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INTRODUCTION
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1.1 LIFE AND WORKS OF BERTOLT BRECHT

1.1.1 EARLY LIFE

"I, Bertolt Brecht, came out of the black forests.
My mother moved me into the cities as I lay
Inside her body. And the coldness of the forests
Will be inside me till my dying day."

(Brecht: 1976, 107).

These are the words of one of the most prominent figures in the 20th-century theatre, Bertolt Brecht, who was born in Augsburg, Bavaria, part of the Bavarian section of the German Empire on February 10, 1898, at 4:30 in the morning. Married in 1897, his father was a Catholic and his mother a Protestant. Brecht was their first child, baptized as Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht. His father, Bertolt Friedrich Brecht, worked in a paper factory. His mother, Wilhelmine Friederike Sophie Brezing, was ill with breast cancer most of his young life. He had one brother, Walter, who was born in 1900.
Brecht was a sickly child, having a congenital heart condition and a facial tic. As a result he was sent to a sanitarium to relax. At age six he attended a Protestant elementary school and at age ten a private school, The Royal Bavarian Real gymnasium. Like most students, he was educated in Latin and the humanities, later being exposed to Nietzsche and other thinkers. He suffered a heart attack at the age of twelve but soon recovered and continued his education.

Significantly, Brecht was exposed at a young age to Luther's German translation of 'The Bible', a text considered instrumental in the development of the modern German language. While in school he began writing, and he ended up co-founding and co-editing a school magazine called The Harvest. By age sixteen he was writing for a local newspaper and had written his first play, The Bible, about a girl who must choose between living and dying but saving many others. Thus he drifted towards the literary arts at an early age, writing poetry as a boy and even had a few poems published in 1914. He was an indifferent student, however, and was very nearly expelled from Augsburg Grammar School for taking a dismissive, anti-patriotic tone when given an assignment to write an essay with the title 'It is a sweet and honourable thing to die for one's country'. He was later almost expelled at age eighteen for dissenting about it being necessary to defend his country in time of war. By nineteen he had left school and started doing clerical work for the war, prevented from more active duty due to health problems.
1.1.2 HIS YOUTH AND EARLY PLAYS

In 1917 he resumed his education and enrolled as a medical student at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, where he would attend Arthur Kutscher's theatre seminar. Although Kutscher had a reputation as something of a theatrical guru, Brecht was unimpressed. He went so far as to harshly criticize one of the instructor's favorite plays, Hanns Johst's *The Lonely One*, a biographical drama about the life of nineteenth century dramatist C.D. Grabbe. The impetuous young Brecht suggested that he himself could write a better play on the same subject. The result was Brecht's first play, *Baal*, an effort that Kutscher considered vile and nauseating.

In 1918, Brecht's studies were temporarily interrupted when he was conscripted and had to serve as a medical orderly in World War I. During this period, he wrote his second play, *Drums in the Night*, which tells the story of a soldier who returns home from the war to find his fiancée engaged to a war profiteer. This was the first of Brecht's plays to be performed, and his theatrical theories had, apparently, already begun to take shape, for he filled the auditorium with banners instructing the audience not to become too emotionally involved in the proceedings. *Drums in the Night*, which premiered at the Munich Kammerspiele in 1922, drew enthusiastic reviews from Herbert Ihering, and even earned Brecht the Kleist Prize, Germany's highest award for dramatic writing. Thus Brecht, from the very beginning, found himself in the spotlight. Moreover, Friendship with the writer Lion Feuchtwanger was an important literary contact for the young writer. Feuchtwanger advised him on the discipline of playwriting which helped him throughout his
career. In 1922, the promising young dramatist married the opera singer and actress Marianne Zoff. Their daughter, Hanne Hiob, born in 1923, would become a famous German actress. Despite being married, Brecht had extramarital affairs and spent very little time with his wife or daughter.

In 1923 his two plays *Jungle of Cities* and *Baal* were performed. *Baal* was basically written for Arthur Kutscher's theatre seminar. John Fuegi paints a picture of Brecht's mindset during this early production:

Typical of Brecht's working method in Leipzig and indeed of what was to become a lifetime practice, were his individual sessions with actors outside the formal rehearsal period and his disregard for the original text of the play. Each day the text would be viewed afresh as Brecht the director denounced (half in jest but half seriously) Brecht the playwright. ‘How could anybody write such shit?’ he would ask rhetorically, and would scribble new lines, new scenes, new acts and insist these be learned immediately. So changing would the chameleon be, that Brecht the theorist would openly fight with Brecht the director, Brecht the poet, Brecht the playwright and Brecht the blatant womanizer. No one could predict which Brecht would predominate at any given moment. But somehow, out of the cacophony of the Brecht’s arguing with one another would come a production that worked as a unified artistic whole as each contributed a valuable piece to the final mosaic. (Fuegi: 2002, 422).
1.1.3 IN BERLIN

