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BRECHT FROM PAGE TO MOUTH:

A practical approach to Brecht's theatre on foot

of an original translation of his *Baal* Learning Play fragments of 1930

Thesis presented for the Master's Degree in Drama and Theatre Studies
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July 2001

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INTRODUCTION

Generally there is felt to be a very sharp distinction
between learning and amusing oneself.
The first may be useful, but only the second is pleasant - Bertolt Brecht

This thesis has at its heart the translation of the fragments of the 1930 learning play project Brecht was planning on the basis of his already well-known and notorious theatrical creation Baal, the protagonist of his eponymous play. The first aim of the translations is to be an introduction of Brecht's mode of writing and thinking to English-speaking students of Drama who do not speak German.

The second aim takes issue with the Brecht statement in the heading to this introduction: I would hope to show that it is possible for learning to be useful *and* pleasant.

In order to demonstrate how a flamboyantly self-centred character like Baal can be transformed into an educational tool, I have presented the main biographical and artistic developments in Brecht's life, from the Nihilistic beginnings to the period in the late 1920s when Brecht espoused Marxism and thereafter devoted part of his talents to writing for educational purposes. The main result of this was the development of the *Lehrstück* or *learning play*, which was designed to educate socialist youth by a stimulating use of dialectical thinking. The main theories involved in the genre have been translated in this thesis. I will attempt to show that the *learning play*, because of its own inner vitality, has transcended its Marxist origins and developed its own dynamic outside Germany, notably in Great Britain.

The different styles and approaches of translation are dealt with and a

number of practical examples on the subtleties and complexities of translation; i.e., lifting ideas from one language and rooting them in a second language without doing harm to the ideas or the mode of expression in which they are couched in the original.

Brecht's project was never completed. The fragments, when rearranged, provide for a mini-drama which contains elements a student should know about Brecht: Gestus, "A" effect, paralanguage appropriate to a character, etc. By staying close to the cool, precise language of the original German, it is to be hoped that the humour and intellectual challenge will stimulate students to study and research Brecht on their own account..

In a final summing up, the steps taken to organize and carry out a workshop devoted to lifting Brecht's translated words off the page and putting them into people's mouths for all to hear and enjoy are described. The reactions to the texts are given and compared with the theory described by German specialists in the field. Video and written feedback in the questionnaires filled out in the moments immediately after the workshop are evaluated in the thesis. The outcome of the practical workshop demonstrates that Brecht has lost none of his capacity to shock, amuse and repel a whole new generation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Secondly, heartfelt thanks to Dr. Ger Fitzgibbon of the English Department, who, when it was time to choose a thesis topic, encouraged me to play to my strengths in German.

Thanks to Ali Robertson and Maeve Lewis of the Granary Theatre for their unfailing assistance and advice.

A kiss to my family, who had to put up with books and slips of paper in every corner of the house.

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CHAPTER 1. APPROACHING BRECHT AND BAAL

No single manuscript, typed or

printed version can be considered

the indisputably authorized text;

the material of Baal

is a life-long theme of Bertolt Brecht. (Wolfgang Frühwald, translated K.P.)

1. BRECHT AS INNOVATOR AND EDUCATOR

Bertolt Brecht is a pivotal figure in the history of twentieth century theatre. Beginning in the 1920s as an expressionist with *Baal*, he proceeded to develop a new, strongly rational and challenging concept of theatre - the epic - and a variety of devices to support his vision of that theatre: the gestus appropriate to a character and the "A" effect, to name but two. In this type of theatre neither audience nor actors were to identify with the characters of the play. The audience was not to forget that they were watching a performance in a theatre. The "A" or alienating affect was designed to make the everyday world strange and thus make the audience more conscious and alert; participants in an event rather than passive observers. Brecht's view was that this type of distancing would lead to a more rational and questioning response and a more active sense of judgement on the part of the audience. A later model for this epic theatre was the *Street Scene*, written in 1938 (GW 16:546-558), in which

the witnesses to a traffic accident put forward their individual views on what happened. These views are expressed in a way completely appropriate to the paralanguage of each individual and is a paradigm for the epic theatre: one should act as if *remembering* an event, rather than *creating* an event. Gestus and "A" effect are built into the situation of the scene as each person vehemently argues from personal conviction. Thus, from the initial expressionistic effusions of *Baal* there is a progression which leads to the serious slapstick of *Man equals Man* (1926), and from there to such epic theatre masterpieces as *The Threepenny Opera* (1928) and *Mahagonny* (1930) at one level, and to *Mother Courage* (1941) and *Galileo Galilei* (1942) at another.

Apart from his poetry, stories, theoretical writings on art and the nature and function of the contemporary theatre and work as theatre director, Brecht also developed the didactic play - the *Lehrstück* for use in the education of young people and workers in a society based on Marxist principles. This was in line with the Marxist principles which he espoused in the late 1920s. These principles, combined with his desire to change the world through theatre, led first to his fleeing Germany to escape the Nazi terror and then, having finally found refuge in the United States, to his being called before that country's Un-American Activities Committee on suspicion of being a member of the communist party. That the Marxist-Leninist Brecht fled Nazi Germany rather than risk imprisonment or death for his political beliefs, and that he subsequently, at the hearings of the Un-American Activities Committee, admitted to socialist beliefs but was not a member of the communist party may seem ethically questionable if perceived through the limited vision of a bourgeois society which has never had reason to fear persecution and possible death from its political opponents.

However, given Brecht's contradictory personality, his Marxist-Leninist beliefs in the creation of a new society and the actual political circumstances under which he lived, his physical flight from Germany and political denials in America demonstrated those survival skills which can be summed up in the old Greek proverb: *He who fights and runs away may live to fight another day.* A dead Brecht might soon have been forgotten by the world. A live Brecht would, and did, continue to criticize and condemn the Nazi regime. A Brecht under pressure from the political establishment in America demonstrated the weaknesses and contradictions in the American political system. America saw itself as the reservoir of freedom and democracy, but that freedom and democracy was, in the late 1940s, interpreted from a narrow W.A.S.P. (White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant) perspective which precluded, culturally and linguistically, any departure from the accepted anti-communist norms as a result of the West's suspicion of the intentions of Stalin's U.S.S.R. in the post World War II period.

The dramatic/pedagogical genre of the *Lehrstück*, which played a central role in Brecht's vision of a new, socialist society, had a single purpose, namely: the employment of theatrical means in the political education of the members of that new, Soviet-inspired, socialist society. The plays were professionally written but intended for amateur, not professional performers and performances. (Brecht's views on this matter are treated in the next chapter.)

For the purposes of this thesis the term *Lehrstück* will be given the English title *Learning Play*. As there is also a practical element to this thesis, in which it will be suggested how the student of today may learn by studying and experimenting with this genre, the shift in emphasis from "lehr" = "*teaching*" to "lern" = *learning* seems a

desirable one. There is a further justification for this shift in that even Brecht himself was not entirely happy with the term *Lehrstück.* In his essay on the origins and development of the form, Brecht expert Florian Vaßen states that it had detractors on the political left and right towards the end of the Weimar Republic:

> "...indeed, the term "Teaching Play", as a general language concept as well as in literary theory was incorrectly understood to mean a play with a message; a contemporary political play, or agitprop in the sense of indoctrination and a negative attitude towards art. Even Brecht wondered *'whether the term teaching play was not an unfortunate one'*. The English translation of the term as learning-play - a translation in which Brecht most probably played a part - expresses Brecht's intention much more strongly, in that it stresses the learning as opposed to the teaching; the playing as opposed to the play. The term learning-play certainly highlights aspects which were hidden by the term teaching-play." (Vaßen 1995:201-2, translated K.P.)

A revolution had taken place in Russia in 1917. As a result, a new country - the U.S.S.R. - had come into existence, and with it the attempt to create a socialist society based on the teaching of Marx and Lenin. As there had been a successful political revolution it followed that education would also have to be revolutionised.

In search of himself and of a theatrical style, Brecht had shocked the German-speaking bourgeois theatre in 1919 with *Baal*, a play about a poetic, chaotic character who acknowledged no law except his own physical and sensual appetites. But by 1926 Brecht had converted to Marxism-Leninism. One of the fruits of his conversion was his conviction that society as a whole could only be changed by education.

2. THE *BAAL* FOCUS OF THIS THESIS

This thesis is concerned with the translation and arrangement of fragments of an unfinished learning-play based on the Baal figure. It is ultimately intended for undergraduate teaching purposes. The scenes are interesting in themselves, being a mixture of social commentary and of biblical stories; the latter, as is appropriate to Marxism-Leninism, have been separated from their metaphysical elements within the framework of Christian belief. By arranging the scenes in a sequence which is dramatically logical, and by juxtaposing Brecht's demythologized Bible texts with the original Bible texts, four teaching events occur:

1. The students are confronted with Brecht and the demythologised Bible texts;

2. The students are confronted with the original Bible texts;

3. The students are re-familiarized with the original Bible texts;

4. The students are, hopefully, positively alienated by the Brecht Bible texts; the result being a clarification of their thoughts and an appreciation of both Brecht and the original Bible stories.

Based on his first professionally performed play *Baal*, the fragments bear the collective title *Der böse Baal der Asoziale* and are numbered 464/69 in the BBA (Bertolt-Brecht-Archiv). They are not included in the Suhrkamp collected works (GW) but are to be found in Dieter Schmidt's *Bertolt Brecht, Baal. Der böse Baal der Asoziale* (Schmidt, 1968:78-91)

3. THE ORIGINAL *BAAL* PLAY

Before dealing with the 1930 learning play texts, some exposition of the background of the original *Baal* is necessary. The fragments are to the original play what symphonic variations are to a symphony. One may enjoy the variations without knowing the symphony, but the enjoyment is deepened and enriched by a knowledge of the original work and the biographical detail of the artist's life at the time of the work's composition. In Brecht's case extracts from three letters written during the gestation period of *Baal* are particularly illuminating. These letters are numbered 29, 34 and 37 in *Bertolt Brecht: Letters 1913-1956* (Methuen 1990:43/44, 49, 53/54).

Letter 29:

Augsburg, 17th of May 1918

To Caspar Neher:

Dear Cas,

Your last letters to Geyer and me paint an alarming picture of a broken man.

... The obstacles in your path are purely external and you will surmount them. ...

Now pay attention. Nicknames for me:

Lup (Wolf)

Chancre (cancer; pronounced Tschanzer)

What do you think?

I've been dancing with Bittersweet.

Maypoles are in bloom. The grass smells.

The wind is rolling through the leaves of my chestnut trees.

Bittersweet...

Letter 34:

Munich, mid-June 1918

To Caspar Neher:

Dear Cas,

The most tremendous things are happening.

1) My comedy: **Baal eats! Baal dances!! Baal is transfigured!!**

What does Baal do? 24 Scenes!

is finished and typed - an imposing tome. I hope to get somewhere with it. Of course I can send it to you only if you'll absolutely promise to return it.

2) The Bittersweet affair is nearing some kind of catharsis, which ought to be over by the time you read this. It's churning me up pretty deeply. Now she seems to want 'it'. May God and I help her.

Letter 37:

High up on the Arber, 12 August 1918

To Paula Banholzer:

...Yesterday I played the guitar in a pub in the woods. In return they gave us milk and butter which are very rare here. I sang perfectly in tune, much better than at home ...

... Not much point in complaining that no matter how divinely happy one is, one can still confuse two things: a hot kiss and a hot cup of coffee?! ... I keep thinking of the look of astonishment my mawkishness will put on your face and love you more and more ... Already I love you more than words can tell ...

Many many kisses

Your

Bert Brecht.

The contradictoriness and ambiguity for which Brecht was later to be renowned are evident in these letters. The first initially demonstrates a genuine concern for his friend Caspar (broken man); then the mood changes to one of almost clinical advice (the obstacles in your path are purely external); next Brecht becomes playful on the subject of nicknames for himself (Lup is an interesting choice, as one of the characters in *Baal* is called Lupu.) and finally, Brecht mentions dancing with his girl of the moment, which leads him to nature imagery, ending with the repetition of her coded name.

The second letter blends Brecht's relief and pleasure at finishing *Baal* with the pleasurable anticipation of sexual conquest. The phrase: 'May God and I help her' unites the most contradictory concepts: 'May God help her' is very ambiguous and ironic in this situation; 'May I help her' suggests pleasurable male anticipation at the prospect of helping a girl to make the transition to full womanhood. This example of zugma - two widely different concepts joined by the one verb - is an intellectual microcosm of the later Brechtian thinking.

The final letter could have been written by Baal himself in one of his sunnier moods: nature, music, food and drink and, again, the combination of opposing concepts: hot kisses and hot coffee. Paula Banholzer was the 'Bittersweet' of his letters to Caspar Neher, and Brecht's wooing of her was consummated in July 1918; and thus the "mawkishness" of the letter of August 1918. Their son, Frank, was born on the 30th of July 1919. In parallel with the bisexual appetites of Baal, there seems

to be a suggestion in Brecht's poetry that he and his created character are running along parallel lines. John Fuegi (1994:59) writes:

> "That [1919] summer, among many other explicitly homosexual poems, plays and letters, Brecht wrote:
>
> *In July I have an affair with the sky,*
> *I call him Little Boy*
> *Blue, glorious, violet, he loves me.*
> *It's male love. (Brecht, GW sup. 3:81)*"

Having looked at the events in Brecht's life at the time of *Baal's* composition, it is clear that *Baal* is a piece with considerable autobiographical content, although Brecht was at pains to suggest that the character was based on a notorious Augsburg personality who ultimately disappeared and is said to have died in the Black Forest. Originally written as an antithesis to Hanns Johst's expressionist play *The Lonely One*, it shows Frank Wedekind's influence in its frank treatment of sexuality: women are a source of pleasure to men. Physically weak, but powerful in the effect they can exert over men sexually, they are to be enjoyed and cast aside as quickly as possible, yet if they are unfaithful they must be punished. In this there are also echoes of Büchner's *Woyzeck*.

In his essay on *Baal* Klaus Kienzler (1994:91) apostrophizes the eponymous character as follows:

> "Baal...is the Embodiment of the 'Anti'-. He is the emodiment of the Antisocial, the Antimetaphysical, the Antiidealistic, and he has nevertheless a lust for power and is an Antigod in the exact image of what Brecht needed for his revolt against the metaphysical connecting of God, Emperor and War." (translated K.P.)

Kienzler goes on to deal with Brecht's choice of name for his larger than life

character: (ibid.:91)

> "Because of Brecht's good knowledge of the bible one may assume that he knew the Semitic-Phoenician fertility god mentioned in Genesis; the god who, before the Israelites conquered the fertile Canaan, nourished that area with his lust for life and chtonic vitality. Brecht clearly wants to revive this insatiable creature of former times ..." (translated K.P.)

In the same essay, Kienzler quotes Paul Konrad Kurz's view that Brecht's *Baal* is close to Nietzsche's Dionysus:

> "Without having read Nietzsche, Haeckel or Oswald Spengler, without going to the cultural or philosophical trouble of reading that *God is dead*, *The Riddle of the World* and *The Decline of the West*, Brecht, from early on, was part of the "spirit of the age". The twenty-year old saw the decline of the imperial bond of God and Emperor. Along with the bourgeois world order he had also rejected the myth of the Christian inheritance which had lasted into the twentieth century." (1994:92, translated K.P.)

With Kienzler's and Kurz's views in mind, it would seem logical to conclude that, by writing *Baal*, Brecht was not only rejecting a centuries old tradition; he was engaging in the invention of a persona for his own splintered nature, and, in so doing, was challenging the social group - i.e. the upper middle class - to which he himself belonged. In this lay the germ of his future theatrical thought. Bourgeois audiences were alienated by the play and its protagonist who was an affront to all their comfortable pre-conceived notions of what was acceptable in the theatre as well as in society at large. Although Brecht had not at this time embraced Marxism, there is a seminal dialectic at work in the basic concept of the play, which may be expressed as follows:

Thesis: Bourgeois Christian society is hypocritical, corrupt and perpetually obsessed with its own financial security and respectable public image.

Antithesis: Baal's nihilistic, self-promoting behaviour is a direct challenge to bourgeois hypocrisy, corruption and perpetual obsession with financial security and respectable public image.

Synthesis: Has either of the above parties - Baal and the Bourgeoisie - the will and the wit to engage in meaningful dialogue and thus learn from its opposite number, to their mutual advantage? The answer in the play is certainly in the negative: Baal dies and the bourgeoisie remain unaffected by his death.

Brecht reworked the play and there are versions of it from 1919, 1922, 1926 and 1955. That the play still has the power to attract, repel, fascinate and irritate can be deduced from reviews of productions in Cologne in 1981 and Berlin in 1993 contained in the February 1998 edition of the critical theatrical publication *Theatre heute* which marked the Brecht centenary year. Of the Cologne production Henning Rischbieter writes:

> "Baal is Brecht, the Brecht of the early Augsburg years: a dark, sinewy, sharp-faced young man with nickle glasses, hurtful to others because of his desire to be someone, socially and sexually. Even when drunk he is sharp, abrasive, gruff." (1998:12, translated K.P.)

The review of the Berliner Ensemble production in the same volume is signed H.R. (Henning Rischbieter?) This production used Brecht's 1926 version of the play, of which H.R. writes:

> "In 1926 Brecht tried to distance himself from his 1918 first-born, *Baal*. He did so by transforming the disorganized drunken young genius into an elderly former mechanic. This version is called *The C.V. of the Man Baal*. This

version of *Baal* is in sharp contrast to the Cologne production and makes of Baal '*a confused, alienated visitor in the prewar panopticum*.'" (1998:13, translated K.P.)

From these two reviews it would seem to be clear that the earlier version is more true to the spirit of Brecht at the time it was written. As writers mature, they sometimes tend to wish to distance themselves from the literary indiscretions of youth, but the rewriting of youthful works seldom manages to retain the spontaneous and inspired spirit of the original.

4. A *BAAL* FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Brecht's *Baal* is a piece which, although powerful, is not a total theatrical success in any version, but it has elemental power and has, to some extent, found a successor in Albert Ostermaier's *The Making Of B Movie* which contains typical Brechtian elements of surprise, alienation, indirect satire of contemporary society and a main character whose moods and appetites are very reminiscent of Baal's. The play is set in contemporary Africa and Europe and satirizes literature, the theatre and the television talk show. At the beginning the main character, André, a poet, sweating and sulking in Africa because he's not writing, has got a letter from his friend Silver, which perturbs his black girlfriend. In response to Silver's letter he says: "I've got to kick chaos in the teeth. He's right: Nobody's coming down from heaven again." (1999:20, translated K.P.)

And so, without too much urging from Silver, whom he hadn't seen for seven years, André leaves his African girlfriend and, as Brom, embarks on a new life as poet, and playwight providing "sex for text" and media celebrity, moving with bisexual abandon between Mäzenatin, Emilie Johannes and a prostitute. In a television talk show he cuts his forehead with a knife, stating: "You wanted me to bleed so that you'd get good audience ratings." Gil Mattis, the host, smiles into the camera:

> "My dear viewers, I don't think I promised you too much. Sex, crime and violence, and all that courtesy of public service broadcasting. Thank you for your interest; I look forward to your sitting in the front seats again next time and experiencing live our uninhibited contemporary literature. Our phone lines are open until 4 a.m. Good bye for now. The curtain is falling, the wounds are open. Good night." (Ostermaier, 1999:100/101, translated K.P.)

The border between reality and show business, between what is and what seems to be, completely dissolves when, at the conclusion of the play, Brom/Andre actually stabs and mortally wounds Silver. As Silver lies dying the theatre manager, Mäzenatin, the critic Müller-Schuppen and the assembled guests are ecstatic at what they perceive to be his great performance. First performed at the end of May 1999 in the Residenztheater, Munich, *The making of B Movie* is both contemporary and from the same timelessly provocative intellectual sphere as Brecht's *Baal* and demonstrates the continuing fascination of German dramatists with the strong but flawed character.

