts on her path as a reformer by wanting to know plainly and simply who is responsible for the misery that surrounds her, and she decides to seek out Pierpont Mauler, whom the workers have named as the packer principally responsible for their plight.

With this simple step Johanna starts to move away from the Straw Hats, though she is still far from actually breaking with them. The other members of the sect are unable to see as deeply into the workers' condition and remain blinded by typical petty bourgeois prejudices about the working class:

... Faulenzer sind es! Gefräbig und arbeitsscheu und von Geburt an bar jeder höheren Regung!

They warn Johanna against probing too deeply into social and economic questions—there are no answers and asking too insistently can be dangerous:


The Straw Hats' timidity reflects their perilous economic and social position as members of the lower-middle class, which is in constant danger of being pushed down into the proletariat. The warmth the Straw Hats fear to lose is not just spiritual. And it is a tribute to Johanna's
humanity and her strong character that she is able to free herself from the interests of her class in order to pursue what she considers her duty as a Christian and as a human being. It is part of her tragedy that, in the end, she is unable to free herself entirely from these influences. In judging both her achievement and her failure, it will be necessary to remember just how heavily these class pressures weigh in the Marxist view of man and society.

I have spoken of Johanna's struggle to obtain some sort of help for the packing house workers that will alleviate the conditions in which they live as constituting the second, reformist phase of her development. This is, perhaps, nothing more than a convenient oversimplification, for her work as a reformer is not all of a piece. Johanna learns and changes continually throughout this "stage." And, as her efforts to obtain relief for the workers fail, she moves closer to a Communist, or at least a socialist, position even before she takes the final leap of advocating the use of violence to change the world.

The first step Johanna must take is to come to a more adequate understanding of the workers and their needs. She must first find evidence to support and broaden her initial insight that the workers' deprivation stands in the way of their spiritual improvement. She as yet lacks any evidence to refute the bad opinion that her fellow
Straw Hats have of the workers.

Mauler, too, encourages such a negative evaluation of the workers when she first approaches him. He evades any responsibility for their difficulties by suggesting that human nature is fundamentally bad and that the people are responsible for their own misery:

MAULER:

JOHANNA:
Herr Mauler, auf den Schlachthöfen sagen sie, Sie sind schuld an dem Elend.

MAULER:
Mit Ochsen habe ich Mitleid, der Mensch ist schlecht. (p. 23, my emphasis)

According to this view, the spiritual in man—here specifically his moral character—is something primary and hence independent of the circumstances in which he lives. Indeed, these circumstances are actually regarded as a product of man's moral stature or rather his lack of it. If Mauler is correct, then the key to a decent life does not lie in social or political reform but in men's hearts. Mauler continues and tells Johanna:

Die Menschen sind für deinen Plan nicht reif erst muß, bevor die Welt sich ändern kann der Mensch sich ändern. (p. 23)

This belief in the primacy of the mental and spiritual in man is condemned by the Marxist as a form of bourgeois
Idealism; that is why Brecht has it expressed by his leading capitalist.

In order to convince Johanna of the baseness of the workers, Mauler has his broker, Slift, take her to the stockyards to show her how they really behave toward one another. He certainly succeeds in showing her some chilling examples of ruthlessness and hardheartedness among the poor and unemployed. But he does not succeed in convincing her that the poor are naturally corrupt, because she is sufficiently perceptive and compassionate to see beyond the obvious debasement of these people. She recognizes that men who lead such desperate lives must be prepared to stoop to any meanness in order to survive. They would prefer to be decent and kind to each other, but the price of goodness is too high for them to pay. The maimed worker, for example, cannot afford to tell a prospective employee the truth about the unsafe machine which tore off his fingers, if, by lying for the company, he can get it to rehire him. Johanna is shocked to see how the management exploits his need and rewards his badness:

SLIFT:
Hast du gesehen, Johanna, daß Ihre Schlechtigkeit ohne Maß ist?

JOHANNA:
Wie aber beherrschest du Ihre Schlechtigkeit! Wie nützt ihr sie aus!
Siehst du nicht, daß es auf Ihre Schlechtigkeit regnet?
This scene illustrates two basic principles that are fundamental to the play and are worth pointing out more specifically.

The first is that men are formed by the conditions in which they live, and is the direct antithesis of Mauler's professed belief in the primary importance of moral character. Karl Marx was, of course, an economic determinist and believed that man's morality, as well as his various philosophical and religious views, were ultimately generated by the basic relations of production and property which form the economic substructure of society. These basic Produktionsverhältnisse also make the two main classes of capitalist society the workers and the bourgeoisie antagonists whose interests are irreconcilably opposed. For Brecht this is the truth upon which his play is built and the truth which he wishes to demonstrate dramatically, but in this scene he has Johanna recognize only part of the truth. She is able to see that the workers are shaped (and twisted) by their poverty and their desperate need for even a poorly paid job. What Johanna fails to see for the present is that Mauler's actions are also determined by the
nature of capitalism. His behavior is not a result of his moral character, but is determined by the economic conditions in the packing house industry and by his self-interest as an entrepreneur. Not recognizing this, she is led to conclude that the workers' misery is due to the selfishness and indifference of Mauler and the other packers or to some correctable malfunction of the economic system. She recognizes quite clearly in this scene that the workers will become decent human beings only if their living and working conditions are drastically improved, but she does not yet understand that nothing less than a social revolution is necessary (according to Brecht) to change these conditions. The result of this partial insight is that in the next scenes she returns to Mauler and renews with fresh conviction her appeal that he help the workers.

The second principle that this scene makes clear is that human nature is basically good despite the corrupting effect of the social and economic environment. Brecht demonstrates this by having Johanna discover the decency that lies buried in the worst of men. Johanna recognizes that the first impulse of each of the debased workers to whom Sllft introduces her is to behave humanely; only their desperate material need makes them suppress this impulse and act meanly and selfishly. This belief in basic human goodness shows that Brecht's view of human nature is not totally deterministic; for, if man were really nothing but
the product of the conditions in which he lives, then his
goodness as well as his badness would have to be exter-
nally caused. However, Brecht's belief in human goodness
is not incompatible with a considerable measure of social
determinism. This is because he represents goodness as an
unheroic quality which will not assert itself under
adverse conditions in a hostile world, at least not in the
ordinary run of men. Men will not be good if this means
sacrificing their own basic interests. This has two
important consequences. First, it is absurd to demand--
as does Mauler--a moral change in the workers as a neces-
sary precondition for social reform. That is to put the
cart before the horse. Second, once society has been
transformed, and it is no longer necessary to exploit or
take advantage of others in order to live decently, then
man's natural goodness can and will flower. One cannot
find this view of human goodness explicitly formulated in
Marx, but it has certainly become part of the utopian
vision of Communism.5

Only in a few rare individuals is this human good-
ness sufficiently strong to assert itself even in an
unfriendly world and against the promptings of common
sense. As has already been noted, Johanna is such a
person.6 As the play progresses, her advocacy of the
workers' cause alienates her more and more from the Straw
Hats and from Mauler, and she gives up both her material
comforts and her little bit of security in order to join the workers in the cold of the stockyards. Neither self-interest nor any social force impels her to act in this way; what moves her is a genuine concern for decency and for the welfare of others. That in the end she fails shows that she too is human and subject to social and economic pressures, but it does not deprive her of her extraordinary moral stature. And it is this as much as her hypocritical canonization by the packers which makes her into a Saint Joan. However, it is worth noting that Brecht is not so much interested in displaying Johanna's natural goodness as he is in demonstrating that this goodness alone does not suffice to create a better world. In the end, Johanna is forced to recognize that one must call upon quite different qualities if one is to transform the world.