After moving to Berlin in 1924, he met a communist Viennese actress, Helene Weigel. His wife Marianne moved in with her parents after the birth of Hanne, and soon she stopped responding to Brecht's letters. At the age of twenty-six Brecht fathered his second illegitimate child, with Weigel. Their son was named Stefan. Brecht divorced Marianne Zoff and in 1929 married Helene Weigel. At this point he was just thirty-one. The new couple also had a daughter, Barbara, who was born shortly after the wedding and who, like Brecht's other daughter, would go on to become an actress (she would also inherit the copyrights to all of Brecht's literary work). In 1924, after receiving productions of *In the Jungle of Cities* at Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater and *Edward II* at the Prussian State Theatre, Brecht moved to Berlin, which was also necessary to continue his dramatic career. During the next few years, Brecht produced a series of well-received plays, the most popular among them was *The Three penny Opera*, which he adapted from John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* along with composer Kurt Weill. It was the biggest theatrical hit in Berlin during the 1920s and helped Brecht to receive worldwide recognition and popularity in general. In addition, he was also able to strengthen his economy. Brecht also published his first book of poems, *Hauspostille (Domestic Breviary)*, which won a literary prize. However, even as his literary fame was towering, Brecht found his interests shifting towards politics. His another play, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, caused an uproar when it premiered in Leipzig in 1930 with Nazis protesting in the audience. During this period, he also formed an influential writing collective which aspired to create a new theatre for
participants rather than for passive audiences. In 1932 he worked on a script for a semi-documentary feature-length film about the suffering caused by the then-rampant mass unemployment that was plaguing Germany. This film, \textit{Kuhle Wampe} was effective in its subversive humor and still provides a vivid insight into the final years of the Weimar Republic.

During this time Brecht was by no means monogamous. He was obsessed with the idea of abandonment, and as a result he abhorred ending relationships. The women in his life were important for his writing career. "In a better world," says Peter Thomson, "major writers might always be models of singular virtue. Brecht was not, and it is surprising how many people are deeply shocked by that....It should be made clear, though, that the women who mattered most (or mattered longest) to Brecht—Weigel, Hauptmann, Steffin, Berlau—were strong people with interests and talents that could have been developed without reference to Brecht. The extraordinary thing is that each in her own way placed those talents almost exclusively at Brecht's disposal."

\textit{(Thomson: 1994, 27).}

The modern feminist detractors often try to claim that his mistresses in fact wrote much of what he takes credit for. The allegation is largely untrue. But women such as Elisabeth Hauptmann did write significant parts of \textit{The Three penny Opera}, and other mistresses included Margarete Steffin, who helped him write \textit{The Good Woman of Szechwan} and \textit{Mother Courage and Her Children}; Hella Wuolijoki, who allowed him to transform her comedy \textit{The Sawdust Princess} into \textit{Herr Puntila and His Man Matti}; and Ruth Berlau, who at least bore him a short-lived, third
illegitimate child in 1944. Weigel was tolerant of his affairs, and she even warned other men to stay away from his mistresses on account of it upsetting him when they made their moves. What seems clear is that Brecht enjoyed the company of women, as lovers certainly, but even more as fellow workers. Answering her own question, 'What was Brecht like?', Berlau concludes:

All that struck me was that, even in

The depth of a hard

Finnish winter, he never wore gloves.

His hands were always warm, and he loved fresh

air on his hands and

forehead. Then, of course, he worked

like no other person I have ever known.

He knew no Sundays, no

vacations, no public holidays. But he did

want to have a Christmas tree.

(Berlau: 1987, 38).

As Fuegi’s research is revealing, much of the work done jointly by Brecht and his lovers was claimed singly by Brecht. "Like the fictional narrator of Elaine Feinstein’s largely factual novel Loving Brecht, they had evidently conceded that he had earned the right to sit at the centre of his own life." (Feinstein: 1992, 120).
1.1.4 EXILE IN EUROPE

In February 1933, however, Bertolt Brecht's career was violently interrupted as the Nazis came to power in Germany. The night after the Reichstag (German parliament building) was burned down, Brecht fled with his family to Prague. His books and plays were soon banned in Germany and those who dared stage his plays found their productions unpleasantly interrupted by the police. The exiled dramatist bounced around from Prague to Vienna to Zurich to the island of Fyn to Finland, where he lived in Villa Marlebäck as a guest of the Finnish author Hella Wuolijoki. There Brecht and Wuolijoki wrote the play *Mr Puntila and his Man Matti* (1940). During this period of exile, while Brecht awaited a pending visa to the United States, he also completed the plays *Mother Courage and her Children* (1939), *The Good Person of Szechwan* (1941), and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Uri* (1941).

Brecht was profoundly influenced by many varied sources during this time and the remaining years of his life. He studied Chinese, Japanese, and Indian theatre, focused heavily on Shakespeare and other Elizabethans, and was fascinated by Greek tragedy. It was during these years that he confirmed his taste for Marxism and a base for the movement called 'epic theatre'. Even before his exile he had started studying Carl Marx's *Das Kapital* and had adopted communist ideology. Meeting with Ruth Berlau, during the time, proved to be lifeline for his creativity. He had two companions- Weigel and Berlau- to share his Marxist thoughts. It was for Ruth's amateur group that he wrote one of his best known (communist) theatre poems, 'Speech to Danish working-
class actors on the art of observation'. The following poem speaks well of Brecht's own social ideology:

See how they walk and speak, those rulers

Who hold the threads of your fate in their white and brutal hands.