5. BRECHT'S NEW ROLE FOR BAAL IN HIS MARXIST SCHEME OF THINGS

It must be pointed out that if 1926 was the year of Brecht's reworking of *Baal*, it was also the year of his first encounter with the works of Marx. In her contribution to *Brecht As they knew him,* (1975:53) Elisabeth Hauptmann refers to her working notes of October 26th, 1926:

> "After *Man equals Man* had been produced, Brecht obtains works on socialism and Marxism and asks for lists of the basic works he should study first. In a letter a little later he writes: "I am now eight feet deep in *Das Kapital*. Now I want to know all the details."

From Brecht's subsequent life, works and thought it is clear that he found in the works of Marx the order and discipline he could not find in himself.

It seems strange that Brecht was not aware of the irony inherent in his replacing the traditional, unquestioned - at least until after the 1914-1918 War - German metaphysical interlinking of God/Bible/Emperor with an anti-metaphysical, materialistic dispensation which had abolished religious faith, had Marx's *Das Kapital* as its anti-metaphysical "bible" and Stalin as its new emperor. Both Christianity in Germany and Marxism as practised in Stalinist Russia were belief systems which were convinced of the absolute truths contained in their teaching. Neither system allowed any theoretical or practical dissent from its dogma. To the critical observer, then, it would appear that Brecht simply exchanged one dogmatic system of belief for another. Dialectically speaking, it makes perfectly good sense to the critical observer:

Thesis: Brecht's childhood was marked by his being the product of a mixed Lutheran/Catholic marriage; he grew up a bible-reading Christian of Lutheran

persuasion with a tendency towards scepticism.

Antithesis: Rejection of Christianity in young adulthood: behaviour shows him to be a hedonistic Nihilist in the mould of his own creation, Baal.

Synthesis: Embraces Marxism's view of a future world in which mankind, having rid itself of God and Capitalism, unites in universal fraternity and takes on the egalitarian roles of economic planner, producer of goods and consumer. It also gives Brecht a firm belief system!

The punishment/reward system in Marxism is based on the here and now rather than the hereafter. It would seem that Brecht, although he could never be described as a conservative, was looking for a system which would reconcile the humanitarian elements of his Bible-reading Augsburg youth with his inner tendency towards Nihilistic excess, and Marxism was the answer.

The change from Nihilist to Communist is marked by his intention in 1930 to write a *Learning-Play* based on the figure of Baal: the iconaclastic figure of his first professionally performed work was now to be a model for educational purposes in a socialist society. As he says in his *Theory of the Learning Plays*:

> "There is no necessity to present only actions which can be evaluated in a socially positive way; the representation of anti-social actions and attitudes (as flamboyantly as possible) can also be expected to have an educative effect." (GW 17:1024, translated K.P.)

The concept and function of the Dialectic in theatre, education and at a personal level, was particularly appealing to him, as it provoked open-ended argument and yet seemed irrefutable in its logic. Of this aspect of Brecht, Max Frisch wrote in 1948:

> "Brecht looks for discussion as a matter of course. For my part I get the least

> from those conversations where Brecht checkmates me with his dialectic: you are beaten, but not convinced." (*Brecht as they knew him*, 1975:105)

This is an aspect of Brecht which should be addressed when teaching; i.e. even though an argument in a *learning play* may seem irrefutable, there is no need to believe it or to feel crestfallen because one cannot find a counter-argument. On the contrary; one should niggle at it long enough and a logical counter-argument will undoubtedly present itself. Florian Vaßen remarks that Brecht himself, in a conversation with Pierre Abraham recounted in Steinweg's *Model for the Teaching Plays* (1976:198), was not, in the *learning play*, concerned

> "about arguments for or against opinions, but purely with exercises that promoted flexibility and were designed for the type of mental athletes who would become good users of the Dialectic." (Vaßen, 1995:209, translated K.P.)

Whatever the extent to which Brecht was a fervent Marxist/Marxist-Leninist, there is no doubt but that he saw education as one of the most important elements in building a socialist society. And whatever the truth about the origins of Brecht's *Learning Plays*, the fact remains that his idea of political/social education by theatrical means, i.e. the *Learning Play* - is worthy not only of investigation but of being practised in the here and now of undergraduate courses. Communism has failed, but one of the truly effective remains of Communism is something which was there long before Communism; i.e. the dialectical argument. Such a mode of argument sharpens the mind and clears away the mental cobwebs caused by acceptance of everyday reality and the "official version" of reality presented by media, politics and religion.

The fact that in 1930 Brecht could consider *Baal* as a suitable vehicle for a *Learning Play* is intriguing in itself, as it shows the sea change caused by his "conversion" to Marxism. The *Baal* fragments show a new, sharper character, whose

appetites, while remaining those of the original 1919 play, are now being used for a different purpose: education by alienation; Baal demonstrates the antisocial and unacceptable in order that those playing in the *learning play* may deduce and reinstate the socially acceptable.

A solid knowledge of the educational theory and objective which form the basis of the *learning play* is a key element in the employment of the form in theatrical training. The dialectic plays an integral part in the process and Brecht's theory and practice of this form of political/social/theatrical education, as well as its fortunes since the fall of Communism will be addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: BRECHT'S DIALECTIC; SOME REFLECTIONS ON ITS APPLICATION IN HIS *LEARNING PLAYS* AND ITS RELEVANCE IN A POST COMMUNIST WORLD

Thought must be divided

against itself

before it can come to

any knowledge of itself (Aldous Huxley)

1. DEFINITION OF THE HISTORICAL DIALECTIC

The dialectical argument has its origins in Greek philosophy, and its most famous proponents were Socrates and Plato. Its function is to question a seemingly self-evident argument and, by opposing it with a counter argument, test the truth of the former and the latter. By combining the argument and counter argument, a new truth or argument is arrived at. Traditionally, the classical titles are used as descriptors: **thesis, antithesis and synthesis.**

2. THE MODERN DIALECTIC

Bernard Shaw, towards whose work Brecht had a typically ambivalent attitude, describing him as a terrorist who employs an unusual weapon: humour (GW 15:97,

translated K.P.), put forward the following dialectical argument in *Arms and the Man:* "Never resist temptation; prove (prove = test, check) all things; hold fast that which is good." (1967:251) Shaw's words are far removed from the dialectical proposition contained in the prologue of Brecht's 1937 learning play (GW 2:793, translated K.P.)

The Exception and the Rule:

> Let nothing be called natural
> In an age of bloody confusion;
> Of ordered disorder,
> Of planned caprice
> And dehumanised humanity,
> Lest all things be held to be
> Unalterable.

The words and the ideas may be different in tone and intent, yet the two statements have one thing in common: one should have the courage to bring about and embrace change. There is, of course, one major difference in intent: when considering Brecht's concept of the dialectical process, it must be kept in mind that he was not thinking of its use in terms of metaphysical speculation but rather as an intellectual weapon in a materialist Marxist-Leninist social order. Such a social order was not at that time in existence in Germany but its realisation was being striven towards by the German Communist Party. Hitler's rise to power left Brecht no choice but to flee Germany, and in an undated letter to Otto Neurath (1990:141/2) it is clear that Brecht is developing his concept of the uses of the materialist dialectic by wishing to found an association:

> "The *Association for Dialectical Materialism* will attempt to derive certain insights and potential insights from social transformations while helping as it were to bring these transformations about. Various phrases to be collected by or submitted to the Association, correlated with social attitudes, are to be analysed in such a way as to throw light on their origin, their effectiveness, and

their dependence on other phrases. In addition to certain prognoses, we hope in every case to indicate the attitudes that make these phrases effective or ineffectual. Our catalogue is thus expected to combat metaphysics of every kind and at the same time to carry a concrete organisational force. ... It goes without saying that we are not interested primarily in a collection of flawless phrases, but rather in teaching flawless thinking by dissecting a catalogue of seeming truths, lies, infamies and metaphysicisms."

The association was, in fact, never founded, but the idea of collecting and using phrases from all walks of life combined with the concept of *teaching flawless thinking* is a clear indication of how the dialectic could be used in teaching for social purposes. The function of the dialectic-driven didactic piece/Lehrstück as a teaching weapon in the arsenal of Marxist-Leninist social education is implicit in this letter. One might, indeed, consider the ideas in the letter as being an extension of the ideas contained in his 1930 texts, *The Major and Minor Pedagogies*, which are part of the theoretical foundation of the *learning play*:

"The major pedagogy completely transforms the function of acting. it abolishes the system of player/spectator. It foresees only players who are simultaneously studying what they play. In accordance with the basic law which states that "where the interest of the individual is identical with that of the state, the commonly understood gestures define the individual's range of actions and activities", imitative playing becomes the main component of pedagogy.
In contrast, the minor pedagogy, in the transitional period of the first revolution, leads to the democratisation of the theatre. The players should, if at all possible, consist of amateurs (the roles so written that those playing them must remain amateurs in their playing of them). The plays and their production should transform the spectator into a statesman/woman. Therefore there should be no appeal to the spectator's feelings which would allow him/her to react aesthetically. The appeal is to the REASON. The players must impose an alienating filter on the characters and plot so that the spectator, taking note of the changes, is forced to *take sides* instead of *identifying with* characters and/or action." (Brecht, ca. 1930, BBA, 521/96, translated K.P.)

By 1938 Brecht's ideas expressed in the *Major* and *Minor Pedagogy* had crystalized and were expressed in the text (GW 17:1024/25, translated K.P.*) On the theory of the Learning Play*:

"The didactic piece teaches by being played, not by being seen. In principle an audience is not necessary, although it can, of course, be evaluated. The basic expectation of the learning play is that those acting it can be influenced socially by executing a definite type of action, adopting certain types of positions and delivering set speeches. etc.
The imitation of highly specific models plays a big part, as does the criticism levelled at such models by a deliberately different style of playing.
There is no necessity to present only actions and attitudes which can be evaluated in a socially positive way; the representation of anti-social actions and postures (as flamboyantly as possible) can also be expected to have an educative effect.
The aesthetic standards required for the creation of stage personae in conventional plays are set aside here. Particularly idiosyncratic or unique types of characters have no place in the learning play, except where the idiosyncracy and uniqueness would be the problem to be considered in the teaching.
The form of the learning play is strict but only so that elements of one own's invention and current topicality can more easily be inserted. (In *The Horatians and the Curiatians* an *ad lib* speech duel can take place between the field marshals prior to each battle; in *Measures Taken* whole scenes can be freely inserted, etc.)
The production values for epic theatre are the criterion for the style of acting.
The study of the "A" effect is essential.
The intellectual comprehension of the whole play is an absolute requirement.
The use of prerecorded music to accompany the piece is permissible. On the other hand, it is instructive for musicians to provide music for mechanical productions (in a film); they then have the possibility of trying out variations of their own within the framework of what is needed for the play.
Likewise, in the acting, the aim is a free, natural style appropriate to the player. This is, of course, not concerned with the mechanics of acting-training and the creation of average types of personae, even though the aim is to create a high average standard of playing.
The learning play offers enormous possibilities for variety. In the production of the *Baden Learning Play*, playwright and composer stationed themselves on the stage and constantly intervened. The playwright publicly directed the clowns to the area where they were to perform, and when the crowd watching the film demonstrated their consternation and distaste at seeing human corpses, the playwright ordered the narrator to announce at its conclusion: "There will now be a second showing of what was considered distasteful: the images of death." And the film was repeated."

These texts contain quintessential elements of Brecht's thoughts on the theory and practice of theatre such as the avoidance of metaphysical content, the "A" effect, Gestus and dialectical challenge of the text. It is perhaps very typical that Brecht, a restless spirit, who cast off what he probably saw as the strait jacket of Christianity

only to tie himself firmly into the even more restrictive strait jacket of Marxism, still managed to create an area of free intellectual questioning within the Marxist system.

3. BRECHT AND THE DIALECTIC IN THE POST COMMUNIST WORLD

The major pedagogical question that arises when considering the *Learning Play* is whether a genre based on a Marxist dialectical view of the world, and devised and intended for educating youth in a Marxist society, can have any relevance in the post Communist scheme of things. Brecht died in 1956. The Berlin Wall fell in 1989. How has Brecht's brain child the Learning Play fared in the forty-five and twelve years, respectively, since then?

It is interesting to note that in the period since Brecht's death and the fall of the Berlin Wall, far from withering and becoming a footnote in pedagogical or literary history, the Learning Play has, instead, taken even firmer root in second and third level institutions in a united Germany. How did this phenomenon come about?

Valuable insights into the steps by which the *Learning Play* took hold in West Germany are given in Florian Vaßen's essay in the Brecht Yearbook: *Brecht's Learning Play: Genesis and Value of the Didactic Play* (Vaßen, 1995:201-215, title and text translated by K.P.). In the essay Vaßen, an acknowledged Brecht expert and pedagogue, having sketched the background history of the genre, relates how a fellow Brecht scholar, Reiner Steinweg, reacted to his first encounter with Brecht's *Learning Plays* in 1963/64:

> "It soon became clear to him (Steinweg) that the theatrical characters were not representing a fully worked out theory, but that the performers as **learners**

were the real protagonists. Thereby the language-based theory is replaced by the performers' assuming **external** physical and **internal** emotional, rational and psychic positions. Similarly, Steinweg was quick to realize the central contradiction "between social responsibility and a life of personal fulfillment". (1995:202, translated K.P.)

It must be remembered that Steinweg's encounter with the *Learning Play* took place at the height of the Cold War. West Germany was a member of NATO, East Germany a member of the Warsaw Pact. Brecht, celebrated in the East, was, for many in the West an "uncomfortable" (unbequem) figure who had fled from the Nazis and, as has already been mentioned, got caught up in the post World War II Communist scare sweeping America. Returning to Europe, while living in Switzerland he wrote to the Austrian composer Gottfried von Einem in April 1949 (1990, No. 597:473/74) inquiring whether his wife, Helene Weigel, could regain her Austrian citizenship removed in 1933 and whether he, Brecht, might not also be granted Austrian citizenship on foot of Weigel's status as a native Austrian. He was granted Austrian citizenship on the 12th of April 1950, but did not receive an Austrian passport until the 3rd of November of that year (1990, No.642:493) even though he had chosen to live and work in the newly-established German Democratic Republic. If this appears complex, then it must be seen in the context of Brecht's life as a controversially eloquent and independent man of letters prior to 1933 and his exile from 1933 caused precisely by his eloquence and intellectual independence. Perhaps, after the flight from Nazi terror and the subsequent years of enforced exile, the thought may have been at the back of his mind that, although he was a Marxist, if he chose to live in the GDR, an Austrian passport would permit him to come and go or, indeed, to leave the GDR without difficulty? Whatever the reasons, Brecht was, in his own personality, a complex blend of precisely those conflicting aspirations of "social

responsibility and a life of personal fulfillment" mentioned by Steinweg (Vaßen, 1995:202, translated K.P.).

Steinweg's realisation concerning the central position of the **learners** was, perhaps, the first step towards the "deMarxification" of the educational element in Brecht's work and its gradual integration into the cultural life of the then West Germany until, as Vaßen goes on to say, in 1981 the Society for Theatre Pedagogy was founded as a means of providing an organisational framework for practical *Learning Play* work, and then, in 1984 came the foundation of the Hannover *Learning Play* Archives (LAH) as well as two publications: the first edition of the theatre pedagogy journal *Korrespondenzen* and the book *Assoziales Theater*. (ibid.202/3) The title of the latter pays tribute to Brecht's tendency to play with words: it may mean *asocial theatre* or *associative theatre* but, in true Brechtian fashion, it does not commit itself to a single meaning (1984:7)!

It is remarkable that, since 1956 and 1963, so much has been achieved on foot of plays which were written seventy years ago and, as Vaßen says, are limited by the Marxist theory on which they are based, a theory which, he concludes, "in its deformed realisation, must be seen as having failed."(Vaßen, 1995:204, translated K.P.)

4. THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS OF A *LEARNING PLAY* ON THE PERFORMERS

The age in which we live is, like Brecht's, a scientific one. Such an age, because of its

lack of a metaphysical core belief for the majority of people, can be stressful in that there is no spiritual authority which may be appealing or appealed to. In a certain ironic sense Western society may be said to have developed into a deformed Marxist Utopia: few people slip through the support provided by the social services net; there is neither starvation nor political oppression, but neither is there a focal point of *inner* activity, rest and rejuvenation for the majority of people. Vaßen's essay underlines the need for a psychological and bodily healing process and suggests that the *Learning Plays*, by their preoccupation with physical force, offer the performers a new possibility for self-harmony. This possibility is encapsuled in the Gestus:

> "Brecht's Gestus means ...interruption and contains a certain strictness and sense of control in the striving for a new, holistic body; i.e. a therapeutic process in which the "sick" body can be healed."
> (Vaßen, 1995:204, translated K.P.)

I interpret this as meaning becoming conscious of one's body as a performer in the everyday world and slowing down to observe both oneself and one's fellow humans in a sympathetic but critical light: a combination of Gestus and "A" effect in everyday affairs. By *acting out* violence, one may become less prone to *act* violently. This personal theory finds a definite resonance in Vaßen's views (Vaßen, 1995:205, translated K.P.) on the cathartic effect of the *Learning Play*; of how the *performance* and *portrayal* of physical violence can, by making physical force *external* actually reduce the *internal* personal and social elements which cause *impulsive* violent acts:

> "In performing a *Learning Play*, internalized forms of violence can be acted out violent fantasies are permitted by the protection of the LearningPlay character; indeed such fantasies are brought out."

This recalls Brecht's own views (GW 17:1024) that one did not always need to

represent only the socially positive; the vigorous portrayal of the antisociallyunacceptable is the best advertisement for the socially desirable. Again, Brecht's own words on the door of his workroom in Buckow seem particularly appropriate: "Principles are kept alive by violating them." (Hayman, 1983:361)

The theme of violence is very relevant to this thesis. The *Baal* texts I have translated, which are at the core of the thesis, contain scenes of physical or mental violence, and sometimes a combination of both. The violent actions of Baal and other *Learning Play* figures are, says Vaßen (1995:206, translated K.P.):

> "the representation of the most important social and aesthetic problems of the twentieth century: *the irreconcilable antagonism between basic instincts and the barriers erected by civilisation." (Freud)*

Contradiction and ambiguity are at the heart of the *Baal* texts. In translating and arranging them for undergraduate study and workshop performance, I am conscious of the points in this chapter: the post Marxist dialectic and post Communist Brecht reception and my own question of how the texts will be received by the performers, based on how the Brechtian performance theories translated here work in practice. I am also conscious of the questions posed by Vaßen (1995:203, translated K.P.):

> "The young adults and adolescents of today are in a significantly different social situation than that of the 1930s. The fundamental questions that arise from that: what and how can they learn from Brecht's learning plays **today?"**

To some extent these questions have been answered in this chapter, but the fourth chapter of the thesis will return to them in evaluating the concrete results

of the *Baal* workshop held in the UCC Granary Studio Theatre on Monday, the 18th of December 2000 from 2p.m. - 5p.m.

The workshop had two aims:

1. To establish by means of performance the contemporary relevance of the *Baal* subject matter.

2. To test the quality of the translations by hearing how they travel from the printed page to the performer's mouth.

With those two aims in mind, the next chapter is concerned with the theory and practice of translation.

CHAPTER 3 REFLECTIONS ON THE TYPES, THEORIES, PURPOSES AND PRACTICALITIES OF TRANSLATION

A person who

does not speak

a foreign language

will have an imperfect grasp

of the complexities and subtleties

of his own (Goethe)

1. TYPES OF TRANSLATION

Translation has different forms and purposes. One can, for example, translate within one's own language by converting a convoluted technical speech or text into an accessible everyday idom. Then there is the translation from a foreign language into one's own. If it is a literary translation, then matters such as precise equivalence, appropriate tone and register have to be considered in light of whether the work to be translated is aimed at a popular or specialist, adult or juvenile audience. In the realm of the spoken word, a good interpreter can make all the difference in business negotiations.

The examples of translation given in the preceding paragraph are very relevant in considering how to approach the translation of a theatre text because such a text is intended for reading, speaking and listening. While respecting the original, the translation must also respect the syntax and morphology of the language into which it

is being translated. Ideally, it should give the impression to the eye and ear that it is not a translation at all. It must be flawlessly clear to the eye of the performers so that it will sound like instinctive native speech when they utter it and the reception of the spoken text by the listeners should be critical only with regard to the content of the text. Problems caused by awkward and clumsy syntax should not arise at all if the translator has paid due respect to the dovetailing, splicing and welding required to make a foreign text sound like a native one. In short: sound, form and content should be seamlessly united by the art that conceals art. If successfully achieved, the eye that sees the words on the page can transfer them to the mouth which will then produce the new sound of the original author's thought in a manner that will, in the theatrical sense, delight, dismay, amuse, move or infuriate the listeners by its seemingly natural rhythmic ebb and flow.

2. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT INFLUENCED THE TRANSLATIONS IN THIS THESIS

The personal theories set out in the previous section are based on practical experience and may be brought together and applied to translating Brecht into English; a task which lies at the heart of this thesis, and one which was inspired by a Brecht workshop held at UCC by Florian Vaßen of Hannover university in June 2000. My first acquaintance with Brecht's 1930 *Baal* project came about as a result of that workshop, which included work on Brecht's *Baal* and *Fatzer Learning Play* fragments. Manfred Schewe of UCC was involved in the organisation of the workshop, and gave

my translation skills a vote of confidence by requesting me to render a scene from the 1930 project into English for use in the workshop. The scene in question - Baal/Lupu/Boy outside the cinema - is numbered B 11 in the Brecht original; it is numbered 06 in my performing version. I found the scene darkly funny, and felt there was about it a strange sense of the familiar. On closer observation I detected a sort of biblical story gone wrong: a suggestion of the direction the story of the Good Samaritan might have taken if removed from its religious context and placed in the hands of a sceptical student of human nature. On reflection, this sense of biblical background should not have been too surprising. Brecht had all his life been an assiduous reader of the Bible.

Interesting light is thrown on this area of Brecht's life and work by Franz Mennemeier's essay (1979:244-255) on Brecht which reveals that his very first play written as a 15 year old was, in fact called *The Bible*. The play chronicles the moral dilemma faced by the inhabitants of a Protestant town besieged by Catholic forces during the Thirty Years War: their town will be spared on two conditions: that they convert to Catholicism and that the mayor's daughter agrees to give herself for one night to the Catholic commander. Already in that play one can see the seeds of the later master of dialectical ambiguity and intellectual provocation. Mennemeier notes:

> "Here ... Brecht calls into being a form of activity with its own sense of responsibilty... religion is turned in the direction which, in Brecht's opinion, should guide human actions; i.e. that "salvation" should be created in this world and not sought for in the next one. - With the force of a play of moral dilemma, instructive despite the refusal to provide an explicit message, Brecht's first play points towards this new morality." (1979:247, translated K.P.)

The *Bible's* theme of bourgeois morality versus the real situation recalls once again the Brechtian motif (GW 17:1024) that the flamboyant representation of the reprehensible can also be educative!

I am certainly not the first to translate passages from Brecht's better known works, but, according to my research, I am the first to translate and rearrange the *Baal Learning Play* fragments of 1930 for contemporary undergraduate teaching purposes.

This is confirmed by two impeccable sources. In autumn 2000 I e-mailed Florian Vaßen and asked him whether the texts had ever been translated into English. He replied that, to the best of his knowledge, and that of colleagues outside Germany, they had not. He suggested I approach Günter Berg, the Managing Director of Suhrkamp, in order to make assurance doubly sure. My fax and e-mails bore fruit: in July 2001, Tom Kuhn of Oxford University and Methuen confirmed by e-mail the untranslated status of the texts. Photocopies of these pieces of correspondence can be found in appendix A of this thesis.

Translating Brecht, even though he has been dead for over forty years, is not a task to be lightly undertaken. He was extremely punctilious about the appearance, sound and effect of his work in other languages. It is safe to say that he did not suffer poor translations gladly. Writing from Skovsbostrand to Ernestine Bevin on 17 June 1938, he has the following to say about a passage from a translation of his play: *Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar* which she had sent to him:

> "When (page 40) Theresa brings in Juan's cap, she says: "This is why they shot him". The German says: "Schuld war die Mütze" (The cap was to blame). And when asked: "How do you mean?" she answers: "Ragged, worn-out." In German it's a clear, short sentence: "Sie ist schäbig" (It's shabby). In this place such sloppy, naturalistic speech is absolutely hideous. Altogether the translation is full of such sloppiness, the kind of loose naturalism that I can't bear." (Letters, No.364, 1990:288)

Brecht's harsh criticism was a warning on the necessity for a translator to stay close to the exact text and spirit of the original. Brecht's own ideas on style are

expressed in his 1926 interview with Guillemin in *Brecht as they knew Him* (1975:46-47):

> "I attempt a classical, cold depiction, based largely on the intellect. I appeal to the brain. My material is understandable, therefore I do not need to make it understandable."

If Brecht was to be taken at his word, it seemed correct to aim in my translations for a cool, precise style in which the words would speak for themselves. There would be no attempt to Irishize or Anglicize the texts. The only concession was to call Baal a "cad" in the title and elsewhere, so that, like the original German title, there would be a suggestion of a rhyme. Neither would there be any location or accent suggested. Students would bring their own accents and not be subjected to any imposition of accents from elsewhere.

3. TWO APPROACHES TO TRANSLATION

Expert guidance on translation to enable production of an accurate visual and aural translation of the text was found from two sources: André Lefevere and Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast.

In André Lefevere's (1992:49-50) *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* there is a description by John Hookham Frere of what he considered the two most recognisable types of translator: the "faithful translator" and the "spirited translator". According to Frere, the faithful translator:

> "renders into English all the conversational phrases according to their grammatical and logical form, without any reference to the current usage which had affixed to them an arbitrary sense and appropriated them to a particular and definite purpose. He retains scrupulously all the local and

particular and definite purpose. He retains scrupulously all the local and personal peculiarities, and in the most rapid and transient allusions thinks it his duty to arrest the attention of the reader with a tedious explanatory note. The archetypal translator just described tends to be conservative in both ideological and poetological terms. He translates the way he does out of reverence for the cultural prestige the original has acquired. The greater the prestige, the more "grammatical and logical" the translation is likely to be."

Lefevere (ibid.:50) then contrasts Frere's "Faithful Translator" with that same critic's "Spirited Translator" who:

"On the contrary, employs the corresponding modern phrases; but he is apt to imagine that a peculiar liveliness and vivacity may be imparted to his performance by the employment of such phrases as are particularly connected with modern manners; and if at any time he feels more than usually anxious to avoid the appearance of pedantry, he thinks he cannot escape from it in any way more effectively than by adopting the language and jargon of the day. The peculiarities of ancient times he endeavours to represent by substituting in their place the peculiarities of his own time and nation."

On the matter of languages themselves, Lefevere (ibid.:100) makes a number of points which make good sense to anybody attempting to avoid the traps into which the contemporary "faithful" or "spirited" translator might fall:

"Languages are different and no amount of translator training is ever likely to reduce that difference. Translator training can, however, alert translators both to the relativity of translation poetics and to strategies that may be used not to "overcome" the differences between languages, which are an undeniable given, but to project "their" image of the original, which may be influenced by various considerations, not just of ideology and/or poetics, but also of the intended audience of the translation. These strategies are by no means limited to the realm of linguistics alone. Rather, they operate on the level of poetics, Universe of Discourse, **and** linguistics."

Lefevere's arguments (ibid.: 100-101) include the traditional translation conflicts of sense at the expense of sound and vice versa, and suggests that if translators *"try to impose the morphosyntactic structure of the source language on the target text, they will in all probability lose whatever elegance and balance the original may have possessed in that respect."*

Specifically, with regard to Brecht, Lefevere sharpened my resolve to steer a middle course between the "faithful" and the "spirited" translation courses. In this I have, perhaps a slight linguistic and cultural advantage. Living in Germany in the late 1960s I had the good fortune to be present at performances of the Berliner Ensemble between 1967 and 1970, when Helene Weigel and others of the original Brecht company were still active. Two thing were particularly impressive: the speech patterns with their hard, steely delivery blending with moments of what, had it not been speech, would have been inexpressible emotion. Secondly, the movements of the players, either large or minimal, seemed so absolutely "right"; neither exaggerated nor underplayed. I was seeing Gestus and the "A" effect from people who had been with Brecht in the Berlin of the 1920s. It was, even as late as the 1960s, a theatre which had the power to change the individual by making him/her focus on those stage actions and situations which provoked in him/her the desire to intervene at that moment and afterwards leave the theatre and do something about it. And yet it was much more than mere "Agitprop". With warts and all, it was a theatre which managed to be itself while performing as a servant of a political idea to which Brecht himself had subscribed. Its language - Brecht's texts in the mouths of actors - was potent through its directness and simplicity, but also by means of the actors' skill in delivering it.

Without succumbing to nostalgia or its concommitant, the desire to recreate historical moments, I was aiming in my translations to create (NOT recreate!) in English the cool, clear, precise language of Brecht. If I have achieved this coolness, clarity and precision, then those performing the translations should find that certain physical movements appropriate to themselves and to theatrical performance will

come naturally. I base this proposition on the fact that in 1998 I produced Brecht's *Kleinbürgerhochzeit* in German at UCC Granary Theatre, Cork with a cast of four German and five Irish students. The video of that production shows what can be achieved with and by amateurs (who are, after all, the target performers for *Learning Plays*!) in a foreign language as well as hinting what might be achieved with a translation that stayed close to the spirit of Brecht without being over-awed by his critical spirit peering over one's shoulder.

A consideration not to be overlooked prior to translating texts is the question of language varieties and register. Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast's (1994:32, translated K.P.) categories of register provided the linguistic parameters for my work:

1.The variation of language with regard to time (diachronic aspect);

2. The variation in language with regard to geographic region (diatopic aspect);

3. The variation of language depending on the differences between socio-cultural layers of a language community (diastrastic aspect);

4. The changes in language register in different situations by e.g. a professor speaking to different people; e.g. to other colleagues,to students, to his football buddies or to his children (diaphasic aspect).

Regarding 1: Brecht's pieces are perfectly at home in the 21st century: human language remains basically the same as in his day.

2: Could play anywhere where the representation of the human form is not forbidden and men and women can act together.

3: The socio-cultural groupings are not extreme. The language is not dialect such as Swabian; nor is it slang, so it is therefore more

easily transferred into the target language.

4: Baal is not an academic but, because of what Brecht had in mind for him to do, he switches roles and this affects his tone rather than his register.

4. SIGNPOST TO BRECHT'S INTENTIONS IN THE 1930 *BAAL* PROJECT

Reinhard Baumgart (1989:127, translated K.P.) throws light on the *Baal* of 1930 when he writes:

> "By 1930 Brecht, in preliminary sketches, was trying something quite different: namely letting Baal's unreliability and lack of social definition explode into unihibited play by having him appear in a variety of social masks; first as a priest, then as passport officer and finally, ad infinitum as "whore, mother, nature lover, strike breaker, historian, engineer, party guest etc", subversion obvious behind the mask and in the role, and that opens up perspectives which will lead to Puntila, the good woman of Sezuan and Azdak, the judge in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*."

The 1930 fragments are exactly that. They consist of some written scenes as well as the outline for scenes that were never written. There is no particular order and, at first sight, no immediately apparent relation between the scenes except for the fact that they are a mixture of social comment and bible stories and parables which have been removed from their biblical context and thus demythologized and subject to critical scrutiny; in other words: Brechtian alienation at work.

5. ARRANGING THE TEXTS WITH A PURPOSE

With Lefevere's thoughts on the "faithful" and "spirited" translators, with Gerzymisch-Arbogast suggesting the parameters of language register, and with Baumgart and Brecht as literary background voices, I once again scrutinized the texts. I came to the conclusion that they would gain greatly by being arranged into a dramatically meaningful running order, balancing the scenes of social comment with those based on the bible. This process would create something approaching dramatic unity while preserving the integrity of the individual scenes and still, as Baumgart put it, "letting Baal explode into uninhibited play". Then, taking Brecht at his word that insertions could be made where appropriate, and taking into consideration the fact that Brecht had never shown any inhibitions about rearranging other people's works, I decided to subject his work to a similar process. Once the running order of the scenes was decided upon, the original Bible texts were inserted as a "prologue" to the Brechtian version of that same Bible story. In so doing, Brecht's alienation of the original text could itself be alienated by confronting it with the original, thus throwing light on the differences and similarities of both versions and opening both versions to scrutiny and criticism by those studying and performing the texts.

6. DECIDING ON LANGUAGE REGISTER: PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

Brecht's text no. B 8 bears the title *DER BÖSE BAAL DER ASOZIALE UND DIE ZWEI MÄNTEL*. For performing purposes I chose to call the scene *The poor man*

in winter. The scene has a stage left and stage right chorus who comment in a quasi-philosophical manner on the action between Baal and the poor man. The following examples show the differences in key elements of German and English and demonstrate the choices which had to be made on tenses, phrasing, selection of appropriate word. Brecht had to be made absolutely transparent, but equally important was finding a pattern of rhythm, assonace and dissonance which would first fit into and then issue forth from a performer's mouth.

EXAMPLE 1: TENSES IN GERMAN AND ENGLISH

German: seit gestern abend laufe ich....(Present tense containing Past tense trace)

English: 1.: Since yesterday evening I'm walking/I'm walking since yesterday evening (Irish tense usage).

English: 2.: Since yesterday evening I've been walking/I've been walking since yesterday evening (Standard English usage).

On reflection, the British tense usage carries the message better, as it anchors the action more clearly as having *begun in the past* and *continuing into the present* -i.e. the *Present Perfect Continuous* tense - and this tense is thus the appropriate one. Were I to have used the *Present Continuous* form as in example 1, which is common in Ireland, it would have awakened cultural echoes of J.M. Synge's frequent use of the form in his plays and thus given Brecht an Irish colouring which, as alredy stated at the outset of the chapter, was to be avoided.

EXAMPLE 2: WORD ORDER

On the matter of word order, there is a subtle difference between "Since yesterday

evening I've been walking." and "I've been walking since yesterday evening."

The latter is appropriate as the answer to the question: "How long have you been walking?" It would be rhythmically lame and linguistically incongruous to begin the Brecht sentence with "I've been walking since yesterday evening", because the information is then, to the Irish and English ear, complete in itself. However, by using the word order "Since yesterday evening I've been walking", the listener is given to understand that *more information is to follow*, and the reaction of the listener will be different, both in the mental expectation of that information and the accompanying, simultaneous reaction of face and body in anticipation of what is to come.

EXAMPLE 3: STRONG OR WEAK FORM OF THE VERB?

A good example of choosing between strong and weak forms of the verb is provided by the register of speech between the poor man and Baal. In colloquial spoken German it is normal to drop the final "e" in the first person singular, Present tense of verbs: *Das mach' ich schon/Das hab' ich schon.* In colloquial spoken English it is similar, with *I have* contracted or weakened to *I've* and *I am* contracted to *I'm*. The use of the strong form of the verb, i.e.: *I have* or *I am* in spoken English always suggests that the statement is of some serious import. "I'm angry with you" suggests the speaker's strong *passing* displeasure with the person addressed. "I am angry with you", with the initial "a" vowels voiced, suggests either a freezing cold or boiling hot anger which will not be forgotten for a long time, if ever. In the same way, "I'm cold" normally means a feeling of discomfort which will pass if one turns up the heating, puts on a pullover, has a cup of tea or goes for a brisk walk. "I am cold", on the other hand, is arresting to eye and ear because it suggests that the cold experienced is of a

threatening, archetypical type; a sort of great, terrible, body and soul-piercing cold. This form has been put into the mouth of the poor man to "alienate" in a Brechtian sense: the strong, rhetorical form of the verb is not normally associated with a poor person. By giving the poor man this form, however, the difference between him and Baal is underlined. The cold the poor man speaks of threatens his very existence. Baal, though physically warm because he is wearing two coats, is, in a sense, the embodiment of the cold from which the poor man is suffering and will ultimately die from, as the text makes clear.

EXAMPLE 4: TRANSLATING A WORD WHICH IS BOTH PERSONAL TITLE AND MODE OF ADDRESS

This example studies the change in meaning of the word *Herr* in the translation of the idiomatic term *der große Herr*, and the poor man's opening addressing of Baal of by his social title of *Herr* .

At first sight the term *Der große Herr* could mean *the big man*, or *the great man*. However, context and idiomatic usage can give it quite a different meaning. In the context of this scene, the poor man sees Baal as a possible way out of his problem. He adopts a suppliant tone which stresses his own low status and elevates Baal to a higher one - *der große Herr* - not because there is anything inherently superior about Baal, but because Baal possesses two coats, one of which he might be persuaded to part with on humanitarian grounds. In this context Baal is depersonalized; in the mind of the poor man Baal/der große Herr is seen purely in terms of opportunity and is, to a degree, peronsally downgraded by the term *der große Herr*, from being a person to being an opportunity which happens to have a

human face. There is no sincerity in the term *der große Herr*: it is merely a coded statement of the poor man's inferior status coupled with a feeling that, for reasons of human solidarity, a man with two coats should, as the Bible (Luke 3:9-11) suggests, give one coat to a man who has none. Thus, the English term *fine gentleman,* which is equally self-serving, grovelling and insincere in this context, is the appropriate translation.

Finally, in a short soliloquy the poor man says: "It is cold. I have no coat. I am freezing. Good day..." The salutation finishes with the word *Herr*. *Herr* can mean *master*, *lord*, *Mr.* or *Sir*. *Lord* and *master* do not fit the context. *Mr.* could sound disrespectful, and so, by process of elimination, *Sir* is the best translation of *Herr* and gives the correct flavour and balance to the sentence in English.

7. FOR WHOM ARE THE TRANSLATED TEXTS INTENDED?

Again, it must be remembered that the translated texts, with their genuine biblical counterparts inserted where appropriate, are not merely part of a thesis that will gather dust on a shelf. They are aimed at introducing the student of theatre to the richly ambiguous and provocative thought processes inherent in Brecht's writing. In a critical introduction to Brecht and his modes of thought action and writing, one might, as a warning against any pre-conceived desire to uncritically "canonize" Brecht and his works, employ Shaw's aphorism: "Where two people agree, only one has been thinking", for with Brecht there is a great danger inherent in agreeing with any of his propositions: a few moments later his thought processes, inspired by the dialectical

mode of thinking, will contradict his own original argument and one is very likely to be dropped, along with one's willingness to agree, into the intellectual equivalent of an olefactorily challenging waste substance. The study and practice of Brecht teaches intellectual vigilance, sharp critical acumen and, very often, leads to a greater understanding of one's own humanity, warts and all, and, by extension, to a greater understanding of the humanity of others, warts and all.

On a practical basis the texts are a vehicle for the introduction and practising of Brechtian techniques such as gestus, attitudes and alienation. To achieve these theoretical and practical aims with students who have no knowledge of German and may, at best, know of Brecht only by name, it is essential that the texts they receive should be lively and stimulating. Above all, the texts must be accurate reflections of the original. They must, as has already been stated, be immediately attractive to eye and ear as a prerequisite to sounding attractive when uttered aloud.

8. TESTING THE TRANSLATIONS IN A THEATRE WORKSHOP SITUATION

The Brecht workshop which I held on 18th of December 2000 in the Granary Studio Theatre, UCC, was the first acid test of the translations' linguistic effectiveness and their contemporary relevance. Information on the organisation and carrying out of the workshop as well as the feedback it provided will be given in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSLATIONS IN PRACTICE: THE BRECHT WORKSHOP AND ITS RESULTS

The world takes
a crazy turn when
teachers themselves
start
to
learn (Brecht: Galileo Galilei)

1. THEORETICAL PREPARATION

The title of this thesis is *Brecht from Page to Mouth* and this chapter is concerned with the results of what happened when, in the workshop situation of 18th December 2000, mouths, the majority of which had hitherto been Brecht-free zones, lifted his words which I had translated off the page and uttered them aloud so that, for the first time, from voices other than my own, I heard Brecht's 1930 *Baal Learning Play* fragments in English.

In order to give a clear shape to the theoretical considerations which lay behind the practical proceedings of the workshop I am making use of Jean McNiff's chart contained in her pamphlet on action research (McNiff, 1994:15).