Having seen the poverty of the poor, rather than, as Sllft had hoped, their baseness, Johanna returns from the stockyards determined to show Mauler the misery of the workers and to move him and the other packers to help. As a reformer she gives up her religious fundamentalism, which is incompatible with a serious concern for the material welfare of the workers, but, at least at first, she remains a devout and serious Christian. She makes a bold attempt to translate the language of the Bible into that of the marketplace. For her, Christianity is not a Sunday piety
but must be an integral part of everyday life, including business dealings. She envisions God on the Day of Judgment calling the packers to the last reckoning and demanding of them:

... wo sind jetzt meine Ochsen? Was hab getan mit ihnen? Habt ihr sie auch der Bevölkerung zugänglich gemacht zu erschwinglichen Preisen?

(p. 35)

At this stage of her development Johanna imagines that the interests of the businessman and the demands of the capitalist market are reconcilable with the moral teachings of Christianity. This leads her to the remarkable equation of neighborly love with customer service:

Betrachten Sie doch einmal den Dienst am Nächsten einfach als Dienst am Kunden! Dann werden Sie das Neue Testament gleich verstehen und wie grundmodern das ist, auch heute noch. Service! Was heißt denn Service anders als Nächstenliebe? Das heißt richtig verstanden!

(pp. 36-37)

This sounds ludicrous, as, I am sure, Brecht intended it to—but not because he is trying to make a fool of Johanna. The average Christian keeps his religion and his business life in artificially separate compartments without ever reflecting on the implications of this separation. By having Johanna refuse such an evasion and naively link the ideas of service and neighborly love, Brecht is trying to jolt his audience into an awareness of the incompatibility of capitalist ethics and the social gospel. Johanna has forgotten that, whereas love is altruistic, service is
ultimately a means to make a profit from one's fellows.

In addition to a belief in the reconcilability of capitalism and Christianity, there is another assumption which underlies Johanna's reformist position. This is that the real interests of the workers and the capitalists are in harmony with each other, that both have a similar stake in the smooth functioning of the free market. Unemployment and poverty, she believes, are the result of a malfunctioning of the system, which is due more to the stupidity and blindness of the packers than to economic necessity (p. 36). In this connection, Johanna makes a number of shrewd observations, which are designed to appeal to the good sense and self-interest of the packers. She points out that the conditions in the slums breed revolution and that the poverty of the masses paralyzes the market because so few people have adequate buying power (p. 37). Where she goes wrong is in assuming that the classes are really bound together by common interests, and that society forms an organic whole. Only later, when she is on the verge of disillusionment, does she formulate this earlier assumption clearly. Speaking to the packers, she says:

Ich lauf von Pontius zu Pilatus und mein: wenn ich euch da oben helf, dann ist denen unter euch auch geholfen. Da ist so eine Art Einheit und wird am gleichen Strang gezogen, aber da war ich schön dumm. (p. 51, my emphasis)

But this recognition comes later. For the moment, she still
believes in organic unity and fails to grasp the crucial truth that the structure of capitalist society makes it inevitable that the packers exploit the workers. According to Marx, profit is derived entirely from surplus value produced by the workers and expropriated by the entrepreneur. Brecht does not try to put the matter quite this specifically, but he makes it perfectly clear that, however much the packers may be at each others' throats, they all ultimately survive and flourish at the expense of the workers. The solution of the economic crisis at the end of the play, to which the packers cheerfully sacrifice the interests of the workers, makes this perfectly clear.

The packers, at least for the present, refuse to accept any responsibility for the lot of the workers, and claim to be completely incapable of controlling the economy:

Gegen Krisen kann keiner was!
Unverrückbar über uns
stehen die Gesetze der Wirtschaft, unbekannte.
Wiederkahren in furchtbaren Zyklen
Katastrophen der Natur!

(p. 36)

There is, of course, an element of truth in this for the Marxist; for him, economic crises are inherent in capitalism. At the same time, however, they do not just happen, but are caused by men. Brecht shows how this one is brought about by the manipulations of Mauler, who wishes to make a killing and to expand his hold on the industry. Johanna perceives Mauler's personal responsibility without
grasping the nature of his position within the capitalist system, and hence believes she can get things changed by a direct personal appeal to him. The true Marxist would have no such illusions, because he is convinced that the economic crises of capitalism can be solved, and the lot of the workers improved, only by abolishing the capitalist system altogether.

But this Johanna will not see until the end of the play; and, for the moment, she seems to triumph as a reformer in her attempts to ameliorate the system from within. Mauler is apparently overcome by the sight of the poor whom she has brought with her in order to show him their misery. He offers to buy large quantities of canned meat in order to revive the market and to create work for the unemployed; and a little later he offers, again at Johanna's urging, to buy cattle from the ranchers. She is under the happy illusion that she has helped Mauler to solve an unnecessary economic crisis and thus brought relief to everybody—workers, packers, and ranchers. But, far from being intent on good, Mauler is preparing a first-class financial coup which will create an even more acute crisis. As a result, the meat plants remain closed and the workers are even worse off than before.

When Johanna learns what has happened, she is outraged and bitter. A long, difficult process of disillusionment begins which will eventually lead her both to new
Insights and to a new commitment to the workers' cause.

The continued, and, she believes, unnecessary unemployment of the workers sharpens her eyes, and she tells the packers:

Wenn ihr schon das ganze Handwerkszeug in der Hand habt von den Leuten in euren großmächtigen Fabriken und Anlagen, dann mußt ihr sie wenigstens heranlassen, sonst sind sie ja ganz aufgeschossen, denn es ist doch so eine Art Ausbeutung dabei . . . .

(p. 50)

She is starting to understand how the capitalist system, by its very structure, exploits the workers; in fact, she is starting to sound almost Marxist. She comes to realize that under such circumstances the desperate worker turns naturally, if blindly, to violent protest, and she recognizes that all appeals to organized religion to help reestablish peace and order are more than a little hypocritical. She even weighs the possibility of violence as a means of social change, though at this point still more as a warning to the packers than as a practical policy:

Wer denen, die da arm sind, helfen will, der muß ihnen, scheint's, von euch helfen. Habt ihr denn gar keine Ehrfurcht mehr vor dem, was Menschenantlitz trägt? Da könnt es passieren, daß man euch auch nicht mehr als Menschen ansieht, sondern als wilde Tiere, die man einfach erschlagen muß im Interesse der öffentlichen Ordnung und Sicherheit!