You should inspect such people exactly. And now

Imagine all that is going on around you, all those struggles

Picturing them just like historical incidents

For this is how you should go on to portray them on the stage.

(Brecht: 1976, 107).

Among his other mistresses, Margarete Steffin was the most influential personality as far as his communism is concerned. She came from a working class and was the only one of whom he wrote like a conventional lover. Her death from tuberculosis in 1941 shocked him a lot. He wrote from Santa Monica, "It is as if someone had taken my guide away on the edge of the desert" (Volker: 1111, 283). On her sad demise, he wrote:

In memory of my little teacher

Of her eyes, of the blue sparks of her anger

And of her old duffel coat with its deep hood

And deep bottom hem, I christened
In May of 1941, Brecht finally received his U.S. visa and relocated to Santa Monica, California, where he attempted to become a Hollywood screenwriter, but his unusual concepts were denied by Hollywood producers who couldn't grasp his artistic visions. His only comparatively successful Hollywood film was *Hangmen Also Die* (1942), a mythical version of the assassination of Nazi leader and "Hangman" Reinhard Heydrich, who died from the bullets of unidentified resistance fighters. The project was held by Fritz Lang, but critics found lack of his craftsmanship to the service of Brecht's ideas. Until then his stay had not proved to be beneficial economically, and ‘Hangmen’ was the first occasion on which he received a good financial reward from the industry.

Describing his general situation in Hollywood in 1942, he wrote one of his shortest yet most famous poems, in which he writes:

> Every morning, in order to earn my bread
> I drive to the market where lies are bought.
> Hopefully [or “patiently” as the first version has it]
> I join the queue of sellers.

*(Fuegi: 2002, 422).*

In late 1942, Brecht – Feuchtwanger collaboration put efforts to write plays for Broadway. The result was *The Visions of Simone Machard*
(1944), which didn't find any American purchasers, but Feuchtwanger turned it into novel, Goldwyn bought the film rights, and they got a big amount to strengthen their pocket. However, the major plays could be Schweyk in the Second World War (1944) for Peter Lorre, The Caucasian Chalk Circle (1945) for Luise Rainer, Life of Galileo (1943), and a Brechtian version of The Duchess of Malfi (1946). Galileo had supremacy of his intellect and was scheduled for the Broadway opening in December. But before that the House Un-American Activities Committee called the playwright to account for his communist activities. His turn came on October 30, 1947. He appeared before the committee, wearing overalls, smoking a cigar, cracking jokes, and making constant references to the translators who transformed his German statements into English. His performance before the committee was so remarkable that even the chairman called him 'a good example'. The irrational political climate of America, then, feared him a lot, and hence, shortly after his testimony, took a plane to Switzerland, not even waiting to see the opening of his play Galileo in New York.

1.1.6 BACK TO BERLIN

On October 22, 1948, after 15 years of exile, Bertolt Brecht returned to Germany, spend a year in Zürich working on Sophocles' Antigone (trans. by Friedrich Holderin) and on his major theoretical work A Little Organum for the Theatre, and then settled in East Berlin where he was welcomed by the Communist cultural establishment and immediately given facilities to direct Mother Courage at the Deutsches Theater. The following year he founded his own company, the Berliner Ensemble. Its first production at the theater was Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti.
Brecht's second wife, Helene Weigel, whom he had married in 1929, was his chief actress and carried on as a director. Brecht quickly discovered, however, that the German Democratic Republic was not quite his ideal brand of Communism, and he was often at odds with his East German hosts. He did not care to keep up appearances, and because of his scruffy, unshaven appearance, East German security guards once excluded him from a Berlin reception being held in his own honor.

In the West as well as in the East Germany Brecht became the most popular contemporary poet, outdistanced only by such classics as Shakespeare, Schiller, and Goethe. Jean Vilar's production of *Mutter Courage (Mother Courage)* in 1951 secured him a following in France, and the Berliner Ensemble's participation in the Paris International Theatre Festival (1954) further spread his reputation. In 1954 he won the international Lenin Peace Prize and in 1955 Brecht received the Stalin Peace Prize. The next year, on August 14, 1956, in East Berlin, a great literary personage and an institution of drama, Bertolt Brecht, contracted a lung inflammation and died of a coronary thrombosis. The stage lost its soul, a stalwart with cigar in one hand and scripts in the other throughout the life. He was the man who could vibrate the whole atmosphere with his very existence. As James K. Lyon points out in *Brecht Unbound*,

"Brecht appears to have been someone whose death did more to advance his career than any single act of his life. Almost from the moment of his funeral, officials in East Germany began a process that rapidly transformed him from a troublemaker into an almost saintly literary classic, while West German intellectuals, theater people, and publishers who discovered and promoted his works
quickly laid the foundation for a 'Brecht industry' that still flourishes today. In the process, and despite a propensity for causing trouble long after his death, Brecht became, depending on how one views it, one of the most dominant influences on, or obstacles to, the development of German theater and literature in both Germanys for the next two-and-a-half decades.” (Lyon: 1995, 77).