2. <u>ACTION PLANNING</u>:

Jean McNiff's chart provides questions which the practitioner asks himself:

Q. What is my research interest?

A. The translation of Brecht's Baal Learning Play fragment; the study of their place and time in Brecht's work.

Q. Why am I interested?

A. Because Brecht continues to challenge traditional wisdom and official versions precisely because he changed course so often while still remaining himself.

Q. What kind of evidence can I gather to show why I am interested?

A. Theoretical texts which have a bearing on the function of the primary texts; e.g. Brecht's *Theory on the Learning Play*; the *Major and Minor Pedagogy*. These will be supported by secondary literature by Brecht specialists in the field of the *Learning Play* such as Florian Vaßen, Clemens and Rautenberg, de Atencio. Also secondary literature which gives insights into Brecht's life at the time the *Baal* 1930 *Learning Play* fragments in question were being written; e.g. Reinhard Baumgart. Where these texts are in German, I shall translate them into English, because I wish to create a wide audience for Brecht among non-German speakers.

Q. What can I do about it?

A. In the theoretical field I can combine the secondary literature and my own ideas with each other to present good arguments and interesting insights into Brecht's life and works both orally and in writing. In the practical field I will devise a workshop open to all to test the effectiveness and quality of my translations as well as the contemporary relevance of Brecht's ideas of 1930.

Q. What kind of evidence can I gather to show that what I am doing is having an impact?

A. The workshop will be recorded on video. Each participant will be given a booklet containing the texts and there will be a questionnaire on the last page of the booklet which will be filled out immediately after the workshops ends so that the feedback will be fresh and spontaneous.

3. ORGANISATION OF THE WORKSHOP

At the organisational level the workshop involved a number of steps: publicity to recruit participants, text preparation, spatial and visual preparation of the performing

space, arranging for videoing of the event.

Publicity

(i) Visually, students were informed of the workshop by means of posters in the foyer of the Granary Theatre as well as on the notice boards of the departments involved in the current M.A. programme (English, German and French).

(ii) Aurally, announcements were made by tutors during language classes. *Artbeat*, UCC's Campus Radio Arts programme, also publicised the event.

Text Preparation

(i) The *student* texts were presented in a user-friendly ring-binder booklet. The cover of the booklet had a portrait of Brecht with his ubiquitous cigar and the "menu" of the workshop. The menu contains references to biblical readings, but no readings were contained in the booklet. The Bible texts were fixed on the walls, interspersed with other Brecht texts and the plan was to make people demonstrate, unconsciously, the unique nature of their walk as they strode or strolled to the wall to find the text they had been asked to read.

Inside the booklet, the texts were presented in large print to facilitate the reader's swift visual assimilation. Stage instructions were given in italics. A section from *The Threepenny Opera* song *The uncertainty of human circumstance* (GW 2:257) was inserted as an example of Brecht's technique of teaching by subversion: the text is radical, the music is rhythmic and catchy. At the back of the booklet was a questionnaire on the texts which was to be filled out at the end of the workshop.

(ii) The workshop leader's logbook consisted of three vertical columns. From left to right, they showed, respectively, the concrete steps of each student activity, the rationale and question prompts behind the activity, and the approximate timings of each one.

A copy of the booklet cover, the logbook and copies of the completed questionnaires are contained in appendix C. As some students had to leave immediately after the workshop it was unfortunately not possible to get all fifteen questionnaires back. Despite promises to return them with the information required,

these questionnaires have not been returned.

Spatial and visual Preparation of the Performing Space

In order to create the visual environment for a critical "Brecht community" posters with Brecht texts and aphorisms were put on the walls of the Granary Studio theatre. The Bible texts which were to be read out loud for comparison with the Brecht texts, were interspersed with these. Items associated with Brecht's thinking and writing in general were placed in the centre of the floor: a copy of the Bible, food (a half-eaten sandwich), a coat of good material, a plastic rain jacket, copies of his Major and Minor Pedagogy, three balls as a reminder of how Brecht wanted actors to speak (Letter 882, Brecht 1956:562). "The speeches must be batted back and forth like pingpong balls."

Videoing of the Workshop

Gerburg de Atencio (1984:112) points out the advantages of videoing the process:

> "Videoing is important and a big help to everybody. Processes are going on which, at least some of the time, people can't control. These processes lose their power to intimidate if the video can be used for everybody together to see what they have been doing.It also gives people the chance to express any fears that they may have about showing or giving too much of themselves."

To test de Atencio's theory and also to obtain visual feedback for future reference, I arranged for a "critical friend" to video the workshop. Apart from the desire of the students to see at a later date what and how they had done in the workshop, there was a further advantage in having a video of the event: it would enable me to check the visual evidence against the written answers to the questionnaire in the student booklet which the students filled out as soon as the workshop ended.

4. PROCEDURAL ASPECT OF THE WORKSHOP

(i) The workshop which was given the Brecht-style title ***Yes, But What Has Been Learned?*** commenced with warm up exercises: walking, establishing eye contact, naming names, engaging in speech, playing at ball throwing and catching, end to end football etc., which concluded with the group sitting in a circle on the floor.

(ii) Alienation was introduced at the end of the warm up phase. The point of the exercise was "Learning to trust each other."

Description of "Learning to trust" exercise

One participant, her eyes closed, feet together, arms at her side, was rocked gently backward and forward between two others, one in front of her, the other behind her. The pendulum style movement became slower and the distance she was allowed to fall wider until finally she was placed full length on the floor and brought back to a standing position with the same gentleness.

A second volunteer, who had been expecting similar treatment, was extremely surprised when, having been lowered gently to the floor, she was subjected to a mock beating up after which her "assailant" walked away, leaving her to get up by herself.

The point of the "Learning to trust" exercise

"Trust, yes; but don't expect that similar beginnings will lead to similar ends. Trust, yes - but not blindly." In the Brechtian sense we had, in that exercise, not only performed an interesting exercise on the nature of trust in an ensemble situation; we had, by taking as our starting point a demonstration of "normal" kind and gentle behaviour, and then demonstrating "abnormal" unkind behaviour, restored the "truth"; namely: that kindness, gentleness and consideration are superior to unkindness, brutality and lack of consideration. Brutality and antisocial behaviour had been flamboyantly demonstrated so that socially acceptable behaviour could be reinstated and appreciated. This is very much in line with Brecht's views in the *Theory of the Learning Play* (GW 17:1024), and also with the final sentence of his rules for himself on the door of his workroom in Buckow: *Principles are kept alive by violating them* (Hayman, 1983:361).

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(iii) Throughout the proceedings, in order to activate the Brechtian concept of Gestus, the participants were asked to study their own hands and the hands of their neighbours by looking at their shape and examining their texture and considering what stories the hands might tell about their owner. This seemed to fascinate some of the participants who had, they said, never previously thought so intimately and consciously about the nature and use of the hands; a point which found its way into the answers to the questionnaire.

(iv) In the middle of the workshop I introduced a refrain from the song *The Uncertainty of Human Circumstances* (GW2, 1967:430-432) from *The Threepenny Opera.* It created a new surge of energy and enthusiam. In retrospect, it would have been good to have started the actual workshop with that song. Exactly the same point was made in the answers to the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the song functioned well, as can be seen and heard on the video, as a means of reinforcing the central message of the workshop: it's perfectly acceptable to make mistakes and to find certain things difficult to do. Go back over them and see if and how you can improve your skills.

(v) As has already been stated, the Bible readings were posted on the walls, interspersed with the Brecht texts, and this created a good opportunity to watch the uniqueness of the person's walk to the wall and note the combination of Gestus and Attitude the walk provided for the observers while the walker was immersed in thinking of his own task.

The participant had to read the Bible text without rehearsal. An aural refinement was presented by the fact that only the student reading from the wall could see the text; thus, the reader had control over the listening group by virtue of the fact that only s/he had the power to proclaim the text and the others had to listen very intently.

(vi) Between the readings and scenes, the group reformed the initial circle and, seated on the floor, discussed what had been done, how it had been done and what, in movement, speech and actual content, might have been done differently. Brecht's idea

in his Major and Minor Pedagogy was put into action: the democratisation of theatre took place with all voices being equal and there was a single acting, studying and reflecting community; the division into actors and spectators had been abolished. My own function was very much that of "gentle facilitator." As far as possible I let the participants enjoy complete freedom, except when it was necessary to end a section of work, introduce some new Brechtian concept, or question or answer some point raised by a participant.

(vii) In order to maintain a vibrant group dynamic, I kept changing the personnel of the groups to enable as many people as possible to play roles and reverse roles in the performance of the same piece. In this way there was a constant shifting of perspective, as the balance of new voices and bodies repeating a piece immediately after others had finished continually changed the dynamic of the piece and swung the intellectual sympathies first one way and then the other. People began to realize that what had at first seemed quite clear was, after playing and watching it several times, no longer as clear-cut as they had originally thought. This was particularly true in B 8, which is *Baal and the poor man in winter*. After four playings of the scene there were animated discussions on whether Baal was really responsible for the man's death, or whether the man himself had contributed to it by his own weakness and stupidity. I merely observed and listened, but felt that Brecht would have approved of people arguing about worthwhile things.

(viii) One participant asked why we were using Brecht texts based on Marxist-Leninist dialectics and the failed political entity of Soviet Communism. Before I could answer, another participant gave an answer: "Dialectical argument, metaphysical and non-metaphysical, was there in Ancient Greece. Just enjoy the language and situations!"

It can be seen in the questionnaires in appendix C, that most people felt stimulated and far from threatened by the texts. An adequate answer to the student's question is provided by David Thomson's authoritative *Europe Since Napoleon* (1957:115) which was published a year after Brecht's death and in the middle of the Cold War era. It contains a statement that is as true now as it was then:

> "It is unnecessary to accept a materialistic or Marxist conception of history in order to hold that changes in how people make a living and in the environment in which they live are among the most important changes in human history."

Most of Brecht's plays are, in one way or another, about just such questions. Judging by the reaction of the participants to the translations of the *Baal* learning play fragments in the workshop of December 18th, it seemed that in the year 2000 Brecht and his work had transcended and, indeed, outlived the political ideas and system to which he had given allegiance.

The workshop began at 2 p.m. and finished at exactly 5 p.m.

5. EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP OF 18th OF DECEMBER, 2000.

Mode of evaluation

(i) Video

Watching the video of an event which one has organized is, to a certain extent, (e)motion recollected in tranquility. It needs the eye of the "critical friend" to point out where things were less than successful. The viewing of the workshop video gave plenty of food for thought. Some parts which had seemed slow-moving in reality looked quite brisk on screen; things which had seemed to go very well in reality appeared hesitant when viewed on the screen. In the final analyis, three "critical friends", one who had been at the workshop, one who had done the videoing of it, and the third who had no involvement with the workshop, watched the video with a critical eye and the consensus was that, though it appeared to have gone well, with a high degree of commitment in the playing and the discussions, such visual evidence should be linked to and compared with the objective written evidence of the questionnaires.

The rationale was clear: no matter how hard the mind tries to be objective when watching a video, the images hitting the eye tend to subvert the mind in the direction of subjectivity. Written evidence, on the other hand, is a cool, clear medium

in which words provide fixed information in an immovable form. The eye is more in control of the information and the mind has more time and unlimited opportunity to revisit unchanging information in sober black and white lines as opposed to the barrage of colour and movement in a video.

(ii) Written: the questionnaire

The questionnaire was the final page of the translation booklet. It was divided into five inter-related sections to elicit information on the participants' response to the different aspects of the workshop. The answers given in each by the individual participants are presented below. A forward double slash // denotes the end of each individual's answer. Photocopies of the originals can be found in Appendix **€**.

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

.....

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT BAAL AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS:

Really interesting useful for further work// Go for what you want// It was a really great workshop - it opened my mind a lot - introducing ideas that I'd never thought about// I felt that, with Baal, Brecht was showing us a minority in society which is a good thing, but also to make us aware that there is a piece of Baal in all of us// Openness, questioning of ideas, even simple things// Approach taken was very good, I think it's good and effective to get the audience involved, most essential feature being the questioning. Importance of gestures also recognized// Brecht is complex but approachable. A lot of writings on Brecht tend to alienate the reader/student (I feel). This opens him up in a more real way// I thought the workshop was very good. Everyone was eager to become involved and the texts were very interesting to go through// Games to get to know each other - good/ fun/ eliminated feelings of uncomfort. Learned about Brecht's ideas - knew little or nothing about him before// The complexity of the text was fascinating. Brecht seemed to challenge us to contradict each other//

==========

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS:

The world is full of injustice// Pity there wasn't more than just the three hours so we could have delved a bit deeper// It certainly made me aware how most people do follow a certain trend, depending on how strong it is// Singing and talking piece should have been at the beginning// Maybe it was a bit short, could have had deeper discussions in some parts// Constant questioning can spiral in on itself and lead to despair. Although on reflection the fun element/humour can temper this and engender positivity// The only negative thing I could say is, it wasn't long enough!// Obviously different levels of acting among participants. Would be good to to comment on what we did good/bad after our attempts at performing the texts. Texts for women?// Baal seemed to know what he wanted but he wouldn't compromise. He was like a spoilt child//

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3. THEATRICAL IDEAS:

Useful for ideas - such as using hands more. Everyone interactive// Would make great mini-theatre work/training// More awareness on the expression of the use of the hands which I hadn't really considered before// More expressive, use your hands// Gestures should be more encouraged and also the audience getting involved. I think that both actor/audience should gain an insight. Forms should be approached// It would be great to stage these pieces from *Baal;* I think the lighting would be very important, spotlights, in darkness etc.// Good mix of fun and practical work, plus got a chance to study Brecht's texts - never did that before// Simple movements can be very dramatic. Do actions speak louder than words? (Probably at least as loud)

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4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

Brecht's ideas are relevant to the world today. Good/Bad - rich getting richer and poor getting poorer// I didn't realize how old it was - it sounded so modern// They're really relevant - it provoked a lot of thought on today's society and the social norms (and its relelevance has proved society to be outwardly changing but inwardly

stagnant// Brecht, like most, is writing about human emotions. This I feel helps us to become more aware or relate to the facts on how we should deal with and express our emotions// Very relevant// Very relevant. "Don't throw potatoes at him, because we need to eat and there's nothing so bad that it would justify destroying a meal"// Very. In reopening the texts that we all know (e.g. biblical tales), he forces us to evaluate things/tales we normally accept as black and white morality lessons. Especially in the case of the Good Samaritan tale which is oft quoted yet never discussed// For pieces that were written in the early part of the 20th century, it seems the situation will never fade out of life. I would liken Brecht's writing to that of Shakespeare, something that will never age// Very. Baal faces and confronts people with truth and does what some of us are afraid to do - break the stereotypes and not comply, i.e. breaking the strings. He seems to be a frustrated man, frustrated at lack of education of workers and their lack of appreciation of his poem// Nothing is black and white. The examples given seem a bit extreme, e.g. in the text about the two coats we question our beliefs. Was the beggar using Baal? I don't think so but others might//

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5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

Texts did not sound "translated". Simple language easy to understand// Didn't realize it was a translation until this question// They were theatrical...it didn't sound like ordinary speech, it wasn't realist, but it didn't have to be. I suppose one would know it was a translation, but it wasn't a negative thing// Normal! didn't sound translated// Good translation// It's hard to say without seeing the German. But no, I didn't find them stilted// I thought the text sounded fine, I had forgotten until this Q. that it was a translation// People rarely answer "Yes!" It sounded very contrived. Also "It is good." People more naturally tend to say "Ya", Yeah", "It's good/great/grand/brilliant." "It is good" sounds just like what a foreigner who has learned English in school// Some of the pieces sounded a bit translated, e.g. "It is cold. I have no coat." Other pieces just seemed to flow out.

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6. INFORMATION GAINED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In assessing the questionnaires I noted the recurrence of certain words and phrases as well as sentences which showed a clear insight into what a particular participant had gained from and thought about the workshop. The most important of these I have divided into positive and negative groupings as follows:

Positive

a) aware ... evaluate ... openness ... questioning

b) Everyone eager to become involved ... Games good fun in eliminating uncomfort ...

c) (The workshop) ... opens him (Brecht) up in a more real way ... The complexity of the text was fascinating. Brecht seemed to challenge us to contradict each other ... He forces us to evaluate things/tales we normally take as black and white ... Simple movements can be very dramatic ... It opened my mind a lot - introducing ideas I'd never thought about ... Didn't realize it was a translation.

Negative

a) extreme ... contrived

b) Didn't sound like ordinary speech .... People more naturally tend to say "ya", "yeah", "It's good."

c) Workshop not long enough ... Pity there wasn't more than just three hours. We could have delved deeper ... It was a bit short. We could have had deeper discussions in some parts.

7. CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Positive

(i) Clearly the language and content of the translated texts appealed to the majority of the participants.

(ii) The introduction to Brechtian concepts and devices such as Gestus, Alienation and Attitude seemed to strike a chord with many of the participants. It is clear they felt that they had learned something new and for some this was an exciting outcome of the workshop.

(iii) The texts worked well as a vehicle for teaching/learning and the relevance of the ideas to the contemporary world was established by the participants' own words without any prompting from me.

Negative

(i) The time constraint was responsible for the shortness of the workshop

(ii) It is quite true that the shortness of the workshop nipped many intriguing discussions in the bud. In a course of undergraduate instruction that would be less likely to arise, as there would be constant follow up in the classes.

(iii) The participants' negative comments on my use of the strong form of the verbs, e.g. "I am cold", were illuminating. In retrospect I should perhaps have told them the function of the strong form as I have described in chapter 3, but I thought, mistakenly, that this would arise from reading and performing the text. Heidrun Gerzymisch-Arbogast's descriptors (1994:32) of the various registers of speech would have been of assistance in pleading the case for using the strong form of a verb in special circumstances. So all pervasive is the use of the weak form of the verb in Irish everyday conversation that it carries over into reading a text from the page: in the actual reading/performing of the Baal/poor man scene, the strong form " I am cold" on the page was ignored and the existentialist effect I had been aiming for was lost.

8. THEORIES VS. REALITIES IN THE DECEMBER 18th WORKSHOP

In an essay on the *learning play* Reiner Steinweg (1971:105) makes the following points:

> "The term *Teaching Play* coined by Brecht has led to misunderstanding: they are not meant to be plays with persuasive arguments; i.e. they are not intended as a vehicle for the instruction of a receptive audience by the author or director - so far as the term "instruction" is understood to mean the transmission of ideas or opinions. The performers "instruct" themselves. They learn ... by becoming aware of their own experiences and the Teaching Play

serves purely as a *teaching aid* to that end."

From the point of view of what happened in the workshop of December 18th, Steinweg's view is perfectly accurate. Much of the input regarding discussion of the Brecht texts and the Bible texts came from the questioning attitude of the fifteen students who attended. My function became very quickly one of "gentle facilitator", as the students were more than willing to try out what was for them the "new world" of Brechtian concepts such as Gestus and the "A" effect; and they reflected on these concepts, as can be seen from the photocopies of the questionnaires in the appendices to this thesis.

Florian Vaßen's question as to how and what young people of today can learn from the *learning play* was left unanswered near the end of chapter 2. The answer to his question comes at this point, but it comes not from me, but from the comments in the questionnaire in response to my questions, which, indirectly, asked exactly the same question as Vaßen in the guise of a number of questions. Evaluating the answers one gets the impression that young people are crying out for a type of play which involves the whole person in an act of self-discovery through playing. This evaluation of the video as well as the questionnaires would seem to point in the same direction as Vaßen suggests (1995:210, translated K.P.) when he observes:

> "Performing *learning plays* always offers the possibility of dissolving the rigidity of everyday consciousness and openinging oneself to new, usually aesthetic experiences."

It was interesting to note that everybody really got involved in the workshop, precisely because the genre permits no building of little groups of shy or discontented "outsiders". Again, my experience as "gentle facilitator" and recorder of the event was very positive. The group very quickly lost their inhibitions as a result of the fun of the warm up games (see details of games in logbook in appendices), and became a "Brecht community"; i.e. a community in which there are no leaders and led, but where everybody's voice is of equal value. The atmosphere was very similar to that described by Clemens and Rautenberg (1984:15, translated K.P.) in their definition of the ideal *learning play* scenario:

9. POSSIBLE FUTURE USE FOR THE *BAAL* TRANSLATIONS

The translations tested in the workshop of 18th December 20000 could be used to set up a module for teaching Brecht's theory and practice of the *learning play* to a new generation of students.