(p. 51)

This is strong language, yet Johanna is still far from being a revolutionary. The action in which her anger expresses itself is one of religious, not political protest. As Christ drove the money-changers from the temple,
she drives the packers from the House of the Straw Hats. But this just means that her indignation is dissipated ineffectually. The only real effect of her action is that she is dismissed by Major Snyder and that Mauler has a few moments of amusement at the expense of his fellow packers.

Despite everything, Johanna, for the time being, still believes that the sort of reform she advocates is possible; and she still believes in Mauler and in his ability to help if he really wants to. After driving the packers out, she resolves to go to him again:

Ich will zum reichen Mauler gehn, der nicht ohne Furcht und guten Willens ist daß er uns hilft. Nicht eher will Ich wieder anziehen diesen Rock und schwarzen Strohhut ... \[ ... vor Ich den reichen Mauler mitbringt als einen von uns, bekehrt von Grund auf. \[ ... Ein gerechter muß doch unter Ihnen sein! \[ (p. 52)

She recognized earlier that a moral betterment of the workers was not the key to an improvement of their social conditions, because she realized the extent to which their character and behavior are determined by their environment. Nevertheless, she still believes that the rich have a freedom and power denied the poor. It would be a mistake to think that her belief in the basic goodness of man is—even now—simply a sentimental illusion. For all his hypocrisy and moral ambiguity, Mauler is a genuinely
sensitive person. That is to say, he has the makings of a good man in him every bit as much as does any worker. What Johanna fails to see is that Mauler and his fellow packers are just as much the products of capitalist society as are the workers themselves. This is, of course, somewhat harder to recognize in the packers' case, because they are not driven by hunger like the poor but profit handsomely from the system. Nevertheless, despite their apparent freedom, their material interests as capitalists demand actions incompatible with the charity which Johanna demands of them as moral men. Brecht, as a Marxist, has no doubt that self-interest exerts the stronger pull.

Paulus Snyder, the pro-capitalist major of the Straw Hats, tells the audience what Johanna has yet to learn for herself:

Arme Unwissende!
Was du nicht siehst: aufgebaut
In riesigen Kadern stehn sich gegenüber
Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer
kämpfende Fronten: unversöhnlich.
Laufe herum zwischen ihnen, Versöhnlerin und Vermittlerin
nütze keiner und gehe zugrund.

(pp. 52-53)

Brecht permits himself the ironic luxury of making his reactionaries, Snyder and later Mauler, speak, on occasion, like better Marxists than his good but still naive heroine.

Johanna finally does go to Mauler after she has spent a week in the stockyards among the homeless poor; she is hungry and worn. He is sympathetic and anxious to help
her personally. As for the unemployed, however, he is apologetic but firm: he is not prepared, indeed not able, to do anything for them. He tries to explain that her faith in his ability to help the workers is an illusion because he is locked in a competitive struggle with the other packers which he must either win or go to the wall. Or, as he puts it, indulging in airs of tragic grandeur:

Aber dies ist ein Geschäft, bei dems um Sein und Nichtsein geht, darum: ob ich in meiner Klasse der beste Mann bin oder selber den dunklen Weg zum Schlachthof geh.

(p. 56)

After presenting a defense of the capitalist system, which Brecht turns into a virtual condemnation, Mauler indicates his own position and tries to show why it would be pointless for him to try to act differently than he does:


(p. 57)

Any hesitation on his part, he claims, and he would be swept aside by his competitors. Mauler is not just trying to confuse the issues for Johanna; what he says is, from a Marxist point of view at least, quite correct. The individual capitalist may successfully manipulate the forces of the market, but he cannot free himself from them and act as an independent moral agent. At least, he cannot do
so without at the same time ceasing to be a capitalist. Mauler knows very well that the reform of capitalism is impossible and that the only alternative to the present order lies in a revolutionary transformation of society:

```
Denn sonst müßt alles umgestürzt werden von
Grund aus
und verändert der Bauplan von Grund aus nach
ganz anderer
unerhörter neuer Einschätzung des Menschen, die
ihr nicht willt
noch wir, denn dies geschehe ohne uns und Gott,
der
abgeschafft würd, weil ganz ohne Amt. . . .
``` (p. 57)

The capitalists and the Straw Hats have, he feels, a very clear common stake in the preservation of the present order. Therefore, he asks support from Johanna instead of criticism, and he hopes that she will give up her foolish call for reform and charity:

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. . . Darum müßt Ihr
mitmachen, und wenn Ihr schon nicht opfert, was
wir auch nicht von euch wollen, so doch
gutheißen die Opfer.
``` (p. 57)

But Johanna is emotionally unable to accept the truth about capitalism that Mauler has told her, for it threatens her whole Image of the world. If Mauler is right, then her efforts to realize the social gospel must remain futile and she must choose between the unacceptable alternatives which he offers her—between the revolution she fears almost as much as he (though for quite different reasons) and the morally corrupt support of the capitalist system by the old religion. Johanna must both free herself from
the old beliefs and find a new basis for social action.

Her problem is not primarily a religious one. She has already broken with the Straw Hats as a religious institution by driving the packers (and with them Major Snyder's hope of financial support) out of the meeting house. Now she breaks with them inwardly on a religious level too. Forced to choose between accepting financial support for the Straw Hats from Mauler and remaining loyal to the cause of the poor, she takes leave of her old beliefs almost too easily:


(p. 58)

Even as a Christian reformer Johanna's concern was with the actual social problem rather than with the Christian faith. In any case, the problem posed by this faith and its gradual loss is not of real concern to Brecht. Johanna's devotion to the poor is, however, and this is not in any way diminished by her growing skepticism toward everything related to the Straw Hats.

Disillusioned and confused, Johanna now almost instinctively takes a step which is of the utmost importance. She resolves to join the poor who have occupied the stockyards:

aber ich will mich setzen zu den Wartenden auf die Schlachthöfe
bis die Fabriken wieder auf sind und nichts anderes essen als sie essen, und wenn
This resolve to identify with the most miserable, to bear their lot and to suffer with them, is, in a secular form, a profoundly Christian gesture. At the same time, it is for a Marxist the beginning of wisdom, because a solidarity with the proletariat marks the birth of a radical class consciousness.

The question for Brecht is, of course, whether Johanna's decision to join the poor is a symbolic gesture which will have no further practical consequences, or whether it will initiate a learning process that will lead her to an advocacy of revolutionary change and Communism. For the moment, Johanna's position is disturbingly ambivalent. On the one hand, we have her unquestioned devotion to the cause of the poor, which causes her to break with her religious past. On the other, we note that she still has not lost faith in Mauler and his ability to help the workers if he really wanted to. It is almost as if she were trying to force him to do something by bringing the people's suffering home to him through her own person (p. 58).

Even more striking evidence of Johanna's inner uncertainty is the dream she describes shortly after
returning to the stockyards. It is a vision of the coming revolution, somewhat abstractly imagined, almost Expressionistic, but unmistakable. She saw a mass of people suddenly set in motion:

An eurer Spitze sah ich stumm mich schreiten
mit kriegerischem Schritt, die Stirne blutig
und Wörter rufend kriegerischen Klang in
mir selber unbekannter Sprache, und da gleichzeitig
von vielen Seiten viele Züge zogen
schritt ich in vielfacher Gestalt vor vielen Zügen
jung und alt, schluchzend und fluchend
außer mir endlich! Tugend und Schrecken!
Alles verändernd, was mein Fuß berührte
unmäßige Zerstörung bewirkend, den Lauf der Gestirne
sichtbar beeinflussend, doch auch die nächsten Straßen
uns allen bekannt, von Grund auf ändernd
(pp. 59-60)

Johanna identifies with this mass of people, or at least with its leaders, and sees herself in many different figures ("in vielfachen Gestalt") at the head of numerous processions. This uprising has both positive and negative qualities, which are, for Johanna, inextricably entwined. The great sense of release the vision brings causes her both to sob and to curse. She sees herself with a bloody forehead and describes the effect of this mass movement as both extremely destructive and creative ("die nächsten Straßen / . . . von Grund auf ändernd") at the same time. The blood and the destruction that are a necessary part of the regeneration of society are still unacceptable to Johanna, and, as a result, she is unable to comprehend her own dream. Not only does she imagine herself speaking in
a language she does not understand, but she gives the dream as a whole a trivial and harmless interpretation. She turns what is obviously a revolutionary, almost apocalyptic, vision into the anticipation of a mass demonstration by Chicago's poor, which is scheduled for the following day. She cannot face the harsher reality she is already carrying in her own heart and mind.

Joining the poor, though a positive step, does not solve Johanna's problems. Indeed, she now enters the most difficult and critical stage of her development. The final struggle she faces is largely an inner one; she must come to terms with the hard truths about capitalism which are pressing in on her from all sides. The facts are, by now, hard to deny. Not only has she experienced the failure of her own efforts at reform, but she has heard a damning analysis of capitalism from the mouth of Mauler himself, an analysis which makes it clear that one must choose between the injustice of capitalism and a revolutionary transformation of the world. It is true that Johanna can, on occasion, still speak so naively to the workers about their situation that they laugh at her (p. 65). But her naivety is not so much a product of ignorance as of an emotional inability to accept the moral fact that men like Mauler consciously and deliberately exploit their workers. However, not long after joining the poor in the stockyards Johanna demonstrates her intellectual grasp of class
antagonism and exploitation by describing the capitalist system in some detail as a motionless seesaw where the poor masses on the low end hold up the rich capitalists on the other (p. 70). She recognizes that the poor can raise themselves only by lowering the rich, and realizes that the latter will do everything in their power to prevent such a change. It is important to note that this objective insight comes before Johanna's last crisis. It is not enough to understand capitalism; she must be emotionally and morally capable of drawing the right conclusions from her knowledge.

Before she can overcome the emotional obstacles in her way, she must experience one more failure, this time a very personal one. Only by incurring a measure of personal guilt for the collapse of the workers' struggle against the packers does she receive a shock sufficient to lead her, in her dying moments, to a final resolution of her problems. The central episode of the last section concerns Johanna's decision not to deliver a letter for the (presumably Communist) labor leaders who are trying to organize a general strike in the face of police terror. Her failure to render this small but important service to the workers' cause is a failure of commitment, or, in the language of the Lehrstücke, a failure of consent. We have seen the gradual growth of insight into capitalism which has brought Johanna closer and closer to this consent.
Now we must consider a little more closely what it is that still stands in the way and makes final consent so difficult for her. Johanna's emotional and moral hesitation has its roots in her class origins. Having learned that the behavior of the workers and even of the packers is determined by the economic status and interests of their respective classes, she must now learn the even harder truth that she herself is subject to similar pressures. It is very hard, she finds, for a middle-class woman to think and act like a worker. She cannot help giving herself away, when, full of good intentions, she says to one of the labor leaders:

Ich bin von Herzen für eure Sache.

to which he responds, dubiously:

Unsere Sache? Ja, ist es denn nicht deine Sache?

(p. 65)

In a very real sense it is not her struggle. She is devoting herself altruistically to the cause of the poor, when, strictly speaking, her personal advantage lies elsewhere. As soon as she starts to suffer from hunger and cold, she feels a great temptation to retreat to the security of the Straw Hats. To the workers she says:

Ihr habt gut hungern, ihr habt nichts zu essen aber auf mich warten sie mit einer Suppe.
Ihr habt gut frieren aber ich kann jederzeit kommen in den warmen Saal die Fahne nehmen und die Trommel schlagen und von IHM reden, der in Wolken wohnt.

(p. 71)