At the time of his death, he was working on a response to Samuel Beckett's absurdist play *Waiting for Godot*, written the year before. Even at the end, Brecht was very much interested in the modern drama of the day. He provided instructions that a stiletto be placed in his heart and that he be buried in a steel coffin so that his corpse would not be riddled with worms. He also left a will giving the proceeds of his various works to particular mistresses, including Elisabeth Hauptmann and Ruth Berlau. Unfortunately for them, the will lacked the necessary witness signatures and was therefore considered void. His widow, Helene Weigel, generously gave small amounts of money to the specified women. Brecht is buried in the Dorotheenfriedhof in Berlin.

1.2 HIS MAJOR PLAYS

*Baal* was the first full-length play written by Brecht. It was written in 1918, when Brecht was a 20-year-old student at Munich University, in response to the expressionist drama *The Loner* by a Nazi dramatist Hanns Johst. The story traces the decline of a drunken and dissolute poet, Baal, an anti-hero who rejects the conventions and trappings of polite society. This honors the German *Sturm und Drang* tradition which celebrates the cult of the genius living outside the conventions of society that would
later destroy him. Baal roams the countryside, womanizing and brawling. He seduces Johanna, who subsequently drowns herself. He spurns his pregnant mistress Sophie and abandons her. He murders his friend Ekart, becoming a fugitive from the police. Defiantly aloof from the consequences of his actions, Baal is nonetheless brought low by his debauchery, dying alone in a forest hut, hunted and deserted, and leaving in his wake the corpses of deflowered maidens and murdered friends. Thus *Baal* is anything but a generalised image of the suffering, romantic poet. He suffers and dies in the play, but he accepts his death, as he accepted all experience, as the fulfillment of a demanding contract with the natural world, freely entered into in order to realise his destiny as a poet. It may be Brecht's first play, but in its cool representation of sensational and offensive images on stage we can detect the beginning of Brecht's ideas on the role of the theatre.

*Drums in the Night* was written between 1918 and 1920, and it received its first theatrical production in 1922. It is in the expressionist style of Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser. Brecht's play revolves around Anna Balicke, whose lover (Andreas) has left to fight in World War I. Anna's parents try to convince her that he is dead and that she should forget him and marry a wealthy war-materials manufacturer, Murk. Anna agrees to this arrangement eventually, just as Andreas returns. Believing that the poor proletarian Andreas cannot provide the kind of life for Anna that the bourgeois Murk can, Anna's parents encourage her to stick to her agreement. Eventually Anna leaves Murk and her parents and, against the backdrop of the Spartacist uprising, searches for Andreas. In the final scene they are re-united; to the sound of "a white wild screaming" from
the newspaper buildings above, they walk away together. The play dramatizes many of the grievances of the Spartacists in their uprising. The soldiers returning from the front felt that they had been fighting for nothing and that what they had had before they left had been stolen. Murk, the war-profiteer who did not fight and who instead made a fortune from the fighting, and who attempts to steal the soldier's fiancé, symbolizes that feeling by the working class of having been cheated. The problem dealt with in the play is contemporary one in a contemporary setting. Here Brecht's concern is not universal but immediate and localised; its transposition into his customary parable format would blunt the edge of the message. The play doesn't present the playwright's answer but strikingly unexpected course of action of an individual character.