In an M.A. seminar on thesis topics held at UCC on Thursday, 18th of May 2000, Trish Fitzpatrick, a professional dancer who was completing a thesis on the connection between mathematics and dance and the application of both to the Irish primary school curriculum, united the different strands of her action research in the acronym: D.A.R.E. which was the abbreviation of her acrostyc:

Describe

Analyze

Reflect

Evidence

As a result of viewing the Brecht workshop process on video, I have coined the following acrostyc which contains all the steps which may be taken to create a harmonious and industrious work ethic and community spirit among the students and instructors:

Preparation/Performance

Observation during performance

Reflection after performance

Refuting the false/Reaffirming the truth/Re-establishing the truth

Inquire further if necessary

Discuss as equals

Generate a critical enthusiasm

Engage in constructive criticism

These headings could be grouped together under the convenient acronym:

P O R R I D G E

I hasten to add that the above steps are by no means binding. They are all equally valid component parts which may be rearranged according to circumstances. In this I refer and defer to Brecht's dictum on the door of his workroom in Buckow. Having written out a list of desiderata for himself, he indulges in a typical piece of self-contradictory fun: "I do not wish this rule to be taken as binding. Principles are kept alive by violating them." (Hayman, 1983:361)

In a teaching situation, similar to the
workshop situation, each class would end with a brainstorming and note-taking session under the Brecht-style motto: *Yes, But what has been learned?*

Ensuring that there is written "Feedback instantly" (FbI) would make for a lively rather than lethargic end to class. More personal reflections could and should be written in the individual student's own time.

In conclusion, I would see these translations as a first step towards encouraging students to create their own *Learning Plays*. They should also provide a link to *Parable Plays* such as Brecht's *The Good woman of Sezuan*. And, at some future stage, students might attempt an Irish variant on the Sezuan play. As an example of how that might be done, I have put in Appendix F an approach which I tried out in the academic year 1999/200, Year I of the M.A. Programme.

10. CONCLUSION

The *learning play* appears to be alive and well in Germany. Judging by the response to my Brecht translations in the *Baal* workshop, it could also very rapidly be alive and well here in Ireland. The concept of the *learning play* is more highly developed in

Great Britain than it is here, as shown by a new book of learning plays and games by Tim Etchells. In the foreword to the book, (1999:18), in acknowledging the debt to Brecht's *Street Scene*, he is not a million miles away from describing the effect of the *learning play*:

> "The art-work that turns us into witnesses, leaves us, above all, unable to stop thinking, talking and reporting what we've seen. We're left, like the people in Brecht's poem who've witnessed a road accident, still stood on the street corner discussing what happened, borne on by our responsibilities to events."

CHAPTER 5: *BAAL* 1930 *LEARNING PLAY* TRANSLATIONS

Thoughts

are made

in

the mouth (Tristan Tarza)

1. RUNNING ORDER

As the text is composed of some finished scenes and headings for scenes never written, I have translated only those sections which would prove useful for teaching and performing purposes.

BRECHT'S RUNNING ORDER	MY RUNNING ORDER
A 1	B 2
A 2	B 1
A 3	B 8
A 4	B 11
A 5	B 3
A 6	A 4
A 7	B 4
A 8	B 7
A 9	B 9
A 10	
A 11	
A 12	
B 1	
B 2	
B 3	
B 4	
B 5	
B 6	
B 7	
B 8	
B 9	
B 10	
B 11	

2. The Translations

B 2

Baal and his girlfriend

Keuner: I'm expecting Mr. Baal. Should we choose guests for the occasion who would harmonize with him? No. On every occasion it is fitting to create that image which reflects the manners of the world. A stranger who's invited to a party likes to speculate about the party guests as he makes his way there. Hopefully we'll have the right mix of people.

Girlfriend: Should we prepare a meal?

Keuner: If he's still there at mealtime then he'll eat with us.

Girlfriend: Should I wear a good dress, then?

Keuner: Certainly.

Girlfriend: After all he'll surely be wearing his best suit.

Keuner: Don't agonize about it: just wear a pretty dress.

B 1

The host: We're expecting Mr. Baal. Because of his talent we wish to receive him with due courtesy.

The wife: The food is ready. After consuming a hearty meal a man unwinds and becomes expansive.

B 8/ *Baal the Bad, the antisocial cad possessed no feeling for justness. In the industrialized city, Baal met a man who had no coat in winter*

Baal: Since yesterday evening, with the weather getting increasingly cold, I've been walking through the forests to where they get blacker. The evening was icy, the night grew icier and towards morning a mass of stars crept away in a whitish fog. Today the bushes take up the smallest space of the whole year. Anything soft freezes; hard things break.

Stage left chorus: The best condition
Is the cold coming before warmth.
Everything makes itself as small
As it possibly can. Everything
Is so frugally silent. Only
Thought is impracticable and then
Comes warmth.

Poor man: It is cold. I have no coat. I am freezing. That fine gentleman there; perhaps he can tell me what I should do about the cold. Good day, sir.

Baal: *stands absolutely still*
Don't you know that speaking to a man on the street is just not done?

Poor man: It is very cold, sir. Perhaps sir can tell me what to do about the cold?

Baal: It's not cold. *He shows his two coats.*

Stage right chorus: The animal without fur
Freezes in the cold and
The cold *does* come.
The man without a coat
Freezes because it is cold,
For the world is cold
And the thinking man loves
The world as it is.

Poor man: Can sir lend me a coat?

Baal looks at him in astonishment

Poor man: It is cold. I have no coat. Brother: I am freezing.

Baal: What's your name, fellow? *After taking off one of the coats. Suddenly mistrustful*

Poor man: Josef, your brother.

Baal: I had three brothers. *counting on his fingers* Brother Anton, Brother Karl and Brother I-dunno-who. Imagine: it's exactly this third name that I can't remember. However, I'm going to spend the whole day and tonight trying to remember the name of my third brother. So, Josef, come again tomorrow!

Poor man: But I am freezing. I cannot wait until tomorrow. But there is a chair. I can burn it to warm myself.

Baal: Give me the chair so that I can sit and think about this..

Poor man: *drags the chair across to him* Do think about it, sir.

Baal: The coats *are* too heavy for me.

Stage right chorus

Praise the handsome animal,
The cruel one; his clear eye
Reflects accurately
The natural terror
Of the unchangeable world;
He is without fear of the future
And fears not the hunger of his enemy.
He takes what is meant for others
As well as that which is destined for himself.
For the thinking man
Loves the world as it is.

Baal: I've thought about it and I can tell you: there must be some hope for you. For otherwise you'll freeze to death. Give me your jacket so that I have a softer seat, then I'll be better able to think about it.

Poor man: *gives him his jacket* Do think about it, sir.

Baal: Sit at my feet, Josef and know that the world is full of imperfection. The world is cold: that is a shortcoming. Our father Kasper begat too many sons; to be more precise, one too many. As well as that, mankind is too hard and too concerned with material things.....for example, you, Josef. Did you demonstrate pleasure on meeting me, your brother Baal, or wasn't it just because I had a coat that you acknowledged me?Yes...Now you're silent. I could show you something which would have

helped you and many like you. In my innermost jacket I have a something which, had our father Kasper had it, you would not be here at all and the cold of which you complain would not have the function which it has. Of course I can't reach it because it's in my innermost jacket, and that's far in, Josef, am I right? Have you anything to say to that? No, you haven't, therefore I am right.

The poor man collapses and dies of exposure. Baal laughs. Josef: you were one of those destined to freeze to death.

Stage left Chorus: The world is cold
Therefore change it.
If man is accustomed to warmth
And freezes to death without a coat, then
Give him a coat right away.
The thinking man loves
The world as it is.

B 11.

A street in the suburbs

Baal, accompanied by Lupu comes across a sobbing little boy standing near the display case of a nondescript cinema.

Baal: Why are you crying?

Boy: I had two Groschen/Pounds for the cinema. A boy came and tore one of them out of my hand. Him, over there. *(points)*

Baal: *to Lupu* That's robbery. As the robbery didn't take place to satisfy a voracious appetite it can't be classified as the theft of food for immediate consumption. As it apparently took place for a cinema ticket, it amounts to one party depriving a second party of his visual gratification. Nevertheless, it is robbery. Didn't you cry for help?

Boy: Yes.

Baal *to Lupu:* The cry for help. Expression of the instinctive emotion of human solidarity. *Stroking him.* Didn't anyone hear you?

Boy: No.

Baal: Can't you shout any louder than that?

Boy: No.

Baal: *to Lupu*: Right then; take the other Groschen/Pound off him!

Lupu takes the other Groschen/Pound from the boy and the two of them go on their merry way.

Baal: *to Lupu*: That's the usual outcome when the weak ones try to stand up for their rights.

B 3
Scene 1

Baal: Did you personally select the people invited here, Mr. Keuner?

Keuner: No. But really, to tell the truth: no. And another thing: the people who've turned up here: they're fine people.

Baal: Do you know that your meat is bad?

Keuner: No..

Baal: Do you know these people eating your soup, Mr. Keuner?

Keuner: No....

Baal: What's better: a good meal or a person who's on your wavelength?

Keuner: A person on your wavelength.

Baal: No. A good meal. Another question: what's better: a bad meal or a person who's on your wavelength?

Keuner: *remains silent*

Baal: Correct. A bad meal.

A 3

The restoration of truth by the young man:

Baal: When summer comes, the air gets warmer and the days shorter.

Young Man: When summer comes, the air gets warmer and the days longer.

Of course I'm right

Although it's sad;

The world is poor

Mankind is bad.

Who wouldn't be good

Instead of coarse?

It's social structures

That cause brute force

A 4

Baal the Bad, the antisocial cad plays music on his instrument. His hearers begin to express their innermost thoughts.

One of them says: "When he entered, the greatest of those present bowed before him."

Or: "When he came among them, nobody saw him for who he was and they continued laughing aloud and chattering. For he was small of stature and unprepossessing in appearance. His language was unclear. His position was lowly. That is why they despised him. And behold: he pretended to notice nothing of this, and he bowed before them and did all that was asked of him, performing menial tasks and doing lowly work. But when this time came to an end, his friends from the city came and, with knives in their hands, positioned themselves at the entrance and looked to him who stood in a lowly position in the hall. Then he gave a sign that they were to spare nobody who had not seen him for who he was. And so they spared nobody and permitted nobody to leave. He, however, departed and was never seen again."

When Baal the Bad, the antisocial cad stops playing he says to this second speaker: "Where are your men? Go on: make your sign."

Then that man buries his face in his hands. And Baal the Bad, the antisocial cad, laughs at him.

The smashing of the instrument

Baal: Was my song good, businessman?

Businessman: Yes, it was good.

Baal: Did you enjoy it?

Businessman: It gave me great pleasure.

Baal: And now it'll give *me* great pleasure to rip out one of the strings from your instrument. Now tell me again, businessman: Do you think the song was good?

Businessman: Fetch a new string. I thought the song was good. *(smiles)*

Baal rips out the second string

Baal: Do you still think the song was good?

The businessman remains silent.

Girlfriend: *(before exiting)*

I've played a woman who falls for a man and becomes servile. I shouldn't have become servile. If I had fallen for a man I should have buried the theory, knowing that I was doing evil and was sick. Thereupon I should have forgotten entirely what I've just said and fallen for him completely, having no thought for the theory or anything else until the time would come when I could again completely forget the fact that I had fallen for him.

B 9

Baal and two workers

The two workers: Our potatoes are almost cooked and ready to eat.

Baal: What did you do to get the potatoes?

The two workers: We worked in the coalmine.

Baal: I'd like to eat, too.

The two workers: Yeah, he should have something to eat, too. Eat with us, Baal.

Baal: Aren't you going to ask me what I did?

The two workers: No.

Baal: I composed a poem.

The two workers: What did you get for it?

Baal: For a poem I normally get applause. I composed the following poem:
"As Baal grew in his mother's white body...."

The two workers: The potatoes are ready. Let's eat.

Baal: Before we do, I'd like to read the poem to the end.

The two workers: Don't you want to eat?

Baal: Yes, I want to eat as well. But first I want to read the poem to the end.

The two workers: Are poems long?

Baal: There are long and short poems. This is a long one. *He continues reading until he comes to the end*. I'm finished. But what about the applause?

The workers say nothing and reach towards the pot

The two workers: We want to eat. Tuck in, Baal.

Baal: What about the applause?

The two workers: There's enough potatoes. Go on, Baal; get stuck in.

Baal: What about the applause? If you don't give me what I normally get for a poem, then we don't need to eat. *He reaches out for the pot,*

smashes it, stamps on the potatoes, and flees.

The two workers: *to each other* Don't throw potatoes at him, because we need to eat and there's nothing so bad that it would justify destroying a meal..

APPENDIX A

> >An: vassen@mbox.sdls.uni-hannover.de <vassen@mbox.sdls.uni-hannover.de>
> >Datum: Dienstag, 17. Oktober 2000 22:17
> >Betreff: Corker sucht Baalfragmente.....
> >
> >
> > >Schoene Gruesse aus der etwas nassen Cork. Ich bin Kevin Power; war
> > >Teilnehmer im Sommer 2000 an M.A. "Brecht Workshop" an der Uni in Cork.
> > >Hatte die Ehre, den Baal/Lupu "Kino" Abschnitt auf Seite 671 ins
> >Englische
> > >zu uebersetzen.
> > >Manfred Schewe hat mir freundlicherweise per Fax die Baal Texte
zukommen
> > >lassen, Seiten 663-671; also die Fragmente, die ich gern fuer meine
M.A.
> > >Arbeit verwenden moechte.
> > >Ich haette jetzt ein paar Fragen:
> > >
> > >1. Sind diese Fragmente die einzigen, die noch existieren?
> > >
> > >2. Sind sie jemals ins Englische uebersetzt worden? Der Manfred meinte
im
> > >Sommer, meine Uebersetzung wuerde die erste sein. Ich hab gesucht aber
> > >nichts gefunden ueber eine englische Uebersetzung der Seiten 663-671;
> > >moechte aber den Florian Vassen selbst fragen, ob er das vielleicht
> > >bestaetigen kann oder ob es eine zuverlaessige Suchmoeglichkeit gibt,
wo
> > >sich so etwas feststellen liesse.
> > >
> > >Ich freue mich auf Ihre Antwort uns Manfred laesst auch gruessen!
> > >Herzliche Gruesse
> > >Kevin Power.
> > >Einen corkischen schoenen guten Morgen an Florian Vassen!
> Herzlichen Dank fuer die sehr schnelle Antwort bzw. die nuetzlichen
> Informationen. Ich werde demnaechst suhrkampieren, wo es hoffentlich Berg
> auf gehen wird mit dem Guenter!
> Nochmals herzlichen Dank...die Tage der Workshop in Cork bleiben mir rege
in
> Erinnerung und waren sogar die entscheidende Anregung, das Thema von
> Lehrstuecken zu waehlen. Im Augenblick befasse ich mich mit dem von Ihnen
> mitverfassten Buch ueber Lehrstuecke und die "Anstiftung zur Praxis".
Alles
> in allem hab ich ein recht interessantes Stueck Arbeit zu erledigen.
>
> Schoenen Tag noch!
> Kevin
~ ~ ~
>
> >From: Florian Vassen <vassen@mbox.sdls.uni-hannover.de>
> >To: Kevin Power <kevinpower58@hotmail.com>
> >Subject: Re: Corker sucht Baalfragmente.....
> >Date: Wed, 18 Oct 2000 00:50:39 +0200
> >
> >Lieber Kewin Power,
> >Zu 1: Es sind wohl die einzigen, aber es gibt mehr Informationen und
> >Materialien und zwar in dem von Dieter Schmidt edierten Band "Bertolt
> >Brecht
> >Baal. Der böse Bal der asoziale. Texte, Varianten, Materialien",
Frankfurt:
> >Suhrkamp 1968 (Edition Suhrkamp 248)
> >Zu 2) Meines Wissens gibt es keine englische Übersetzung, meine
> >amerikanischen Freunde und Brecht-Spezialisten kannten jedenfalls keine
> >offizielle und auch keine inoffizielle. Um sicher zu gehen, wäre es
> >sicherlich gut, Kontakt mit dem Suhrkamp-Verlag aufzunehmen. Email an
> >Günter
> >Berg mit besten Grüßen von mir und der Bitte die Frage zu klären bzw.
> >weiterzuleiten
> >(Email: 100142.3041@compuserve.com)
> >Mit besten Grüßen auch an Manfred und gutem Gelingen bei der Arbeit
> >Florian Vassen
> >-----Ursprüngliche Nachricht-----
> >Von: Kevin Power <kevinpower58@hotmail.com>

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Language Cent
Info@langcent.ucc.ie

Director: Wm. Steven Dodd,
MA, DipTrans, LTCL, PgDipTESOL

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

FAX NO.: 00.49.69.75601522

TO: Günter Berg

FROM: Kevin Power

DATE: 01. 06. 01

NO. OF PAGES (incl. Cover) 2

MESSAGE: Anfrage über Brechts
1930 Baalfragmente

********** -COMM.JOURNAL- ********** DATE 01-JUN-2001 ***** TIME 17:15 *** P.01

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********** -353 21 903223 - ***** - **********

kevinpower58@hotmail.com

Geehrter Günter Berg!

Herzliche Grüße aus der irischen Cork. Dr. Florian Vaßen hat mir empfohlen, mich mit Ihnen in Verbindung zu setzen, da ich mit meinem Brecht am Ende bin.... Lass mich erläutern!

Die Baalfragmente, die in Dieter Schmidts „Baal, der böse Baal der Asoziale" – Texte, Varianten, Materialien" (Edition Suhrkamp 1968 248) enthalten sind, habe ich als Teil einer akademischen Arbeit übersetzt. Mein hiesiger Chef Dr. Manfred Schewe bzw. Florian V. sind der Ansicht, dass diese Texte noch nie übersetzt worden seien. Florian hat amerikanische Kollegen gefragt; sie seien auch der Ansicht, dass diese Fragmente nie übersetzt worden seien und damit ich ganz sicher sein darf, dass ich der erste bin, so eine Übersetzung ins Englische zu unternehmen, meinte Florian, es wäre ratsam, Sie zu fragen, ob ich tatsächlich der erste bin, der diese 1930er Fragmente übersetzt. FAX oder E-mail: eine Information bzw. Bestätigung vom „Nichtübersetztwordensein" von Ihnen wäre wertvoll für die Gültigkeit meiner Arbeit.

Mit freundlichem Gruß,

Page 81

P.S. Florian lässt auch grüßen! Kevin N. Power

MSN Home Hotmail Web Search Shopping Money People & Chat Passport sign out

msn

How long does it take artists to get discovered?

msn Music

Hotmail® *kevinpower58@hotmail.com*

Folder: Inbox

From: "Tom Kuhn" <tom.kuhn@st-hughs.oxford.ac.uk> Save Address - Block Sender
To: <kevinpower58@hotmail.com> Save Address
Subject: Fw: Baal
Date: Tue, 3 Jul 2001 12:10:55 +0100

Couldn't read the email address. I'll try.this instead.
-----Original Message-----
From: Tom Kuhn <tom.kuhn@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk>
To: kevinpower38@hotmail.com <kevinpower38@hotmail.com>
Date: 03 July 2001 12:05
Subject: Baal

Dear Kevin (if I may)
Your letter/fax of 1 June to Guenter Berg at Suhrkamp has been passed on to me by Petra Hardt (who now deals with all rights issues, incl. Brecht) at Suhrkamp. It's come to me because I am the sort of managing editor of Brecht
in English (in the Methuen edition). I hope this answer may help.
Some of the fragments are contained in the Notes to _Brecht, Collected Plays: One_ in the Methuen edition (pp.369, for the poem, and 372-4), but I guess you knew that. I know of no published translation into English of the rest of the material and think it's very unlikely that there is one. There's nothing in the Methuen or Suhrkamp archives. (It's
just possible that there's an unlicensed publication out there somewhere.) However, there are lots of unpublished translations of Brecht floating around. I don't know if you're interested in those as well, and of course it's anyway impossible to track everything down. You could try writing to the International Copyright Bureau at 22A Aubrey House, Maida Avenue, London
W2 1TQ (fax 020 7724 7662) and asking if they have a record of anything. They shd have a copy if anyone has ever tried a reconstruction for performance purposes (in English, outside of the US, or at least in GB and Ireland). There is nothing that I'm aware of in the Methuen archive. I'll check an old list I have of unpublished projects, and I'll ask John Willett,
and I'll get back in touch if I find anything (unlikely).
Do I understand correctly: you're asking just in order to establish (as far as that's possible) that you're the first, you're not planning a publication? Because if you were planning a publication you'd have to get back in touch with Suhrkamp and, via them, the Brecht heirs, to acquire permission. They might not want a publication outside the main series (i.e. Methuen), and in any case they'd want to charge and tie up the copyright. There is no plan to publish these fragments in the Methuen edition, and it's
extremely unlikely that we'd suddenly decide to include them just because of
the existence of a translation. There are other priorities, at least for the
next few years (theoretical writings, other plays, fragments, poems).
However, it might be a good idea to register your translation, just so that

>anybody could discover it if they were planning to go back over this. If
>you're willing, I suggest you send a copy to me at the address below. It's
>probably safer with me than in the Methuen archive. I have quite a pile of
>boxfiles of such material, and, when I give up this responsibility, I shall
>pass it all back over to Methuen.
>It's good to hear that somebody else is seriously concerned with Brecht and
>translation. Good luck with the work. And please give my greetings to
>Florian.
>Yours,
>Tom Kuhn
>St Hugh's College, Oxford OX2 6LE, GB
>

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The Web's best personal finance site
Keep your car running longer
Get on your soap box
More...