To suffer such deprivation when not compelled to do so by bitterest need seems to her almost a sort of play-acting. Nevertheless, although her resolve is softened, she at first stays on with the letter entrusted to her.

Then rumors spread through the stockyards that Mauler has sold cattle to the other packers, and that, as a result, the plants will soon be opening again. Despite all her hard-won insights into the nature of capitalism, Johanna is still pathetically eager to believe in her Mauler and in the efficacy of goodness and humaneness in the world. She exults:

der Rechtliche unter ihnen
hat nicht versagt. Angesprochen als Mensch
hat er menschlich geantwortet. Es gibt
also Güte.

(p. 72)

Even as she speaks, the distant sound of machine-gun fire gives a brutal answer to this renewed hope. Once again she stays to deliver the letter, but with her resolve still further weakened.

It is only when she is brought face-to-face with the problem of violence that her resolve finally crumbles. The two labor leaders who entrusted her with the letter are brought by, under arrest, and Johanna suddenly has a vision of herself as a criminal, excluded from the world that is known and familiar to her:

... Was steht in dem Brief? Ich könnt nichts tun
was mit Gewalt getan sein müßt und
Gewalt erzeugte. Ein solcher stünd ja
voller Arglist gegen den Mitmenschen
außerhalb aller Abmachung
die unter Menschen gewöhnlich ist.
Nicht mehr zugehörig, fände er
In der nicht mehr vertrauten Welt sich
nicht mehr zurecht. Über seinem Haupte
ließen jetzt die Gestirne ohne die
alte Regel. Die Wörter
änderten ihm ihren Sinn. Die Unschuld
verließ ihn, der verfolgt und verfolgt wird.
Er sieht nichts mehr arglos.
(pp. 74-75)

The overwhelming anxiety generated by the prospect of abandoning a whole world view and facing the coldness of a dehumanized reality is here given an almost existential interpretation. What remains Marxist is the suggestion, implicit in the scene as a whole, that the world view Johanna finds it emotionally impossible to abandon is merely that of the middle class from which she comes. Of course, she does not recognize this; she feels herself face-to-face with nothingness. In her decision to leave the stockyards without delivering her letter, all these things play a role. Perhaps none alone would have been decisive, but together they are too much for her resolve.

The crucial general strike fails because not enough people were informed of the plans, and the packers reach an agreement to set up a trust under Mauler which will lower the wages of the workers and leave many permanently unemployed. When Johanna realizes that her failure to deliver the letter has helped to bring this about, she is overcome with shame and guilt. The shock is sufficient to
destroy the remaining illusions she still has about capitalism and about Mauler and to complete a radical change of heart. She is now able to see that the most extreme measures are necessary in the class struggle, and she is brought to a whole new evaluation of the moral problem that has previously tormented her.

Sick and dying Johanna is brought to the Straw Hats, who have just formed an alliance with the packers in which the Straw Hats undertake to defend capitalism in return for financial support. Johanna is welcomed by the packers as a symbol of charity and kindness, a figure who has actually helped the capitalist system in the weeks of crisis by making it seem a little more humane:

SLIFT:
Wir wollen sie groß herausbringen, denn sie hat uns durch ihr menschenfreundliches Wirken auf den Schlachthöfen, ihre Fürsprache für die Armen, auch durch ihre Reden gegen uns über schwierige Wochen hinweggeholfen. Sie soll unsere heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe sein.

(p. 92)

SLIFT believes—and the Communists would agree—that everything Johanna has done, even her criticism of the packers, has made the capitalist system as a whole more tolerable and thus weakened the revolutionary resolve of the people. Johanna now not only rejects the scheming hypocrisy of the packers and the Straw Hats, but even her own sincere efforts to do good. She accepts in effect SLIFT's analysis of her role as the correct one:
If her goodness has not only failed to help the poor but has actually helped the rich, as she is now forced to recognize, then her conception of goodness must have been inadequate. She therefore proposes a radically new standard of evaluation, one which reminds us strongly of the passage "Ändere die Welt, sie braucht es" from Die Maßnahme:

A person's actions must be judged by what they accomplish, Johanna now realizes; they cannot be judged by intentions alone--hers were always good--nor by adherence to some theoretically good principle such as nonviolence. For all her good intentions and her high moral scruples, Johanna has harmed rather than helped the poor. Only actions which really make the world a better and more decent place to live in are to be regarded as good, and in the context of the play this means actions which lead to a socialist
reorganization of capitalist society. This new principle
does not in itself represent such a radical break with
Johanna's past. She has always been concerned with the
practical consequences of her beliefs. As a Christian she
was not satisfied with a merely transcendental faith; she
wanted to realize the Christian spirit in the stock market
and the packing houses. Her advance to a more radical, non-
Christian position is a logical, and, from a Marxist point
of view, necessary development. It means substituting
really effective political and social action for what was
well-intentioned but "folgenlos."

What is new for Johanna and marks a painful break
with her past is the advocacy of violence as a means of
achieving social change. From the very beginning she has
abhorred violence as a blindly destructive force leading
to chaos. It was the violent aspect of revolution that made
her vision of the uprising of the masses frightening and
unacceptable to her. It was her revulsion at violence as
a negation of the whole moral order in which her existence
was grounded that finally led her to break faith with the
workers and leave the stockyards instead of delivering the
letter for the Communist labor leaders. Now goaded by the
guilt of her own betrayal of the workers and by her fury
at the even shabbier betrayal of true Christianity by the
Straw Hats, who have now become an openly pro-capitalist,
reactionary force, she suddenly bursts forth with an
almost frenzied call to violence:

Darum, wer unten sagt, daß es einen Gott gibt
und ist keiner sichtbar
und kann sein unsichtbar und hilfe ihnen doch
den soll man mit dem Kopf auf das Pflaster schlagen
bis er verreckt ist.

Und auch die, welche ihnen sagen, sie könnten
sich erheben im Geiste
und stecken bleiben im Schlamm, die soll man
auch mit den Köpfen auf das
Pflaster schlagen. Sondern
es hilft nur Gewalt, wo Gewalt herrscht, und
es helfen nur Menschen, wo Menschen sind.

(p. 95-96)

As she speaks, the packers and Straw Hats try to drown out her words so that nothing will disturb the stereotype of saintliness into which they are trying to force her. I think that only the contrast between their dishonesty and her desperation makes the ruthless brutality of her last words comprehensible. Johanna has not become a monster, but she is fighting against monsters, not human beings: only violence, she says, can succeed against violence.

This shrill call for violence against those who preach a false salvation, religious or spiritual, to the workers is a somewhat narrower appeal than one might have expected at the end of the play. Instead of making an openly revolutionary declaration in favor of the violent overthrow of capitalism, she turns her anger primarily against her one-time associates, the Straw Hats, who have sold out to the packers. Of course, given the circumstances of the last scene, this anger with the Straw Hats is psychologically right. A direct call for revolution
and Communism would have been unconvincing, because Johanna has so little real knowledge of either. The important thing is that she has broken completely with the outlook of the middle class and has committed herself without qualification to the cause of the workers. Brecht leaves it to his audience to take the obvious further step of seeing that it is necessary to advocate and support Communism. Johanna learns a great deal, but it is not necessary that she be made into a perfect revolutionary before her death. If the audience will go on learning where she leaves off, Brecht will be content. He has left no doubt about the route to be followed.

Johanna has come far in the course of the play, and every step has been, for her, a necessary and an unavoidable one. The process of consent to revolutionary change has become long and complicated. The words of the young comrade in Die Maßnahme, "Der Anblick des Unrechts trieb mich in die Reihen der Kämpfer" (Versuche 1-12, p. 323) have grown into a whole play. Indeed, so long and complicated has the process become that the term consent is no longer very useful in describing it.