_In The Jungle of Cities_ is the third play written between 1921 and 1924, it received its first theatrical production under the title _In the Jungle_ at the Residenztheater in Munich, opening on the 9th May, 1923. George Garga and Shlink are portrayed as two metaphorical boxers locked in a fight for the entirety of the play. Shlink is a wealthy lumber merchant and Garga is a book clerk. The play opens with Shlink and his accomplices, notably Skinny, The Worm, and The Baboon. He tries to buy Garga's opinion on a book, but Garga refuses to sell it. As a result, Shlink declares war on him and starts to destroy the bookshop. Maynes arrives and soon fires Garga. After Garga leaves, Shlink pays for the damage and departs. Garga arrives at the lumberyard, and Shlink makes himself Garga's servant. Garga accepts the challenge and immediately makes the business sell the same lot of lumber twice, thereby cheating one of the buyers. He
invites a Salvation Army Officer into the room and promises to donate the entire building to him if the Officer will allow them to spit in his face. Shlink then goes over to the officer and spits at him. Shlink goes to live with The Worm. Garga's sister Marie moves in with him, having fallen in love. Garga's girlfriend Jane is also there, working as a whore for The Baboon. Soon thereafter Garga decides to go away to Tahiti. Shlink arrives Garga's house and offers to work for them and provide them with money if they give him a place to stay. Although they all think that Garga has gone to Tahiti, it turns out that he never left Chicago. He soon goes to the hotel where Shlink is staying. When he learns that Marie is living there, he is upset that Shlink has taken over both his sister and his family. Garga starts to try to make Shlink marry Marie, but she becomes afraid and runs to Manky, who happily agrees to take her. Garga also makes Shlink give him all of his remaining money. Meanwhile, Garga has returned home and married his former girlfriend Jane after stealing her away from The Baboon. His family is living very nicely on the money that Shlink gave him. While celebrating the marriage dinner, Shlink arrives with a letter informing him that he will have to go to jail for three years for making a fraudulent lumber deal. Garga decides to go to jail instead even though it will destroy his family. When his mother hears this, she leaves the family. Garga writes a letter that accuses Shlink of raping his sister and violating his wife. He puts the letter into his pocket and tells his father that he will give the police the letter on the day that they release him from prison. Three years later Garga gives the police the letter. Shlink is forced to flee from his new lumber yard that he has built during those years. Garga takes some men and visits the Chinese Hotel in order to show them what has become of his sister and wife. Both Marie
and Jane are now prostitutes in the hotel, and Jane refuses to even consider returning with Garga. Shlink manages to return to the hotel after setting fire to his lumber yard. He tells Garga that the fight is not yet over and that they need to flee immediately. In a tent outside of a Chicago, Garga realizes that the fight has been about trying to touch another person by hating them. However, he decides that the fight has gone on too long. Garga proclaims himself the victor and leaves. Marie arrives and watches as Shlink dies in the tent. She defends his dead body from an angry mob that has arrived to lynch him. Back in Chicago, Garga sells off the burnt down lumber yard to Manky. Garga decides to go to New York. Thus Brecht puts the acute feeling of new beginning at the end after a long fight. Here “... Brecht sets a new sort of drama. The struggle is not absurd. It has the logic of the boxing ring. The audience at the boxing match would not stop to ask ‘why’ the boxers are fighting; neither should the audience at In The Jungle.” (Meech: 1994, 52).

*The Threepenny Opera* is a musical drama in three acts written by Brecht in collaboration with Kurt Weill, produced in German in 1928 and published the following year. The play was adapted from John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (1728). The play commences in the shop of Jonathan Jeremiah Peachum, the boss of London’s beggars, where Peachum outfits and trains the beggars in return for a slice of their takings from begging. In the first scene, the extent of Peachum’s iniquity is immediately exposed. Filch, a new beggar, is obliged to bribe his way into the profession and agree to pay over to Peachum 50 percent of whatever he made; the previous day he had been severely beaten up for begging up within the area of jurisdiction of Peachum’s protection racket. As a
depiction of exploitational capitalism, in a world where even beggars, individuals at the most exposed and lowest of human ebbs, are constrained to pay protection, it sets out to paint an unflattering picture. After finishing with the new man, Peachum becomes aware that his grown daughter Polly did not return home the previous night. Peachum, who sees his daughter as his own private property, concludes that she has become involved with Macheath. This does not suit Peachum at all, and he becomes determined to thwart this relationship and destroy Macheath. The scene shifts to an empty stable where Macheath himself is preparing to marry Polly once his gang has stolen and brought all the necessary food and furnishings. No vows are exchanged, but Polly is satisfied, and everyone sits down to a banquet. Since none of the gang members can provide fitting entertainment, Polly gets up and sings "Pirate Jenny," a revenge fantasy in which she is a pirate queen and orders the execution of her bosses and customers. The gang becomes nervous when the Chief of Police, Tiger Brown, arrives, but it's all part of the act; Brown had served with Mack in England's colonial wars and had intervened on numerous occasions to prevent the arrest of Macheath over the years. The old friends duet in the "Cannon Song" ("Army Song"). In the next scene, Polly returns home and defiantly announces that she has married Macheath by singing the "Barbara Song." She stands fast against her parents' anger, but she inadvertently reveals Brown's connections to Macheath which they subsequently use to their advantage. Polly warns Macheath that her father will try to have him arrested. He is finally persuaded that Peachum has enough influence to do it and makes arrangements to leave London, explaining the details of his bandit "business" to Polly so she can manage it in his absence. Before he leaves
town, he stops at his favorite brothel, where he sees his ex-lover, Jenny. They sing the "Pimp's Ballad" ("Tango Ballad") about their days together, but Macheath doesn't know Mrs. Peachum has bribed Jenny to turn him in. Despite Brown's apologies, there's nothing he can do, and Macheath is dragged away to jail. After he sings the "Ballad of the Easy Life," another girlfriend, Lucy (Brown's daughter) and Polly show up at the same time, setting the stage for a nasty argument that builds to the "Jealousy Duet." After Polly leaves, Lucy engineers Macheath's escape. When Mr. Peachum finds out, he confronts Brown and threatens him, telling him that he will unleash all of his beggars during Queen Victoria's coronation parade, ruining the ceremony and costing Brown his job. Jenny comes to the Peachums' shop to demand her money for the betrayal of Macheath, which Mrs. Peachum refuses to pay. Jenny reveals that Macheath is at Suky Tawdry's house. When Brown arrives, determined to arrest Peachum and the beggars, he is horrified to learn that the beggars are already in position and only Mr. Peachum can stop them. To placate Peachum, Brown's only option is to arrest Macheath and have him executed. In the next scene, Macheath is back in jail and desperately trying to raise a sufficient bribe to get out again, even as the gallows are being assembled. Soon it becomes clear that neither Polly nor the gang members can raise any money, and Macheath prepares to die. Then a sudden reversal: a messenger on horseback arrives to announce that Macheath has been pardoned by the queen and granted a castle and pension. The cast then sings the Finale, which ends with a plea that wrongdoing not be punished too harshly. In this way Brecht has tried to focus on the bourgeois society dealing with underworld, and there by brings out the darker reality of the contemporary society.
The Life of Galileo, also known as Galileo, is also a very ambitious work of Bertolt Brecht. The first version of the play was written between 1937 and 1939; the second version was written between 1945-47 in collaboration with Charles Laughton. The play received its first theatrical production at the Zurich Schauspielhaus, opening on 9 September 1943. The story moves round the struggle of Galileo, who has the celebrated scientist of the world. Galileo is short of money. A prospective student tells Galileo about a novel invention, the telescope, being sold in Amsterdam. Galileo replicates it, but then sells it to the Venetian Republic as his own creation. Galileo uses the telescope to substantiate Copernicus' heliocentric model of our solar system, which is highly incompatible with both popular belief and church doctrine. His daughter's marriage to a well-off young man (with whom she is genuinely in love) fails because of Galileo's reluctance to distance himself from his unorthodox teachings. Galileo is brought to the Vatican for questioning. Upon being threatened with torture, he recants his teachings. His students are shocked by his surrender in the face of pressure from the church authorities. Galileo, old and broken, living under house arrest, is visited by one of his former pupils, Andrea. Galileo gives him a book containing all his scientific discoveries, asking him to smuggle it out of Italy for dissemination abroad. Andrea now believes Galileo's actions were heroic and that he just recanted to fool the ecclesiastical authorities. However, Galileo insists his actions had nothing to do with heroism but were merely the result of self-interest. Thus Brecht, here, takes a huge task of knitting the life of a very popular figure, Galileo, and presents his struggle of choosing one out of body and soul, which is also a question
constantly going on in the people's minds. And thereby he manages to create an aesthetic distance.