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APPENDIX B

BRECHT

WORKSHOP

GIVEN BY: Kevin Power

AT: The Granary (Studio)

ON: Monday, 18th December

FROM: 2 P.m. — 5 P.m.

BRING: A cushion, strong socks, strong sense of fun and a questioning attitude!

INTERESTED? Please enter name and contact phone number:

1.	M: Prendergast	4560515
2.	Ana Rosa	c/o
3.	Ria O'Sullivan	c/o
4.	Maureen i Shea	Maura Prendergast C.S.M.
5.	Catherine Lee	C.S.M.
6.	Peter O' Mahony	
7.	Niamh ni Bhroin	46 Gen Rd
8.	Edel Egan	
9.	Sabrina Acoka	
10.	Hilary ni Shaughnessy	C.S.M.
11.	Derek Murphy	
12.	Denis Murphy	4966250
13.	Ola Gotten	4322192
14.	Jackie Whelton	4546309
15.	Maeve Power	4347607
16.		
17.		
18.		

APPENDIX C

BRECHT:

BAALINESE

WORKSHOP

MENU



01 B 2: Baal and his girlfriend (actually Mr. Keuner with Baal's *future* girlfriend)

02. B 1: The host and his wife.

03. 1st READING: LUKE 3, 9 - 11.

04. B 8: Baal and the poor man in winter.

05. 2nd READING: LUKE 10, 25 -37.

06. B 11: Outside the cinema. Baal, Lupu, small boy.

07. B 3, SCENE 1 & A 3: The party at Mr. Keuner's house(Baal, Keuner, Young man)
& The restoration of the truth by the young man.

08. 3rd READING: LUKE 9, 51 - 56

09. A 4: Baal's music. (Baal, 1st speaker, 2nd speaker)

10. THE SONG: Of course I'm right...(Brecht's MISUC: Music with an instructional purpose: to teach a lesson by means of a challenging text wrapped up in a simple, catchy melody. Let's test the theory.....

11. B 4: The smashing of the instrument. (Baal, the Businessman)

12. B 7: (Baal's) Girlfriend, *(before exiting)*

13. B 9: Baal and two workers

14. AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

WHAT WAS POSITIVE, WHAT WAS NEGATIVE FOR YOU?

ARE THE BRECHT TEXTS WE HAVE WORKED ON RELEVANT IN YOUR WORLD?

DO THE TEXTS SUFFER IN TRANSLATION?

IS THE *LEHRSTÜCK* NO MORE THAN A HISTORICAL CURIOSITY?

YOUR ORAL & WRITTEN OPINIONS, PLEASE!

Brecht Workshop, 14:00 - 17:00, 18.12.2000 at the Granary Theatre (Studio)

Running Order

Concrete Steps	Reflection on how each step leads to the next	Approx.Timing
1. Walking exercise a)Random/silent b)Exchange looks c) Exchange names d)Exchange different styles of greetings. e)Join hands in a circle. Tighten the circle. On the count of three, shout YES and break the circle. Scatter.	Ice breaker. Social intercourse.	
2. Ball play a)Form two lines. b)Toss the ball the length of the line twice. c)Break the line and start random throwing with names. d)Form teams for end to end football.	Social intercourse: interactive; cooperation and friendly competition. Quote Brecht's comment: "Bounce your words off each other like rubber balls." First "team" to score three goals wins!	
3. Rock & Roll a)Two rock one b)Distance widens until the "rocked" person is on the ground. c)"That is life."/"Yes, that is life." d)Repeat with three new people e)Kicking. "That is life"/"Yes, that is life." f)Helping up/stomach punch/ karate chop.	Feel good factor and relaxation after sport. ALIENATION: sense of security and trust will be shattered. "People/circumstances change!"	
4. QUESTION: What has been learned?	How deep do the norms of civilized behaviour go? Can trust be unqualified? "Social structures create brute force."	
5. WORD GAME: Choosing the leader/Baal. Group sits down. The message is: *"Do actions really speak louder than words?"* Each person gets a single word on a piece of paper and the group shout out their words. The first to find the message is selected to play Baal. *(N.B. Baal selects a "successor" after the completion of his first appearance.)*	What makes a leader? Virtue? Intelligence? Opportunism? Here it is s/he who shouts loudest.	

Concrete Steps	Reflection	Approx Timing
6. The *Lehrstück/Teaching Play:* a)A play to be acted, not seen b)A play for amateurs c)Players copy patterns and criticize them. d)Bible story vs. Brecht story!	What are the main sources of our moral/social patterns? BIBLE Brecht and the Bible/His counter stories. as provocative questioning of the unquestionable ACCEPTED TRUTH vs. COUNTER TRUTH	
7. *GESTUS*: Showing the posture, gesture and paralanguage appropriate to a character. a)Students stand back to back in a line. Each is given a role and asked to consider andshow the appropriate gestus/status: *rich man/poor man* *rich woman/poor woman* *small boy/big boy* *sexy woman/prudish woman* b)Having assumed the positions, they now observe each other and make constructive comments.	Preparing the "showing" of the characters in the biblical stories and Brecht's counter stories.	
8. TEXT WORK Social commentary in simple conversation Scene B 2 Mr. Keuner and Baal's (future)girlfriend	What do people reveal by what they say and how they say it? What is learned about Keuner's and the girlfriend's way of thinking?	
Scene B 1 b)Host and wife	What is learned about the wife's way of thinking What do we learn about Baal in both scenes?	
Scene B 8 One group prepares the bible reading, the other the Brecht text. a)Reading: Luke 3, 11: On sharing Reading from the wall. Scene B 8: BAAL AND THE POOR MAN IN WINTER Narrator introduces the scene. L /R StageChorus: everybody not in the scene.	Demonstrating how "official truth" may be questioned by a counter story whose "truth" is equally valid. How do we "sound" when we read "serious" texts? What tone do we adopt? Do we read word by word or do we rush to complete the sentence? Introducing Baal in the double-edged Brecht vs. Bible scenes theme of "Sharing" and "Who is my neighbour?"	

Reading: Luke 10, 25 -37
reading from the wall
Scene B 11: Outside the cinema.

Narrator introduces the scene and reads the stage directions to the first reading/acting.

Straight on into scene B 11
After playing the scene, discussion on the parallels/differences between the Brecht/Bible texts.
Question: WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?
About Baal? About the poor man/boy victims?
About ourselves in our own reactions to the text/action?

B 3
Scene 1: The Party at Mr. Keuner's

From Baal's attitude towards the weak to his attitude towards those who would use/exploit him for their own purposes. What is the point of this scenes? What do they show about Baal, Mr. Keuner and the others? Is anybody "admirable" in the scenes? Who? Why?

A 3: The restoration of the truth by the young man.

Note: The host then reproves the young man! What does this tell you about the host?

A 4: Baal's music.....
Biblical and Brechtian

Biblical story read from the wall.
Many biblical stories begin with social mealtimes... wedding feast at Caana, the Last Supper itself..
How do the Baal and Bible stories compare?
Which is the more provocative and why?

rejection stories

(i)Jesus rejected by Samarian village
(iii)Baal's music and the second speaker's story.

Does the inclusion of music in Brecht's story make it stronger, weaker or cheaper?
Which story has the bigger impact? Why?
Is there a difference between the HEARING of the bible story and the READING of the Baal story?

Baal's music, maybe?

MISUC....
Music for instruction

A catchy melody which is quickly learned and can be hummed or whistled can sell a socially subversive message.

Insert of song from *Dreigroschenoper* which fits the atmosphere of the scenes and also changes the mood of the group

Teaching the song:
1. Divide up melody/rhythm between sub-groups
2. Repeat with clapping.
3. Introduce the text, practise, perform!

Question: What have we learned from the two stories and the song?
What are our counter-arguments?

"Where two people agree, only one has been thinking..." (G.B. Shaw)

B 4: The smashing of the instrument....
What is the function of this scene?
Who are your sympathies with

Contrast: the performance on the instrument followed by the destruction of the instrument..

Does this scene reveal the hypocrisy of people who praise what they don't understand?

when it ends? Why?

B 7: Girlfriend, before exiting.	This is a complex thought process. Is it a valid expression of feminine emotion or just verbal razamataz?
B 9: Baal and the two workers	Back to the start...Baal out in the world. The first sight of Baal as a poet bringing his "product" to the working class as opposed to the bourgeoisie.
Is this scene tongue in cheek or does it serve a serious purpose? If so, what?	Pearls before swine? Satire on the proletariat? Brecht sending up Baal?

APPENDIX D

DO ACTIONS REALLY SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS?

APPENDIX D

BRECHT'S

MAJOR

AND

MINOR

PEDAGOGY

The major pedagogy completely transforms the function of acting. It abolishes the system of player/spectator. It foresees only players who are simultaneously studying what they play. In accordance with the basic law which states that "Where the interest of the individual is identical with that of the state, the commonly understood gestures define the individual's range of actions and activities", imitative playing becomes the main component of pedagogy.

In contrast, the minor pedagogy, in the transitional period of the first revolution, leads to the democratisation of the theatre...The players should, if at all possible, consist of amateurs (the roles so written that those playing them must remain amateurs in their playing of them). The plays and their production should transform the spectator into a statesman/woman. Therefore there should be no appeal to the spectator's feelings which would allow him/her to react aesthetically. The appeal is to the **REASON**. The players must impose an alienating filter on the characters and plot so that the spectator, taking note of the changes, is forced *to take sides* instead of *identifying with* characters and/or action.

LUKE 3, 9 - 11

...And John said: "Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

Then the people asked John: "Master, what should we do?"

John answered: "If anyone has two coats he must give one to the man who has none, and he who has food must share it."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

LUKE 10, 25 - 37

25 A teacher of the Law came up and tried to trap Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to receive eternal life?"

26 Jesus answered him, "What do the Scriptures say? How do you interpret them?"

27 The man answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'"

28 "You are right," Jesus replied; "do this and you will live."

29 But the teacher of the Law wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?"

30 Jesus answered, "There was once a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead. 31 It so happened that a priest was going down that road; but when he saw the man, he walked on by, on the other side. 32 In the same way a Levite also came along, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by, on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan who was travelling that way came upon the man, and when he saw him, his heart was filled with pity. 34 He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way, I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.'"

36 And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbour towards the man attacked by the robbers?"

37 The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him."

Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."

A Samaritan Village Refuses to Receive Jesus

51 As the time drew near when Jesus
would be taken up to heaven, he made
up his mind and set out on his way to
Jerusalem. 52 He sent messengers ahead
of him, who went into a village in Samaria
to get everything ready for him. 53 But
the people there would not receive him,
because it was clear that he was on his
way to Jerusalem. 54 When the disciples
James and John saw this, they said, "Lord,
do you want us to call fire down from
heaven to destroy them?" j

55 Jesus turned and rebuked them. k
56 Then Jesus and his disciples went on
to another village.

APPENDIX E

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT *BAAL* AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS: Approach taken was very good, I think its good and effective to get the Audience invdved, Most essential feature being the Questionning. Importance of gestures also recognised.

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS: Maybe it was a bit short could have had deeper discussions in some parts.

3. THEATRICAL IDEAS: Gestures should be more encouraged and also the Audience getting involved. I think that Both Achor / Audience should gain an insight. Forms should be approached.

4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

Very Relevant. Don't throw potatoes at him, because we need to eat and there's nothing so Bad that it would justify destroying a meal.

5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

good translation.

(Continue on next page if you're feeling particularly eloquent!)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT *BAAL* AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS:

Brecht is complex but approachable. Most of writings a Brecht tend to alienate the reader / student (I feel) this opens him up in a more real way

==========

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS:

Constant questioning can spiral in on itself + lead to despair. Although on reflection the fun element / humour can temper this and engender positivity

==========

3. THEATRICAL IDEAS:

==========

4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

Very. In reopening the texts that we all know (eg biblical tales), he forces us to evaluate things / tales we normally accept as black and white morality lessons Especially in the case of the good Samaritan tale which is oft quoted yet never discussed.

==========

5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

Its hard to say without seeing the German. But no. 2 didn't find them stilted.

(Continue on next page if you're feeling particularly eloquent!)

Thank you!

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT *BAAL* AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS: I thought the workshop was very good. Everyone was eager to become involved and the texts were very interesting to go through.

==========

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS: The only negative thing I could say is, it wasn't long enough!

==========

3. THEATRICAL IDEAS:
it would be great to stage these pieces from Baal; I think the lighting would be very important, spot lights, in darkness etc.

==========

4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

For pieces that were written in the early part of the 20th century, it seems the situation will never fade out of life. I would liken Brecht's writing to that of Shakespeare, something that will never age.

==========

5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

I thought the text sounded fine, I had forgotten until this Q that it was a translation.

(Continue on next page if you're feeling particularly eloquent!)

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT *BAAL* AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS: Games to get to know each other – good/fun/eliminate feelings of uncomfort. Learned alot about Brecht's ideas – knew little to nothing about him before.

==========

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS: Obviously, different levels of acting among participants. Would be good to comment on what we did good / bad after our attempts @ performing the texts.
Texts for women?

==========

3. THEATRICAL IDEAS:

Good mix of fun / practical work, plus got chance to study Brecht texts – never did that before

==========

4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

Very. Baal faces and confronts people with truth and does what some of us are afraid to do – break the stereotypes and not comply. ie. breaking the strings. He seems to be a frustrated man, frustrated @ lack of education of workers and their lack of appreciation of his poem

==========

5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

People rarely answer 'Yes'. It sounds very contrived. Also 'It is good.' People more naturally tend to say 'Ja,' 'yeah,' 'it's good' great/grand/brilliant." "It is good" sounds just like what a foreigner who has learned English in school.

(Continue on next page if you're feeling particularly eloquent!)

Thanks

Hal Quinn

AND SO, IN THE END, WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

HOW DID YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT *BAAL* AND BRECHT DEVELOP BETWEEN THE START AND FINISH OF TODAY'S WORKSHOP?

1. POSITIVE IDEAS:

The complexity of the text was fascinating Brecht seemed to challenge us to contradict each other.

==========

2. NEGATIVE IDEAS:

Baal seemed to know what he wanted but he wouldn't compromise. He was like a spoilt child.

==========

3. THEATRICAL IDEAS:

Simple movements can be very dramatic. Do actions really speak louder than words? (probably at least as loud)

==========

4. BASED ON THE TEXTS AND YOUR EXPERIENCES THIS AFTERNOON, HOW RELEVANT DO YOU THINK BRECHT'S IDEAS ARE IN THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT? (Give positive/negative text examples)

Nothing is black & white. The examples seen a bit extreme eg. in the text about the 2 coats we question our beliefs. Was the begger using Baal? I don't think. so but others might

==========

5. COMMENTS, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ON THE TRANSLATIONS (Did the texts sound "translated" or did they sound like normal, idiomatic English as might be heard in the theatre or used for theatrical training?)

Some of the pieces sounded a bit translated eg. It is cold I have no coat. Other pieces just seemed to flow out

(Continue on next page if you're feeling particularly eloquent!)

APPENDIX F

THE HUMANITARIAN OF BANAKILTY

PHIL HARRINGTON, a mobile phone salesman

A THREE PERSON GOD

MARY O' HARE, a prostitute, later a shopkeeper

MRS PLUNKETT, former owner of Mary O'Hare's shop

A FAMILY OF EIGHT, (husband, wife, brother, sister law, grandfather, niece, nephew, boy)

AN UNEMPLOYED MAN

A CARPENTER

MRS GRIMES, Mary O'Toole's landlady

MARK O'TOOLE, an unemployed software engineer, later a factory manager

AN OLD WHORE

A GARDA

AN OLD MAN

AN OLD WOMAN, his wife

MR SHARKEY, a barber

TILLY O'TOOLE, Mark O'Toole's mother

GENTLEMEN, VOICES, CHILDREN (three), etc.

PROLOGUE

When we enter the auditorium we see that the stage is concealed by a closed curtain across the middle of which the title of the play is projected unevenly on a film slide.
The title is written in thick paint in an uncertain, semi literate hand.
When everybody is seated, the houselights fade slowly down. The title of the play on the curtain remains visible, but is imperceptibly faded out during the following sequence...
Over the P.A. system, very loud, comes the sound of the dance FULL OF JOY from the album "The Chieftains in China" The music lasts at that volume for twenty seconds. It fades down as two Chinese voices are heard above the music. Voice No. 1 is a child's, voice No. 2 is mother's. FILM OF MOTHER READING STORY TO UNSEEN CHILD IS PROJECTED ONTO CURTAIN The music is still quietly in the background as we hear what the mother is saying.

CHILD: (plaintively, but not quite whingeing..) I want a story.

MOTHER: (firmly, but not firmly enough) No, it's too late! Be a good girl now and go to sleep.

CHILD: (noting the slight weakening of Voice No. 2) I can't. Tell me a story and then I'll go to sleep.

CHILD: I will. I promise.

MOTHER: ***(the first four words briskly, then shifting into story-telling mode...***) Right.. Then let's begin: Once upon a time, long, ago, in a land far away in the West, there was a little town called Banakilty. The people there were very happy because they were guarded by a great, powerful animal called .... the Celtic Tiger.

CHILD: ***(in awe-struck tone)*** Oh a tiger

MOTHER: Yes, a tiger. And while the tiger guarded them, the people of Banakilty lived in perfect peace, prosperity and harmony Now, I'll press the button here and we'll see here's an animated picture of them enjoying themselves after a hard day's work.

SFX: ***Layers of the following sounds:***
Night club techno music, glasses and bottles breaking, sounds of rows and arguments, fists meeting jaws, men's shouts and curses, women's screams and curses, ambulance sirens, gardai sirens
THEN: ***SUDDEN TOTAL SILENCE***

CHILD: ***(wonderingly)*** Is *that* enjoyment?

MOTHER: ***(patiently)*** Well, you must remember that the people of Banakilty are not Chinese and so they do not behave like we behave here in Sezuan… they use knives and forks whereas we use chopsticks ... and they drink tea at the end of a large meal whereas we drink tea between different courses...

CHILD: ***(comprehending)*** Oh… I thought everyone did what we do…

MOTHER: ***(briskly)*** So, as I was saying, the good people of Banakilty lived most of the time in peace, prosperity and harmony, knowing that the magical Tiger was guarding and protecting them all.... BUT ... one dark night sonic bad men came and....

(By now the play's title on the curtain has completely disappeared; the curtain rises silently on the blacked-out stage)

CHILD: ***(sharply)*** How do you know they were men?