In the earlier plays it is possible to isolate one moment of inner decision in which the act of consent takes place. In Der Jasager, for example, it occurs when the climbing party has to abandon the boy; in Die Maßnahme it takes place on two occasions: when the agitators are
dedicated as Instruments of the Party, and when the young comrade is asked if he accepts the necessity of his own liquidation. In *Die heilige Johanna* this has changed. No single moment of consent can be identified; the heroine's development must be considered as a whole if her position at the end is to be understood. Her call for violence is only the last and most dramatic change in a series of changes which must be considered together. Moreover, Johanna's consent, her radical commitment to violence and, by implication, to revolution, cannot in any way be considered apart from her growing political understanding. Psychological development and social education have become two facets of the same process. Consent has become nothing more nor less than the process by which the individual brings himself into line with the revolutionary forces of history, as seen by the Marxist, and this process is a long and complicated one for a person of middle-class origin like Johanna. Both *Die heilige Johanna* and *Die Maßnahme* teach that it is necessary to sacrifice one's own purity and to perform "immoral" acts in order to advance the revolution. In both plays the overriding need to transform the world is held to justify all means that will accomplish this end. In *Die Maßnahme*, however, this insight is arrived at analytically by considering the problem posed by the young comrade, while in *Die heilige Johanna* it is the product of a long and painful process of personal development. The
final position of the two plays is very similar, but the analytic presentation of Die Maßnahme makes it possible to isolate a specific act of consent which is justified by a particular moral and political calculus of ends and means. The process of development shown in Die heilige Johanna makes it difficult to separate the heroine's final advocacy of violence from all that she has experienced and learned in the course of the play. We learn from Die Maßnahme by being persuaded to accept the agitators' analysis of the young comrade's liquidation and the circumstances that made it necessary. We learn from Die heilige Johanna by identifying (not necessarily uncritically) with the heroine and following sympathetically her slow growth toward revolutionary understanding and commitment.

The special focus of the Lehrstücke on a specific act of consent seems a little artificial in retrospect, a little oversimplified. This was perhaps appropriate for short, didactic plays where a considerable schematization of reality was necessary. The greater complexity of Johanna's development corresponds to the wider horizon of the full-length play, which, while still simplifying reality, can deal with it much more fully. There are, of course, other reasons, too, why the idea of consent now disappears from Brecht's work, and I should like to turn to a discussion of these as a conclusion to this study.
Ernst Schumacher gives 1931-32 as the date for the writing of Die heilige Johanna (Die dramatischen Versuche, p. 438), but virtually all later writers agree on 1929-30 (see, for example, Reinhold Grimm, Bertolt Brecht, p. 26). One critic, Werner Mittenzel, actually suggests that it was completed before Die Maßnahme was begun in 1930 (Bertolt Brecht: Von der Maßnahme bis zu Leben des Galilei, p. 52). More important is his contention (pp. 52-56) that Die Maßnahme represents a more mature Marxist conception. He regards Brecht's attitude in Die heilige Johanna as that of a just, but uninvolved, observer, in Die Maßnahme as that of a Communist partisan. I think this is to mistake a difference in subject matter for a growth in allegiance. An analysis of the play will show that it is written every bit as much from a Communist point of view as is Die Maßnahme. Mittenzel's views are rejected by another Marxist writer Käthe Rülicke (Die Dramaturgie Brechts, p. 229).

The best analysis of this aspect of the play is by Käthe Rülicke ("Zu Brechts Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe," Theater der Zeit, XVI, I [1961], 22-39). See also Schumacher, Die dramatischen Versuche, pp. 434-493.

The text referred to is that of Versuche 13-19 (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 1959), pp. 6-98. Future references are by page only. For the version in Stücke, IV, Brecht added some minor scenes and expanded others. The essence of the play remained unchanged.

See, for example, Marx's preface to Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Werke, XII, 8-9).

See M. M. Bober, Karl Marx's Interpretation of History, pp. 67-94.

In Brecht's later work we find a number of such women whose impulse to do good is stronger than the promptings of self-interest. This is most obviously the case with dumb Kattrin in Mutter Courage and Grusche in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis. The good impulses of Shen Te in Der gute Mensch von Sezuan are equally strong, but here the situation is complicated by the fact that in order to survive at all she must look after her material interests by inventing a practical, ruthless cousin, who becomes her alter ego.
CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

After 1930, the problem of consent either disappears from Brecht's work or recurs in such modified form that it can hardly be considered in the old terms. Die Maßnahme is the last play in which the term actually occurs, although, as we have just seen, the idea itself is still discernible in Die heilige Johanna. Brecht remains a Marxist playwright, and, therefore, the relation of the individual to society remains a central problem for him, but it is no longer considered in terms of consent. Part of the reason for this is that none of Brecht's plays after 1933, with the exception of Die Tage der Commune, are revolutionary plays, and, as a result, Brecht is no longer much concerned with the problem of the individual and the Communist Party. The problems which were of vital concern to the young Marxist in the late twenties lost their acuteness as Brecht himself adjusted to his new political and social allegiance.

If we turn briefly to Brecht's didactic revolutionary play Die Mutter, written in 1930-32, we can see just how his perspectives on Communism change, and just why the problem of consent disappears. Much like Die heilige
Johanna, Die Mutter deals with the conversion of the heroine to revolution and Communism, to which she is at first almost as hostile as Johanna was. Die Mutter, of course, does not culminate in this conversion. Pelagea Wlassowa actually becomes a Communist Party worker, and much of the play is devoted to a demonstration of various aspects of her agitational work.

For the first time in Brecht's work the heroine is a class-conscious working woman. Johanna came from the middle class, and the young comrade of Die Maßnahme certainly had middle-class attitudes, whatever his origin. Wlassowa, on the other hand, is the wife and mother of a worker and is deeply concerned for the welfare of her son, for whom she can no longer cook nourishing meals because the wages in his factory have been cut. When she becomes a Communist, she does so in order to fight for her own and her family's interests and not to help others or to establish a just world as Johanna and the young comrade do. One of the choral passages which Brecht proposes in his notes as comments on the action of the play makes this especially clear:

Seht, jetzt merkt sie: es ist meine Sache
der Kampf ist nützlich. Bald
wird sie kämpfen. Und laut wird sie sagen können: dieser Kampf ist nützlich stets mit lauter Stimme: für mich besonders!

(Versuche 13-19, p. 233),
my emphasis)
This emphasis on self-interest does not in any way imply selfishness. In the class struggle the interest of one worker, properly understood, is identical with the good of the working class as a whole. Only through common revolutionary action can the workers improve their lot. Solidarity and common action through the Communist Party follow from this as a matter of course for Brecht. This may have posed a problem for the middle-class intellectual; it should pose none for the workers once they have achieved an elementary grasp of their economic and social position.

The Party, moreover, does not appear in the play as a separate entity or a special authority. We see the Party only in and through the working-class people, like Pelagea Wlassowa and her son Pawel, who carry on its work. To all intents and purposes these people are the Party, and a conflict between the individual and the collective cannot really arise. The problem of consent to the will of the collective as experienced by Johanna and the young comrade just does not exist.