_Mother Courage and Her Children_ was produced in 1941 and published in 1949. Composed of 12 scenes, the work is a chronicle play of the Thirty Years' War and is based on the picaresque novel *Simplicissimus* (1669) by Hans Jakob Grimmelshausen. In 1949 Brecht staged the play with music by Paul Dessau, in Soviet sector of Berlin. The play is set in the 17th century in Europe during the Thirty Years' War. The Recruiting Officer and Sergeant are introduced, both complaining about the difficulty of recruiting soldiers to the war. A canteen woman named Mother Courage enters pulling a cart that she uses to trade with soldiers and make profits from the war. She has three children, Eilif, Kattrin, and Swiss Cheese. The sergeant negotiates a deal with Mother Courage while Eilif is led off by the recruiting officer. One of her children is now gone. Two years from then, Mother Courage argues with a Protestant General's cook over a capon, or chicken. At the same time, Eilif is congratulated by the General for killing peasants and slaughtering their cattle. Eilif and his mother sing "The Song of the Girl and the Soldier." Mother Courage scolds her son for taking risks that could have got him killed and slaps him across the face. Three years later, Swiss Cheese works as an army paymaster. The camp prostitute, Yvette Pottier, sings "The Fraternization Song." Mother Courage uses this song to warn Kattrin about involving herself with soldiers. Before the Catholic troops arrive, the Cook and Chaplain bring a message from Eilif. Swiss Cheese hides the regiment's paybox. Mother Courage & co. hurriedly switch their insignia from Protestant to Catholic. Swiss Cheese is captured by the Catholics while
attempting to return the paybox to his General. Mother Courage deals her cart to get money to try and barter with the soldiers to free her son. Swiss Cheese is shot anyway. To acknowledge the body could be fatal, so Mother Courage does not acknowledge it and it is thrown into a pit. Later, Mother Courage waits outside of the General's tent in order to register a complaint and sings the "Song of Great Capitulation" to a young soldier waiting for the General as well. The soldier is angry that he has not been paid and also wishes to complain. The song persuades the soldier that complaining would be unwise, and Mother Courage (reaching the same conclusion) decides she also does not want to complain. When Catholic General Tilly's funeral approaches, Mother Courage discusses with the Chaplain about whether the war will continue. The Chaplain then suggests to Mother Courage that she marry him, but she rejects his proposal. Mother Courage curses the war because she finds Kattrin disfigured after collecting more merchandise. At some point about here Mother Courage is again following the Protestant army. Two peasants wake Mother Courage up and try to sell merchandise to her while they find out that peace has broken out. The Cook appears and creates an argument between Mother Courage and the Chaplain. Mother Courage departs for the town while Eilif enters, dragged in by soldiers. Eilif is executed for killing peasants but his mother never finds out. When the war begins again, the Cook and Mother Courage start their own business. The seventeenth year of the war marks a point where there is no food and no supplies. The Cook inherits an inn in Utrecht and suggests to Mother Courage that she operate it with him, but he refuses to harbour Kattrin. It is a very small inn. Mother Courage will not leave her daughter and they part ways with the Cook. Mother Courage and Kattrin pull the wagon by
themselves. The Catholic army attacks the small Protestant town of Halle while Mother Courage is away from town, trading. Katrin is woken up by a search party that is taking peasants as guides. Katrin fetches a drum from the cart, climbs onto the roof, and beats it in an attempt to awake the townspeople. Though the soldiers shoot Katrin, she succeeds in waking up the town. Early in the morning, Mother Courage sings to her daughter's corpse, has the peasants bury her and hitches herself to the cart. The cart rolls lighter now because there are no more children and very little merchandise left.