MOTHER: ***(indul*****gentlv)** Oh alright, little Miss Perfect ...one dark night sonic bad *people* came and stole the Banakilty Celtic Tiger. And, although the people of Banakilty searched and searched for many years, they never found the tiger again. And so they became very poor and being poor made them unhappy, and because they were unhappy they thought only of themselves and therefore almost nobody in Banakilty was good and kind any more, as you can see in this next picture. I'll just click the button for technisoundvision .....

CHILD: ***(animatedly)*** Let me, Let me!

(VIDEO BLACKOUT, leading instantly to. Scene 1)

SCENE 1

There is a burst of bright light as the stage is illuminated. It is the town square of Banakilty The architecture of the backdrop and flats suggests a notion of Ireland that a Chinese person who had never ventured beyond his own village might create from watching dubbed commercials for Irish beer. The full cast, males and females of all ages, are dressed in all astonishing variety of costumes, suits and traditional garb which could have been seen on the streets and in the theatres, tourist cabarets and museums of Ireland between 1900 and 2000. They blink myopically, as people do when making a sudden transition from dark to light. One of them, has a bodhran, a second a guitar, a third a violin.

BODHRAN PLAYER: ***(Mournfully)*** A haon, a do, a tri……
(The musicians strike up and the cast break into an untuneful, minor key version of **Happy Days Are Here Again** **to** ***the following text:)***

ALL: Crappy days are here again
The skies above are grey again
Let us sing a song of misery:
Crappy days are here again!
II
Now we're going for a drink
Our sorrows we will try to sink
And we'll sing our song of misery:
Crappy days are here again.
(They all shuffle off disconsolately, leaving Phil the Phoneman alone on stage)

PHIL: ***(Addressing the audience)*** I sell mobile phones in Banakilty. It isn't easy. When the Celtic Tiger went back into the jungle, most of the big companies repatriated or went to South East Asia so there's not much call for mobile phones ... hey, that's good: no call for mo …. mobile ph ... phones **....** ***(Realizing the tackiness of the joke his voice falters and dies ; then, pulling himself together.)*** I went to a fortune-teller last week and asked if she could forecast any improvement in our situation. She told me that only God could help us. Our God is made up of three persons. So I prayed to all three of them. And guess what: last night I dreamt three times that all three persons would be arriving in Banakilty this evening but how to recognise them and then there's the problem of accommodation. The local hotel doesn't even have a bridal suite, not to mention one fit for a God ... ***(off stage there is a murmur of voices; Phil's gaze drifts off stage)*** Speaking of which: I do believe I see them …. Yes, it must be .... It is!

(The Gods enter. Each has a white, cardboard halo suspended over his/her head by means of a piece of thin plastic. God One is an elderly, academic-looking gentleman with a short back-and-sides haircut; he is wearing an old but good quality pin-stripe suit. He carries a map, which he is busily consulting. God Two is thirty-something, has a long brown beard and pony tail and is dressed in a flowing full-length white garment secured at the waist with a length of brown cord; sandals on his feet. God Three is female; blonde Margaret Thatcher hair style; she is wearing a fluffy, sweater, a smart ankle length skirt, and high-heeled shoes; Dame Edna style glasses obscure much of her face.)

GOD 1: Yes, this is definitely the place he mentioned. There's the Co-Op Stores and there's the…

GOD 2: Oh, look, Dad; they even have an unsigned painting of me in the window...not a good likeness!

GOD 3: Is there any cafe? I could do with a nice cup of tea and a sit down: my feet are killing Me.

GOD 1: I warned you about those shoes, but would you listen…

GOD 2: ***(unctuously)*** Now Dad, Mother normally stays at home dispensing wisdom. She's never been out on a field mission with us before. She just wanted to put her best foot forward, for God's sake

GOD 3: Best foot forward for God's sake ***(chuckles)*** very droll, my boy, very droll!

GOD 1: ***(Addressing Phil)*** Excuse me, sir, but I'm looking for Philip Harrington, a.k.a. Phil the Phoneman

PHIL: ***(aside)*** Good God, it really is God! All three of them..him..them! ***(addressing the Gods)*** I'm the man you're looking for. ***(shaking hands heartily with all three Gods)*** You're all very welcome to Banakilty. Thank you for coming so promptly. In fact you're so prompt I haven't had time to arrange accommodation ... but that should be no problem. ***(knocks on hotel door)***

VOICE: ***(sound of sliding hatch, pause, then.)*** Not a hope! You don't set foot in here again until you settle your drinks bill!

PHIL: It's not for myself. I have some very important visitors

VOICE: ***(Hatch slides open again)*** Have they money?

PHIL: ***(turning to the Gods, embarrassed)*** Err do you have any money?

GODS: ***(laugh uproariously)*** HA HA HO HO HEE HEE HU HU!

GOD 3: Dear man, you're joking, of course!

GOD 2: On my first mission money was the death of me! Never carry the stuff now!

GOD 1: I never carry cash.

VOICE: Yeah, We've heard that one before, too. Piss off the lot of you! ***(Hatch slams shut)***
(Phil tries two more doors, but gets only abuse and closed doors)

PHIL: Hallo, Sister Benedicta; I've God here and he..ehh they're looking for bed and breakfast

VOICE 2: Philip Harrington, you're drunk again. Take God with you and go to hell! ***(Phil, embarrassed, tries next door)***

PHIL: Father Barry, I've God here with me and I thought you might put him up for the …

VOICE 3: Harrington! That phone you sold me has given me nothing but grief. Get lost, ye waster!

GOD 1: Don't be embarrassed Mr. Harrington; we've never been very popular.

GOD 2: Tell me about it! I'll never know why you sent me on that mission to the Middle East!

GOD 3: Now, now, dear, let bygones be bygones! I'm afraid your father overestimated the capacity of people to care more about others than they care about themselves. It's just not in their make up….

GOD 1: No, my dear, I cannot agree with you on that score. It's true that good and caring people are in the minority, but they do exist and they reflect our glory. The way they live illuminates the lives of the vast majority and gives them something to imitate ... why, I'm sure we shall find a noble, self-sacrificing person here in Banakilty; a good and honest soul who is selflessly devoted to the well-being of the community. ***(benignly to Phil)*** For example, you yourself Mr. Harrington

PHIL: ***(to the Gods, hastily)*** Me? Oh, no: I haven't time to be good, but I do know just such a person ***(to the audience)*** and it'll be killing two birds with one stone …God gets to meet a real humanitarian and he..that is..they also get lodgings for the night. Very basic lodgings, but what the hell: doesn't it beat a stable? ***(to the Gods)*** I think I've found the answer to the accommodation problem .... pardon me for just one moment. ***(Moves stage left, picks up a stone and throws it up at window, SFX of stone hitting window. Then he shouts up.)***
Hey: Mary; Mary O'Hare!

MARY: ***(throwing open the window and looking down)*** What is it, for God's sake?

PHIL: You know what I was telling you last night?

MARY: What oh, yeah that dream you had about God but sure you were half-cut at the time!

PHIL: Half-cut I may have been, but 'twas the truth all the same. And now he tha's to say..*they're* here!

MARY: ***(wide-eyed)*** *God?* All *three* persons, *here?* In Banakilty? You're not serious!

PHIL: I swear to God! Anyway, listen: I can't find anywhere for them to stay. And you know I'm sleeping rough these days. Could you put them up in your place? Just for tonight?

MARY: Not a hope! I've a customer coming in ten minutes I'll have to service him because I need the money for the rent. Mrs Grimes has given me until Monday. Why couldn't you get them a room?

PHIL: Why? Because the people here are a bunch of wankers, tha's why! Ah come on, Mary; I'm in

a jam ... just the one night. ***(wheedlingly)*** God'll reward you.

MARY: God doesn't pay the rent! And as landladies go, Mrs Grimes isn't too bad; I want to stay on the right side of her. On the other hand I'm not feeling great, and me customer wants me to go to his place for the weekend. I'm not too keen on going. ***(considers)*** I could give him a buzz and put him off .. Tomorrow's Sunday, and I charge double for Sunday work. If the weather
is good I'll pull a few at the roundabout. If not I'll do a few pubs; yeah: that would make the rent. ***(decides)*** Alright, so. Send 'em along to me!

PHIL: ***(fervently)*** God bless ye, girl!

MARY: I'd better change the sheets. ***(thought strikes her)*** *I* suppose they know what I do for a living?

PHIL: Oh Jesus, they don't..and we don't want 'em to know, either! ***(Mary closes the window; Phil walks back to the Gods)*** Everything under control! You'll be sleeping in the private room of Mary O' Hare, a woman who, in my opinion, is one the finest human beings alive today. Decent, honest good and caring: the salt of the earth!

GOD 2: ***(brightening visibly)*** Sounds like Mary Magdalene.

GOD 3: Hush, dear! The less said about that particular lady the better!

(The Gods make their way to Mary's room, which is created by turning two flats around; Mary's room consists of a double bed, dressing table, a pull-out sofa two chairs and a table chair. There is a faded picture of the Sacred Heart on the door, which causes God 2 to wince in aesthetic anguish as the three Gods enter)

MARY: You're all very welcome. You must excuse the mess

GOD 1: Nice little place you have here.

GOD 3: ***(aside to God 2)*** The Hilton it isn't

GOD 2: ***(waspishly)*** It's better than a stable, isn't it?

PHIL: Right, well, I'll be off, so …oh, and if anybody needs to get in touch with me, maybe Mary would let you use her phone.

MARY: I would, only I was cut off ten minutes ago: me... eh..customer works for Eircom!

PHIL: Oh ....Well, look: here's my second mobile; ***(giving her phone; then to the three Gods)*** All the best. See what you can do for us, and say a little prayer for me...

GOD 2: Surely it's you who should be saying a little prayer to us

PHIL: What? Oh Oh, yeah. Sound. Very good. Ha ha! Well, sleep tight and don't let the fleas bite! ***(Phil exits at speed, followed by Mary)***

GOD 3: ***(shocked, wide-eyed)*** What? Are there fleas here?

GOD 1: ***(chuckling indulgently)*** No, no; just a figure of speech, my dear.

MARY: ***(to Phil, outside the house)*** Where are you sleeping tonight?

PHIL: In the abandoned phone box off Tully Street…the glass in it is still in one piece even though it's lying on its side ***(Phil hurries away, Mary goes back into the house.)***

MARY: Can I get you something to cat? Or would you like a cup of tea ...?

GOD 3: ***(eagerly)*** Oh, tea, that would be nice

GOD 1: No, no, we've had a very long day. All we need is sleep. ***(GOD 3 glares at GOD 1)***

MARY: Alright, so. Ye can work out the sleeping arrangements yerselves. Good night and God bless….

GODS: ***(in unison)*** We will. ***(The lights dim, then fade completely; for a few seconds the sound of gentle snoring wafts through the darkness. During the blackout the flats are put back in their original position. Then. as the light begins to return, the cry of the cock is heard.. Gods 2 and 3 are seen leaving Mary's house...)***

GOD 2: I hate that bloody sound!

GOD 3: What sound?

GOD 2: The cock reminds me of something I said to a friend once.

GOD 3: And what was that?

GOD 2: Oh, told him that before the cock crowed twice he'd have left me down pretty badly!

GOD 3: Well, he did, didn't he?

GOD 2: Yes, but I hurt his feelings unnecessarily; he spent the rest of his life on. a guilt trip and another chap in the group topped himself on my account over a small sum of money. No wonder I hate money! Anyway, as I've said before, it really wasn't the most successful mission. ***(sighs lugubriously)*** *I* just hope this one is a bit more positive ***(God 1 comes out of the house with Mary; he is in affable and waggish mood)***

GODI: Thank you for your warm-hearted hospitality. Oh, and do give Phil his mobile phone back. ***(significant pause)*** I'm pleased with your Mr. Harrington; in you he has shown us a good, decent, caring human being; in one word: a humanitarian!

GOD 2: ***(waspishly)*** That's two words!

MARY: Oh, I'm not good .. I confess: when Phil asked me to put you up for the night, I didn't want to.

GOD 2: ***(eagerly)*** *I* know a story about thatThere was this man had two sons and he asked the first one to go and work in his vineyard and the son said...

GOD 1: Yes, yes, we know the story: and it applies to you, Mary; you didn't *want* to do good, but in the end you did! You are the living proof that good people really do exist .... a point which certain persons..**(a *quick glance at GOD 3)*** even in heaven have lately begun to dispute ... You are the living proof that my universal plan is working.

GOD 3: ***(looking into the middle distance and tossing her head)*** Peh!

GOD 1: ***(avuncular)*** Well, good bye, my dear

GOD 3: ***(gushingly)*** Good bye, dear; so nice, must do it again sometime

GOD 2: ***(Flat tone)*** Bye.

MARY: Hold on a minute. I'm not good. I'd *like* to be good. But, there's the rent to pay. And to pay the rent I have to sell meself to men. Sometimes I actually *enjoy* the work. Now *that's* not good, is it? I'd love to be able to keep the commandments and be a fat housewife
with three children…kind, loving and giving - but I haven't a hope. The competition in my line is fierce; even working flat out I still can't manage to make ends meet. Money is the root of all evil: I simply can't *afford* to be good!

GOD 1: ***(coughs, then stiffly but not unkindly)*** To err is human. We forgive you.

GOD 3: ***(looking at her wrist watch)*** Heavens, is that the time?

GOD 2: Look for the hero inside yourself: try hard and YOU- WILL- BE- GOOD. That is your target: TO-BE-GOOD!

MARY: Listen to me: can't you understand: I just can't afford to be good!

GOD 2: Dad...I think we have a problem here.***(The Gods get into a huddle, there is comic business***

as they debate intently, but the following words emerge from their murmured-conversation)

GOD 2: She says MUTTER MUTTER MUTTER

GOD 1: What? But we don't get involved in economics BUZZ BUZZ BUZZ

GOD 3: But if it hasn't been tried before, why not try it now BUZZ MUTTER BUZZ

GOD 1 ***(finally, sounding overruled)*** WELL OH ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! ***(They break the huddle)***

GOD 1: ***(coughing unctuously, turns to Mary)*** Ahem; it would appear that an improvement in your financial position would lead to an accompanying rise in your self-esteem and social status, thereby enabling you to put certain philanthropic schemes of yours into action. Am I correct in this assumption?

MARY: Yes, you're right. And this would be my plan. ***(She sings the following text to the melody of the Irish air "The Spinning Wheel")***

If I were a rich girl I'd stop this bad living,
I'd spend all my life then in loving and giving;
I'd give to the poor and I'd ask them no questions
And let them all eat till they got indigestion.

Oh I'm so tired of being laid by allcomers,
Young men and old men in winter and summer;
I'd like if my life was both richer and better
But poverty keeps good intentions in fetters.

(Pause: The Gods are visibly moved; then, very decisively)

GOD 3: I say we do it. I may regret it later but now I say to hell with good economic practice!.

GOD 2: I agree; this is a special case: let's throw economic discretion to the winds!

GOD 1: Very well ***(turning to Mary)*** Mary, we don't carry money but we are not paupers. You gave us hospitality. In return I am giving you this piece of paper. It belonged to one of my earthly representatives and can be cashed at any bank. All you need to do is sign your name on it and you will be able to realize your dreams. ***(He hands the paper to Mary, who looks at it wide-eyed, gasps and faints; God 1 stuffs the paper into Mary's pocket. Gods 2 and 3 carry her recumbent form into her house. When they return, God 1 addresses them in a worried voice)***

GOD 1: Do you think we've acted wisely?

GOD2: Whatever about wisely, I do think we've done the right thing

GOD3: Wisdom is my department and I say that we'd be wise to drop back here to see how things work out.

GOD 1: Well, we have had a pleasant time and I agree that we should return here to review the situation. Also, my dears, I can tell you that we have acted in accordance with the laws of heaven and earth.

GOD 3: What do you mean?

GOD 1: I have searched my memory and I can say with certainty that there is no law in the universe, which says a God is exempt from paying hotel bills. By giving Mary a little gift we have paid our way, rewarded her goodness and encouraged her to persist in doing good. A good day's work for heaven and earth, don't you think?

GOD 2: Fine. Can we go now?

GOD 1: Andiamo! ***(making to depart.)***

GOD 3: There he goes again: he just can't forget his Italian connection!

GOD 2: ***(exasperated)*** Bloody Italians; did they give me grief in the Middle East!

MARY: ***(As they go off, Mary's window opens and she shouts)*** Thanks. Thanks a million. God speed!

GODS: ***(turning to her, they bow slightly and chant in unison)*** Be good, just be good!

(The Gods are now out of sight. Lights fade slowly down to end the scene, almost as if the light was following the departing Gods; the last thing we see is Mary, who has stopped waving and is looking inscrutably at the piece of paper which God 1 has given her)

SCENE 4

(Afternoon in Banakilty town park. The park is represented by a bench, stage centre, and four male actors; the actors stand in pairs, about one metre apart, at either side of the stage, their backs turned to the audience, their hands in front of them. They are dressed in green and bits of tree branches are attached to their costumes by sellotape. Hanging from the branches of the "trees" stage right is a placard with the letters "B N KI TY"; the "trees" on stage left have a placard which reads: "TO N ARK"; placards at the feet of each pair read. "FIR TREES" Clearly the park has also fallen on hard times. Sitting on the bench is Mark O' Toole, 20 something. Scruffy, unshaven, in sweatshirt, stained anorak and torn jeans, he has a bottle of mineral water on the bench next to him. He takes a bottle of tablets out of his pocket and pours a large handful into his hand. He unscrews the top of his water bottle and is about to put the tablets in his mouth when an old whore and her niece enter.)

NIECE: Howya, handsome! Fancy a little thrill?

MARK: No thanks. I have my own private ecstacy.

WHORE: You'd want to watch him …he might have a syringe!

NIECE: I doubt it. He's not the type. He's good-lookin' enough under all the shit

MARK: Thank you for those kind words. How would you like to buy me lunch?

WHORE: ***(intervening)*** I'm sorry for your trouble. We're not rich enough to feed the poor ***(Mary O'Hare enters; she is dressed better than in the first two scenes; this attracts the ire of the whore, who says very loudly)*** ... unlike that stuck-up bitch Mary O'Hare.

MARY: ***(stopping in her tracks)*** Me? What did I do?

WHORE: Didn't you get that cousin of yours to kick me niece's family out into the street!

MARY: Oh, no; I never

NIECE: Ah, now, fair's fair; you can't hold that against her: Mary tried to get yer man to change his mind, but lie wouldn't, the bad bastard! ***(flaring up)*** Jesus, 'tis hard to believe they're the same flesh and blood; Mary's a decent skin, but him: he's a mean, cold-hearted, grasping little fucker!

WHORE: ***(to Mary)*** Be that as it may, hasn't there been a big change in yer fortunes? I wonder did ye get some poor eejit of a bachelor man to give ye a legacy for services rendered?

NIECE: Indeed 'n' she didn't. ***(staring at Mary as if she were an exotic object)*** She went one better: she's only engaged to a farmer in Pogmolamh; a widower with three kids!

WHORE: Jesus, where'd she meet him?

NIECE: At the shop when he brought her a load of turnips.

WHORE: An' I suppose he fancied her Dutch cabbages! Well, isn't she the cute hoor, now!

NIECE: Cuter than us, anyhow! ***(to Mary)*** You're off to see him now, I suppose?

MARY: Well, yes

MARK: *(who has been growing increasingly annoyed at all this female chatter)* What the fuck is this? A Hoors' Convention or an ICA meeting? Would ye ever all fuck off and let me have a bit of peace and quiet!

WHORE: Wash out yer mouth with soap an' water, ye dirty scut!

NIECE: Come on, auntie; don't lower yerself to his level! *(Niece and Whore exit)*

MARK: Bloody hoors!

MARY: Leave them alone! They perform a valuable social service for the lonely and the frustrated and all they get in return is abuse from the holier than thous .... and 'tis the behaviour of the holier than thous that creates the need for whores in the first place! *(catching sight of Mark's tablets, which he is calmly preparing to swallow)* Oh!

MARK: What are ye gawking at?

MARY: *(pointing)* Them…. What are you doing with them?

MARK: What do you think? I'll give you a hint. A year ago I was a whizz kid. Now I can't even afford to make a call from a public phone.

MARY: *(focusing totally on the tablets)* What are you doing with them?

MARK: None of your business. Fuck off!

MARY: *(irrelevantly)* Me feet are killing me.