The problem of violence—so painful for Johanna—is also approached quite differently in Die Mutter than it is in the earlier plays. Like Johanna, Wlassowa has a positive horror of violence at the beginning of the play:


(Versuche 13-19, p. 186)
However, Pelagea Wlassowa has an experience which causes her to revise this position radically. She takes part in a peaceful May Day demonstration, during which government troops fire on the workers and kill Smilgin, who is carrying the red flag. Brecht stresses that this worker once thought peaceful progress and reform possible:

SMILGIN:

PAWEL:
 Gib sie nicht weg, Smilgin! Es geht nicht durch Verhandeln, sagten wir, und die Mutter sagte ihm:

DIE MUTTER:
Du mußt sie nicht hergeben, es kann dir nichts geschehen. Gegen eine friedliche Demonstration kann die Polizei nichts haben.

(Versuche 13-19, p. 188)

When Smilgin refuses to surrender the flag, he is shot down; and Pelagea Wlassowa herself picks it up again. Thus, the mother learns that it is not the workers but the authorities who are responsible for violence because they are ready to repress by force even peaceful demands for reform. The workers and revolutionaries do not choose violence; it is forced on them by the overt and covert violence practiced by a reactionary government in order to keep the people down. A paradox from Die heilige Johanna is taken up here and thought through to its conclusion. The dying
Johanna advocates violence in the most savage terms, but the only act of violence in that play comes when the police and soldiers fire on the workers in the stockyards. That is to say, the only violence comes from the capitalists themselves, whose interests the police defend, not from the workers or the Communists.

Later, when Wlassowa is doing propaganda work for the Party, a woman says she has heard that Communism is a crime. Wlassowa counters with her "Lob des Kommunismus" and sings:

\begin{verbatim}
Die Ausbeuter nennen ihn ein Verbrechen.
Aber wir wissen:
er ist das Ende Ihrer Verbrechen.
Er ist keine Tollheit, sondern
das Ende der Tollheit.
Er ist nicht das Chaos
sondern die Ordnung.
Er ist das Einfache
das schwer zu machen ist.
\end{verbatim}

(Versuche 13-19, pp. 190-191)

This is, for Brecht, the definitive answer to the question of the moral nature of Communism. It is capitalism which is a crime, and Communism which will finally put an end to this crime, just as it is the capitalists who bear the real responsibility for violence.

Another development that strongly affected Brecht's view of the individual's commitment to Communism was, of course, Hitler's rise to power in 1933, and the long exile this brought for the writer and his family. Much of his energy in the next years was devoted to the fight against fascism. We must remember that, for the Communists,
National Socialism was the late and extreme form of a capitalism which could no longer maintain itself by democratic means. Brecht himself gave this theory clear expression in Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui, with its triple equation of Nazism, gangsterism, and capitalism. Brecht was so sure of the identification of Nazism with capitalism that in Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe he was led to a patently simplistic interpretation of Nazi antisemitism as a form of capitalistic exploitation.

The criminality of Nazism seemed to Brecht so flagrant that if, as he believed, capitalism could—indeed, had to—give birth to this monster, then no sensible person ought to have serious misgivings about turning to Communism for an alternative form of society. He expresses this idea most clearly in his poem "Gleichnis des Buddha vom brennenden Haus." Asked by disciples about the exact nature of the Nirvana, which they would enter after they had cast off all earthly desire and freed themselves from the wheel of becoming, Buddha professed to know no answer. Later, however, he told wiser followers the parable of the burning house. Seeing people still in a burning house, he had called to them urging them to come out. Instead, with the fire already singeing their brows, they asked all manner of questions: was it raining outside, was there another house for them, and so on. Buddha comments tartly:

... Diese, dachte Ich
Müssen verbrennen, bevor sie zu fragen aufhören. 
Wirklich, Freunde
Wem der Boden noch nicht so heiß ist, daß er ihn lieber
Mit jedem andern vertauschte, als daß er da bliebe, dem
Habe ich nichts zu sagen... .

Brecht, obviously speaking for the Communists, comments:

Aber auch wir,...

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
. . meinen, daß wir denen, die Angesichts der heraufkommenden Bombenflugzeuggeschwader des Kapitals noch allzulang fragen Wie wir uns dies dachten, wie wir uns das vorstellten Und was aus ihren Spärbuchsen und Sonntagshosen werden soll nach einer Umschaltung
Nicht viel zu sagen haben.

(Gedichte, IV, 58)

Fascism was the great simplifier for Brecht. When fighting a Hitler, the complicated qualms of good people like Johanna and the young comrade seem exaggerated and foolish. For us today, with a knowledge of Stalinism as well as fascism, such a poem seems more than a little callow; but, given the conditions of the early thirties, its point of view is readily understandable.

In the thirties there was also strong pressure to form a popular front of liberal and left-wing groups against the common enemy. The fight for Communism had, for the time being, become part of the struggle against fascism. Brecht himself was not ready to give unquestioning support to the popular front and to ignore all party differences, as his speech to the International Writers' Congress in 1935 shows. Nevertheless, his play Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar, written in the first year of the Spanish civil war,
shows clearly how the fight against Franco pushes specific questions about party allegiance into the background. At the same time, the play illustrates very clearly how the rise of fascism forces a man to take sides. Now it is no longer possible to hesitate or to remain uncommitted.

Teresa Carrar, a poor fisherwoman, will not allow her two sons to go to the front and join the fight against Franco, nor will she release a cache of weapons she has hidden in the house. She wishes to keep herself and her family out of the fight. Brecht explores her attitude and shows the process by which she is turned into a militant supporter of the republican cause at the end of the play. The plot would have proved an ideal occasion to reconsider the idea of consent, but all the problems once involved in this issue have been dissolved by the radical character of the new struggle.

Why does Teresa Carrar refuse to support the fight against Franco despite the urgings of her brother and her son? She has lost her husband in a revolutionary disturbance two years earlier. It is said that she encouraged his political views at the time. Since that day, however, she has become convinced of the foolishness of all such efforts and is determined to save her own family at all cost. She wants her son Juan to fish, as God intended him to, and not to fight. She believes that if they all keep quiet nothing will happen to them and
they will come to no harm:

Ich bin nicht für die Generäle, und es ist eine Schande, das von mir zu sagen. Aber wenn ich mich still verhalte und meine Heftigkeit bekämpfe, dann lassen sie uns vielleicht verschont. Das ist eine einfache Rechnung. Es ist wenig genug, was Ich verlange.

(Stücke, VII, 45)

Again and again she voices her conviction that "Dem, der nicht kämpft, kann nichts geschehen" (Stücke, VII, 39).

Since the shock of her husband's death, she has also developed a certain piety, and opposes violence in principle. "Ich bin dagegen, daß Blut vergossen wird," she tells her younger son (Stücke, VII, 10). Her moral scruples do not, however, go nearly so deep as those of Johanna. They are only a psychological reflex to her husband's death. This comes out quite clearly when she curses her son, because she thinks he has gone off to the front against her will:

Wenn er . . . zur Miliz gegangen ist, dann soll er verflucht sein! . . . Ich werde ihm meine Tür nicht mehr öffnen, wenn er zurückkommt, nur weil er sagt, er hat die Generäle besieglt! Ich werde ihm sagen . . . daß ich niemand in meinem Haus haben will, der sich mit Blut befleckt hat. . . .

So far, this sounds like a moral condemnation of violence, but she goes on and gives away her real motives:


(Stücke, VII, 55-56)

She will learn shortly just how little the poor can rely