*The Good Person of Szechwan* is also known as *The Good Woman of Szechwan*, it was written between 1939 and 1941, but completed in 1943 while the author was living in temporary political exile in The United States, and was first performed in 1943 at the Schauspielhaus Zürich in Switzerland with a musical score and songs by Swiss composer Huldreich Georg Früh. The play opens with Wang, a water carrier, explaining to the audience that he is on the city outskirts awaiting the foretold appearance of several important gods. Soon the gods arrive and ask Wang to find them shelter for the night. They are tired, having traveled far and wide in search of good people who still live according to the principles that they, the gods, have handed down. Instead they have found only greed, evil, dishonesty, and selfishness. The same turns out to be true in Szechwan: no one will take them in, no one has the time or means to care for others - no one except the poor young Shen Teh, whose pure inherent charity cannot allow her to turn away anyone in need. Shen Teh is rewarded for her hospitality, as the gods take it as a sure sign of goodness. They give her money and she buys a humble tobacco shop which they intend as both gift and test: will Shen Teh be able to maintain her goodness with these
newfound means, however slight they may be? If she succeeds, the gods' confidence in humanity would be restored. Though at first Shen Teh seems to live up the gods' expectations, her generosity quickly turns her small shop into a messy, overcrowded poorhouse which attracts crime and police supervision. In a sense, Shen Teh quickly fails the test, as she is forced to introduce the invented cousin Shui Ta as overseer and protector of her interests. Shen Teh dons a costume of male clothing, a mask, and a forceful voice to take on the role of Shui Ta. Shui Ta arrives at the shop, coldly explains that his cousin has gone out of town on a short trip, curtly turns out the hangers-on, and quickly restores order to the shop. At first, Shui Ta only appears when Shen Teh is in a particularly desperate situation, but as the action of the play develops, Shen Teh becomes unable to keep up with the demands made on her and is overwhelmed by the promises she makes to others. Therefore she is compelled to call on her cousin's services for longer periods until at last her true persona seems to be consumed by her cousin's severity. Where Shen Teh is soft, compassionate, and vulnerable, Shui Ta is unemotional and pragmatic, even vicious; it seems that only Shui Ta is made to survive in the world in which they live. In what seems no time at all, he has built her humble shop into a full-scale tobacco factory with many employees. Eventually one of the employees hears Shen Teh crying, but when he enters only Shui Ta is present. The employee demands to know what he has done with Shen Teh, and when he cannot prove where she is, he is taken to court on the charge of having hidden or possibly murdered his cousin. The townspeople also discover a bundle of Shen Teh's clothing under Shui Ta's desk, which makes them even more suspicious. During the process of her trial, the gods appear in the robes of the judges,
and Shui Ta says that he will make a confession if the room is cleared except for the judges. When the townspeople have gone, Shen Teh reveals herself to the gods, who are confronted by the dilemma that their seemingly arbitrary divine behavior has caused: they have created impossible circumstances for those who wish to live good lives, yet they refuse to intervene directly to protect their followers from the vulnerability that this goodness engenders. At the end, following a hasty and ironic (though quite literal) deus ex machina, the narrator throws the responsibility of finding a solution to the play's problem onto the shoulders of the audience. It is for the spectator to figure out how a good person can possibly come to a good end in a world that, in essence, is not good. The play relies on the dialectic possibilities of this problem, and on the assumption that the spectator will be moved to see that the current structure of society must be changed in order to resolve the problem. Through this play, Brecht satirises the capitalist social structure, and shows how the actions of the individuals derive their meaning from their social and political relations at a specific moment in history.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle is play consisting of a prologue and five scenes, which was first produced in 1948. The work is based on the German writer Klabund’s play Der Kreidekreis (1924), itself a translation and adaptation of a Chinese play from the Yuan dynasty (1206-1368). The play begins with a Prologue that deals with a dispute over a valley. Two groups of peasants want to claim a valley that was abandoned during WW II when the Germans invaded. One group used to live in the valley and herded goats there. The other group is from a neighboring valley and hopes to plant fruit trees. A Delegate has been sent to arbitrate the dispute. The fruit growers explain that they have elaborate plans to
irrigate the valley and produce a tremendous amount of food. The goat-herders claim the land based on the fact that they have always lived there. In the end, the fruit farmers get the valley because they will use the land better. The peasants then hold a small party and a Singer agrees to tell them the story of the Chalk Circle. The Caucasian Chalk Circle is actually two stories that come together at the end. The first story is that of Grusha and the second story is that of Azdak. Both stories begin in a Caucasian City ruled by a Governor, who serves a Grand Duke. The Governor has just had a child, Michael, and his wife Natella is incredibly jealous of the attention that he gives to his son. The Governor's brother, the Fat Prince, stages an insurrection on Easter Sunday. He kills the Governor and forces the Governor's wife to flee. In her haste, she leaves behind her child. The Grand Duke and many of the soldiers flee as well. Grusha, a kitchen maid, becomes engaged to a soldier named Simon. Soon thereafter, during the coup, she has Michael handed to her. She hides the child from the Fat Prince and his soldiers, thereby saving the child's life. She then takes Michael with her and flees the city, heading north. After spending most of her money and risking her life for the child, she arrives at her brother's house. He allows her to live there over the winter. When spring arrives, Grusha's brother forces her to marry a "dying" man from across the mountain. They hold a wedding, but during the reception the guests learn that the war is over and that the Grand Duke has raised an army and returned. The "dying" man, Jussup, realizes that he can no longer be drafted into the war. He miraculously recovers and throws all the guests out of the house. Grusha, now stuck with a husband she did not want, is forced to become a good wife to him. One day Simon returns and learns that she is married. He is even more upset when he sees
Michael, whom he thinks is Grusha's child. Some soldiers soon arrive and take Michael away from her, claiming that Michael belongs to the Governor's wife. Grusha follows them back to the city. The next story that is told is that of Azdak. The plot returns to the night of the Fat Prince's insurrection. Azdak finds a fugitive and saves the man's life. The man turns out to be the Grand Duke. Realizing that he could be branded a traitor, Azdak walks into town and reveals that he saved the Grand Duke's life. The soldiers refuse to believe him and he is released. The Fat Prince soon shows up with his nephew, whom he wants to make the new judge. However, he agrees to let the soldiers decide who the next judge should be. After staging a mock trial, they choose Azdak. He then judges four very strange cases, ruling in each case in favor of the poor person. Azdak soon gains a reputation for supporting the poor. However, after two years as a judge, the Grand Duke returns. Azdak is arrested as a "traitor" by the soldiers and is about to be killed by them. However, the Grand Duke, remembering that Azdak saved his life, reappoints Azdak to be the judge, thereby saving his life. Azdak now takes over the case of Grusha and the child. The Governor's wife wants Michael back because without Michael she cannot take over the former Governor's estates. Grusha wants to keep the child, whom she has raised for the past two years. Even Simon goes to the trial and promises Grusha that he will support her. After hearing all the arguments and learning about what Grusha has done to take care of the child, Azdak orders a Chalk Circle to be drawn. He places the child in the middle and orders the two women to pull, saying that whichever woman can pull the child out of the circle will get him. The Governor's wife pulls whereas Grusha lets go. Azdak orders them to do it again, and again Grusha lets go. Azdak then gives Michael to Grusha and orders the
Governor's wife to leave. He confiscates Michael's estates and makes them into public gardens. His last act is to divorce Grusha, thereby allowing her to marry Simon. During the dancing that follows, Azdak disappears forever. Although we read Brecht as a writer of epic theatre it would be more fitting to make it clear at the outset that we find features of existentialism and postmodernism in his writing. Both are notorious for breaking with the past. Existentialism is interested in exploring the possibilities of human existence whereas postmodernism is interested in showing its distrust in grand narratives and promoting local narratives. In the second chapter when we try to explain the concept of epic theatre, we will find some of the features of existentialism and postmodernism embedded in the form of epic theatre.