MARK: This bench is occupied.

MARY: So I see. I wouldn't dream of disturbing you.

MARK: Fine. So you'll be moving along.

MARY: I might.

MARK: Do; I don't like the look of you. Did anybody ever tell you you're cross-eyed?

MARY: They didn't, because I'm not. Just look into my eyes; you can see I'm focused!

MARK: Ah, hell; who cares about your eyes! If your feet are tired sit down!

MARY: *(sitting on bench, a little apart from Mark)* Why were you going to do it?

MARK: You really want to know? *(pause)* Well, I'll tell you to get rid of you! You know what a software engineer is?

MARY: ' Course I do! I've met loads of them in different positions!

MARK: *(dryly)* I bet you have! I'm a software engineer. I was working in the States. Doing very well for myself I came back to Ireland because the country was crying out for people like me. I left all my friends in America and came here. With my girl friend. She liked it at first ... it was such a change from LA. But then she got fed up of the endless circle of work, socialising, getting pissed, hangover, work, socialising and so on. So she left. Three months ago the factory closed down. So here I am: minus a woman and minus the job for which I'd left the comfort of life in America. I must have been soft in the head to come back! But here I am: a software engineer with nowhere to do his engineering. Know what that feels like?

MARY: Yes, I do.

MARK: No, you don't; how could you?

MARY: Yes, I can. There's an English summer school here for foreigners. Me sister fell in love with an Italian engineer one summer. And he seemed to love her, too. For the six weeks here he was like one of the family. Anyway, he went back to Italy. They wrote to each other for a while, but then the letters stopped. She was very upset. She felt there was something wrong, so she decided to go to Italy.

MARK: Wait. Don't tell me. She found where he lived and he was married and his wife was expecting their second child and

MARY: You've been watching too many films. It turned out that the factory where he worked had closed down. They had a party on the last day. He drank too much and decided to walk home ... he lived only a mile from the factory. He was dressed in dark clothes. He wasn't very visible and people in Italy don't tend to walk on the side of the road so drivers aren't very careful And when me sister arrived back here she couldn't concentrate on her work and so.... She hasn't worked since. And every summer while the English summer school is on we have to be particularly careful. You see, she tried to *(she breaks down)*.

MARK: Jesus!

MARY: *(valiantly)* Why is it you never have a tissue when you need one!

MARK: *(wiping her face with his own handkerchief)* You're pretty helpless, aren't you?

MARY: *(still upset)* I don't know what I am!

MARK: Your sister… so that's why you stopped me?

MARY: *(to the audience)* It's such a nice day. Nobody should do anything horrible and ... permanent on a nice day. *(to Mark)* You only wanted to do that *(gesturing at the tablets)* because you couldn't bear your own misery on such a lovely day.

MARK: Oh? *(after a pause)* Well, that's enough about me. What's your story?

MARY: Not much. I have a shop.

MARK: A shopkeeper? With your looks you'd earn more walking the streets or doing the pubs and hotels.

MARY: That's what I *used* to do. Now I have a shop.

MARK: *(mockingly)* Jasus! What a gift from the gods!

MARY: That's exactly what it was. Who told you?

MARK: ***(scornfully)*** Sure what else could it have been? One evening the gods turned up at your place and said: here's a reward for your services to humanity!

MARY: ***(ignoring his tone)*** Partly right; but the reward came in the morning!

MARK: They were no fools, those gods! Always sample the wares before making payment! ***(as if watching himself from outside himself)*** Why the hell am I having this conversation. This is fucking farcical! ***(He turns away from her in irritation)***

MARY: I can play the guitar a bit. ***(Pause)*** And I can mimic men. ***(Pause)*** When I got the shop I gave away the guitar. I realized that with money I could be as stupid as I liked, and I'd still be respected.
"I'm my own boss," I said to myself,
"I can walk alone and sleep alone.
For a whole year," I said,
"I'll keep away from men."

MARK: And now you're marrying a farmer in Pogmolamh....
(long pause)
What do you know about love?

MARY: Everything!

MARK: You know nothing! ***(pause)*** Unless, of course, you enjoyed it

MARY: I didn't most of the time.

MARK: ***(without looking at her, strokes her knee with his hand)*** Like that?

MARY: Uh hub.

MARK: ***(breaking off)*** You're easily pleased. ***(pause)*** I hate this town!

MARY: That's because you have no friends.

MARK: I do have friends! But it makes them nervous to see me still unemployed. "Yerra, you're bound to find something," they used to say. Now they duck down side streets when they see me coming. That or they pretend not to see me. Another variation is smiling at me from a distance and then speeding up as they come abreast, pleading an urgent appointment .... and they slow down when they're about five metres past me. Oh, yes; I've got friends!
(turning to Mary) And you?

MARY: ***(hesitating)*** Well…I have…I have a cousin.

MARK: Out for what he can get, I suppose!

MARY: He only came once. Then lie went away. He won't be coming back ***(Mark Iooks away from Mary .....pause .....)*** They say hopelessness is next to wickedness; hope is next to goodness What's your name?

MARK: Mark O' Toole. Talk away I'm just listening to the sound

MARY: Once, when I was a little girl, I fell and dropped a bag of loose potatoes. They rolled out into the street and got mangled. An old man in a shabby suit helped me up and gave me a pound to get some more. People who don't have very much often seem to be the most generous. Funny that, isn't it? It's as if they want to show what they can do with the little they have, and being kind seems to come naturally to them. Wickedness is empty and awkward; you can see the awkwardness and emptiness in wicked people, as if they had locked up all their kindness and thrown the key away. Kindness has a sort of in-built rhythm to it; a kind of instinctive feeling of rightness and harmony. When we sing a song, or make something useful or sow potatoes we're being kind. Underneath all yer oul' guff I think you're kind.

MARK: You make it all sound so simple.

MARY: Oh, no. ***(short pause)*** Oh! A drop of rain!

MARK: Where'd you feel it?

MARY: Between the eyes.

MARK: Closer to the left or the right one?

MARY: The left.

MARK: Great. ***(He is getting sleepy and starts to slump forward. Mary grabs him and changes position so that she can get him lying with his head in her lap. Although he is, indeed, very tired, he realizes the comedy of the situation as he remembers Mary's declaration regarding men.)*** So you're definitely finished with men, eh?

MARY: ***(with a smile)*** But I am NOT cross-eyed.

MARK: Perhaps not.

MARY: Definitely not.

MARK: ***(weakly, after a short pause)*** Listen; I haven't had a bite to eat for two days and all I've had to drink was river water. I couldn't give you what you want even if I tried.

MARY: I like it in the rain.

(Phil Harrington enters, far from happy about the rain. He sings to the melody of SINGING IN THE RAIN..)

PHIL: I'm cursing in the rain,
It's giving me a pain.
What a damp, sodden feeling:
I'm drenched once again;
No-one wants a phone,
I'm soaked to the bone:
I'm cursing, just cursing
In the rain

(changing to the melody of WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE...)
Who wants to buy a mobile phone? No-one
That's why I'm having a big moan
No-one, no-one at all has ready cash or blank cheques
I really am vexed, I'm poor and perplexed

(The rain has stopped. Mary gently disentangles herself from Mark and runs across to Phil)

MARY: Phil! Just the man. You can pick up your phone in my shop.

PHIL: Thanks a million. And how's life treating you since your windfall??

MARY: I've just met a kind and unlucky man. I want to buy him the finest mobile phone.

PHIL: ***(raising his eyes to the sky)*** THANK YOU, GOD! Things are starting to improve.*(to Mary)* Drop into Murty's pub this evening. That's where I keep the stock since I was thrown out of the shop. IT sell you a phone that's only heavenly and sure why wouldn't it be! ***(laughs)*** See you later! ***(He exits on the following line)*** One phone sold today: that's food for the next week. Isn't God good all the same!

MARY: ***(Seeing Mark asleep on the bench)*** He's asleep. Hopelessness, rain and me wore him out. Not to worry: the phone I'm buying him will put him in touch with the outside world. Just imagine it: I will have helped to give his life meaning again! ***(brushes Mark's tablets to the ground and crushes them beneath her shoe)***

(Brecht, Scene 3A): Phil's home in the abandoned phone box. The Gods appear to him in his dreams and he tells them to slow down the expectations of "goodness" which they have. "Neither Banakilty nor Rome was built in a day."

Scene 5

(Brecht Scene 4): Violence in the street. Phil assaulted and injured by Sharkey, the barber. Mary is offered financial assistance by old man and his wife. Mary, partly as herself, partly as Frankie Fulignati considers the inadequacy and inequalities in human life and the economic system and questions the gods' commitment to human beings.

Scene 6

(Brecht, Scene 5):In the vegetable shop. Mrs. Plunkett gossips about Mary's broken engagement and says she'd be better off with Sharkey, whose wife is in the last stages of cancer. Frankie/Mary negotiates with Mark, who's impressed with the shop. Disguised as Frankie, Mary learns what Frankie really thinks of her. Sharkey declares his love but Mary lets her heart rule her head and decides to stick with Mark. Sharkey is devastated. Mary and Mark leave together.

Scene 6A

(Brecht, Scene 5A): Mary's room. Mary is to be married. But she is in two minds about the money which the old couple gave her, which they now need themselves; she wants to give it back, but she also wants to help Mark make a new start.

Scene 7

(Brecht, Scene 6): Restaurant, wedding breakfast. Everyone awaits the arrival of Frankie Fulignati. As Mary is there, he doesn't appear; there is no wedding and the party breaks up in recrimination.

Scene 7A

(Brecht, Scene 6A): Phil's home in the abandoned phone box: He dreams of the gods; asks for help but they say they have their own problems at this moment.

Scene 8

(Brecht, Scene 7): Street behind Mary's shop ... Mrs Plunkett guesses at the Mary/Frankie connection. Sharkey gives Mary a blank cheque; Mary confides to Mrs. Plunkett that she's pregnant. Chaos, as there are evictions; property is stolen. Financial problems are solved for the moment.

Scene 8A

(Brecht, Scene 7A): In his phone box Phil dreams once more of the gods; they are now very much the worse for wear, refuse to help and it's clear they wish they'd never set foot in Banakilty.

Scene 9

(Brecht, Scene 8) Frankie's Market Gardens in Sharkey's plot of ground. Mark suspects Frankie has got rid of Mary. His mother is delighted to see what a job Mary has made of Mark; he is now a leader of men and everybody in the area is employed in the market gardens.

Scene 10

(Brecht, Scene 9) The market gardens .... Mark is now sure that Frankie has got rid of Mary in some evil way…and he (Frankie) is getting fat! The Gardai arrive and Frankie is arrested on suspicion of illegal imprisonment, or worse, of Mary. He says he has nothing to fear ... even though Phil finds Mary's clothes and pandemonium ensues.

Scene 10A

(Brecht, Scene 9A) Phil's home in the abandoned phone box ... he dreams one last time of the gods. They are disgusted with the weakness of humanity .... except for Mary. They vow to find her.

Scene 11

(Brecht, Scene 10) Banakilty court house .... Frankie is on trial. The gods appear as judges in exotic robes of patchwork design. The characters of the Banakiltians are revealed in all their hypocrisy and yet not altogether evil shoddiness. Mrs Plunkett is about to expose Mary when Mary reveals her identity herself. The gods praise Mary, refusing to listen to the terrible things she confesses to having done in her alter ego of Frankie Fulignati. A piercing light covers the gods and they begin to retire from the earth. All they can give Mary is platitudes as she begs them to tell her how to go on. The gods have disappeared. Stage lights fade slowly down. Mary is left lying on the ground in despair Stage in total darkness. Music which has

been very low in the background now fades up it is the Chinese dance FULL OF JOY, heard in the prologue

EPILOGUE: (original) VIDEO/FILM of Chinese mother and unseen daughter

Music down;

Child's Voice: But what happened to Mary? And Mark? And Phil (tremulously)

Mother: I don't know. I tell you what; you go to sleep now and tomorrow you can tell me what you'd have done if you were Mary!

Child: O.K Mammy; is there really a country called Ireland far away in the west?

Mother: Yes. but it's very small……it could fit into our Sezuan quite a few times before anybody even noticed it was there.

Child: Yes, Our Sezuan is soooo big. (yawns) Good night, Mammy.

Mother: Good night, my petal.

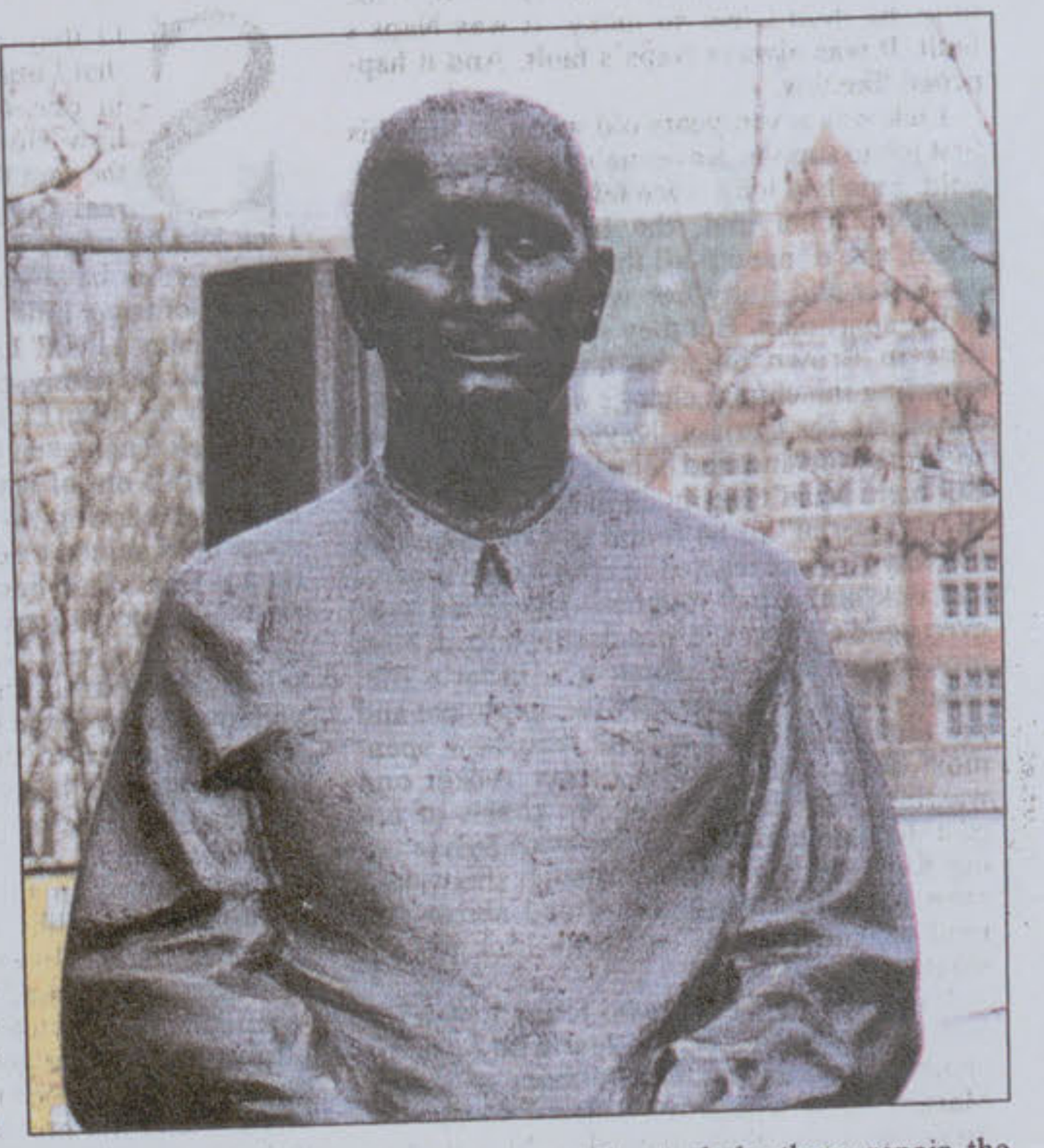
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APPENDIX G

IRISH TIMES WEEKEND REVIEW
SATURDAY, 26.05.01



The graves of Bertolt Brecht and his wife, Helene Weigel, in the Dorotheen Cemetary, Berlin, and (right) a sculpture of the writer on Bertolt-Brecht-Platz.



Brecht's final refuge

MADELEINE HUMPHREYS

Bertolt Brecht's Berlin, a Bohemian paradise in "the dump near Potsdam"

IN THE spring of 1956, Bertolt Brecht was living at number 125 Chauseestrasse at the northern periphery of central Berlin. He was working on an adaption of John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* and reading Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. It was 30 years since he had written *Mann ist Mann*, which was seen recently in Dublin. By the time his theatre company, the Berliner Ensemble, performed his *Playboy*, Brecht was dead.

The house at Chauseestrasse was a final refuge for Brecht. From the large room on the top floor where he worked, he looked out on the Dorotheen Cemetary and the grave of his hero, Georg Hegel, the philospher. Now Brecht lies alongside him with Heinrich Mann not far away. When Brecht lived there, after 1953, he had but a short walk down the Freidrichstrasse to what is now the Bertolt-Brecht-Platz and his theatre. He directed the company in partnership with wife, Helene Weigel. Although their marriage was over, Helene lived with him in the house on Chauseestrasse for his last years. She occupied the first floor while he lived on the top. There were two doorbells.

Helene was Austrian and today, the restaurant which constitutes the ground floor of the Brecht-Haus serves Austrian specialities reputed to be her recipies.

Bertolt Brecht was not a native Berliner. He was born in Augsburg, Bavaria, in 1898, the son of a paper mill manager. He studied medicine and worked as a medical orderly in the first World War, where he became passionately anti-militaristic. By 1924 he was living in Berlin, the city of theatres. He cannot have known how portentous his play, *Mann ist Mann*, would be. It is a play about the surrender of identity where the chief protagonist Galy Gay, a poor Irish dock-porter, wittingly allows himself to be changed into anything society wishes. He becomes the machine-made man, the ultimate social conformist.

Given that he was reflecting on the human condition at this level, it was hardly surprising that Brecht had to leave Germany soon after the accession to power of Adolf Hitler. But before he did, he had considerable success with many of his plays and especially with his musical *The Threepenny Opera*. In May, 1933, the Nazis burned his books. He was in exile, and it lasted for 15 years.

In May, 1941, Brecht got a US visa. Since leaving Germany he had lived in various European countries and Russia. Then, though remaining an unreconstructed, unreformed, unregenerate Marxist, he ended up in southern California. He never settled. But he made friends with Charlie Chaplin and Charles Laughton. In October, 1947, Brecht was called before the House Committee on Un-American Activities where he could truthfully answer that he "was not and never had been a member of the Communist Party". They did not ask him if he was a Communist. A master of ambiguity, Brecht enjoyed himself immensely. The dialectical approach was, after all, his metier. And the Committee loved it. In 1948 he was back in Berlin. A sharply divided Berlin, but Berlin all the same. Like many of the returning intellectuals, he settled in the East.

Authorised to set up the Berliner Ensemble by the government of the German Democratic Republic, Brecht spent much of his time wandering around Berlin, watching the women piling up bricks in neat arrangements. "The dump near Potsdam", is how he described the city in this period. It was full of ghosts and some of the ghosts had miraculously survived. They gathered together in a battered shed opposite the Deutsches Theatre on Max Reinhardtstrasse where the door was always left open. It was to be a theatre for the people; to help them repair the damage caused by the perversion of their emotional lives during the years of the Third Reich.

The house on Chauseestrasse and the Dorotheen Cemetary together with the Deutsches Theatre and the Berliner Ensemble are only a part of this literary landmark. The pilgrim will want to explore the whole of the Scheunenviertel (the barn quarter) from Weidendammerbrücke to the Rosa Luxemburgstrasse, bearing in mind that long before it was a Bohemians' paradise it was the old Jewish Quarter. On Rosa Luxemburg-Platz stands Max Reinhardt's Volksbuhne Theatre. Here the great impresario brought the works of Heinrik Ibsen and August Strindberg to the people of Berlin in the early 1900s, while Edward Martyn was doing the same for the people of Dublin. In a way both were blazing a trail for Bertolt Brecht.

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