Teresa Carrar's brother argues with her and points out with some bitterness that there is no such thing as neutrality in the fight against Franco. By refusing to let her sons go to the front and by concealing the much-needed rifles, she is really helping Franco, whether she realizes it or not:

_Nicht für uns kämpfen, Teresa, heißt nicht: nicht kämpfen, sondern für die Generäle kämpfen._

(Stücke, VII, 55)

The moral argument against violence is disposed of by means of similar reasoning. In a discussion with the local priest the brother comments on the priest's appeal to the Biblical commandment against killing:

_Nur ist die Frage, ob sie kein Kämpfer sind. Sie müssen mich verstehen. Wenn sie zum Beispiel einem Mann, der gerade getötet werden soll und sich verteidigen will, mit dem Wort in den Arm fallen: Du sollst nicht töten, so daß er wie ein Huhn abgeschlachtet werden kann, dann nehmen Sie vielleicht an diesem Kampf doch teil, ich meine, in Ihrer Weise._

(Stücke, VII, 33)

And again, as in _Die Mutter_, it is pointed out that the other side is the one responsible for the violence:

_DER ARBEITER:_
_Wenn die Halbliche dich angreifen, bist du es, der die Gewalt anwendet? Sind wir nach Madrid marschliert, oder ist der General Mola über die Gebirge zu uns gekommen?_  

(Stücke, VII, 49)

None of these arguments appear to have the slightest effect on Teresa Carrar until her cherished son, Juan, is brought in wrapped in a blood-soaked sail. He has been
gunned down by a fascist cutter while peacefully fishing. What words could not teach her, this bitter blow does: neutrality is an illusion; the only hope for the poor lies in solidarity and fighting resolve. The shooting is at the same time an equally decisive answer to her moral reservations against fighting: it is the fascists who are guilty of initiating violence. One must resist or be destroyed.

But something more than Brecht's ideas on violence has changed. One feels, on reading *Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar*, that he is writing from a vantage point of certainty and assurance that he did not have in *Die Maßnahme* and *Die heilige Johanna*. Perhaps it is the more conventional dramatic technique, to which we are unaccustomed in Brecht, that makes the play seem almost a theatrical exercise. At any rate, Teresa Carrar's problem does not touch him the way Johanna's did. Johanna seemed to embody his own agony at the necessity of accepting violence. Now we sense something almost like condescension in his treatment of his heroine's mistaken position.

Another result of the fight against fascism is that Brecht becomes interested in quite a new aspect of the relationships of individual and society. In the first years following his conversion to Communism, Brecht was understandably interested in the relation of the individual to the revolutionary movement or to the Party. In
his years of exile, however, he becomes concerned with the problem of the man who must survive and carry on his work under a hostile authority, with which he has to come to terms without actually compromising his integrity or his mission. Galileo must live under a hostile church, and, in the first version of *Galileo Galilei* he recants in order to go on working despite official condemnation of his scientific findings. ² Brecht's Schweyk has the equally difficult task of surviving under National Socialism. He develops a virtuoso form of obsequiousness and sly simple-mindedness, with which he manages to hold the various Nazi officials at bay. One can, like Hans Mayer, term this a form of *Einstverstänndnis*, if one wishes;³ but, whether it is a question of a genuine compromise with the authorities or merely the pretense of compliance, it is a very different type of consent from that of the *Lehrstücke*. There the individual was called on to submit to a valid and necessary authority (from Brecht's point of view) like the Communist Party. The allegiance demanded was real and genuine. In the later plays the authority is always a negative one, to which the individual does not owe any inner loyalty. The individual must learn, in one way or another, to keep the hostile authority at bay. His "consent" is, in fact, a form of covert resistance. There is a well-known Keuner story which is almost the archetype of this sort of consent. Chided for having failed upon one
occasion to show civil courage in opposing violence, Keuner answers:


Then he tells the story of Herr Egge, to whose house there came an agent with the power to requisition any residence and any services he required. The agent moved in and demanded to know whether the man would serve him:

Herr Egge deckte ihn mit einer Decke zu, vertrieb die Fliegen, bewachte seinen Schlaf, und wie an diesem Tage gehorchte er ihm sieben Jahre lang. Aber was er immer für ihn tat, eines zu tun hütete er sich wohl: das war, ein Wort zu sagen. Als nun die sieben Jahre herum waren und der Agent dick geworden war vom vielen Essen, Schlafen und Befehlen, starb der Agent. Da wickelte ihn Herr Egge in die verdorbene Decke, schleifte ihn aus dem Haus, wusch das Lager, tünchte die Wände atmete auf und antwortete: "Nein."

(Versuche I-12, pp. 25-26)

It is this unheroic but stubborn "no" to false or corrupt authority that we hear in the voices of Galileo and Schweyk behind all the apparent compliance with the demands of those in power. 4

Brecht remained a Marxist all his life and even his disappointment with the developments in the DDR never, as far as we know, destroyed his hopes in the future of Communism. But he also remained as conscious of the difficulty of being a kind, friendly human being while fighting for Communism as he had been when he explored the problem of consent in Die Maßnahme and Die heilige Johanna. The moral dilemma of the revolutionary did not
cease to trouble Brecht, but his attitude was mellowed by the wisdom and resignation born of long experience. This is perhaps nowhere better expressed than in the much-quoted, but still undimmed, lines:

Gingen wir doch, öfter als die Schuhe die Länder wechselnd
Durch die Kriege der Klassen, verzweifelt
Wenn da nur Unrecht war und keine Empörung.
Dabei wissen wir doch:
Auch der Haß gegen die Niedrigkeit
Verzerrt die Züge.
Auch der Zorn über das Unrecht
Macht die Stimme heiser. Ach, wir
Die wir den Boden bereiten wollten für die
Freundlichkeit
Konnten selber nicht freundlich sein.

Ihr aber, wenn es so weit sein wird
Daß der Mensch dem Menschen ein Helfer ist
Gedenkt unserr
Nit Nachsicht.

("An die Nachgeborenen," Gedichte, IV, 145)
NOTES, CHAPTER IX

1\textsuperscript{1} Versuche, Heft 15, 137-141. See also Hans Mayer, Bertolt Brecht und die Tradition, pp. 87-91.

\textsuperscript{2} The original version of the key scene which later ends with Galileo's sharp self-condemnation (Stücke, VIII, 170ff) is given in full by Ernst Schumacher in his Drama und Geschichte: Bertolt Brechts "Leben des Galilei" und andere Stücke, pp. 28-38. In this version the revelation that Galileo has written a new scientific work comes after, rather than before, his self-criticism, and thus carries much greater weight than it later does. Galileo speaks with so much sly irony of his recantation and his renewed scientific efforts that his critical remarks, in themselves seriously meant, appear to be much less than the full story. Galileo goes on to urge his former student, Andrea, to "steal" the manuscript and smuggle it out of the country. He bids him farewell with the words, "Nimm dich in acht, wenn du durch Deutschland fährst und die Wahrheit unter dem Rock trägst!" (Schumacher, p. 37), words which must have had almost programmatic meaning for the anti-fascist writer in exile.

\textsuperscript{3} Hans Mayer, Bertolt Brecht und die Tradition, pp. 87-91.

\textsuperscript{4} Brecht actually incorporated a variant of this story into the first version of Galileo Galilei (Schumacher, Drama und Geschichte, p. 22). This is a further indication of the emphasis Brecht placed on the need to survive and keep the truth alive under hostile authority. See also Brecht's short tract, Fünf Schwierigkeiten beim Schreiben der Wahrheit (Versuche, Heft 9, 85-101), which was written in 1934 for illegal distribution in Germany.
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Only the editions of Brecht's works and only those secondary sources actually cited in the present study are included in this bibliography. The most useful general bibliography on Brecht is by Reinhold Grimm (Bertolt Brecht, see exact listing below). For special purposes such as the location of contemporary reviews and discussions of Brecht's works the now somewhat dated bibliography by Walter Nubel (Sinn und Form: Zweites Sonderheft Bertolt Brecht, 1957, pp. 481-623) is still useful. Information on more recent publications by and on Brecht will be found in the annual bibliography of PMLA and in the bibliographical journal Germanistik.

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