1.2.1 LIST OF HIS PLAYS:

Entries show: English-language translation of title (German-language title) year written / year first produced

- *Baal (Baal)* 1918/1923
- *Drums in the Night (Trommeln in der Nacht)* 1918-20/1922
- *The Beggar (Der Bettler oder Der tote Hund)* 1919/?
- *A Respectable Wedding (Die Kleinbürgerhochzeit)* 1919/1926
- *Driving Out a Devil (Er treibt einen Teufel aus)* 1919/?
- *Lux in Tenebris (Lux in Tenebris)* 1919/?
• *The Catch* (Der Fischzug) 1919/?

• *In The Jungle of Cities* (Im Dickicht der Städte) 1921-24/1923

• *Edward II* (Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England) 1924/1924

• *Man Equals Man* (Mann ist Mann) 1924-26/1926

• *The Elephant Calf* (Das Elefantenkalb) 1924-6/1926

• *Little Mahagonny* (Mahagonny-Songspiel) 1927/1927

• *The Threepenny Opera* (Die Dreigroschenoper) 1928/1928

• *The Flight across the Ocean* (Der Ozeanflug; originally Lindbergh's Flight ([Lindberghflug])) 1928-29/1929

• *The Baden-Baden Lesson on Consent* (Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis) 1929/1929

• *Happy End* (Happy End) 1929/1929

• *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny) 1927-29/1930

• *He Said Yes / He Said No* (Der Jasager; Der Neinsager) 1929-30/1930-?

• *The Decision* (Die Maßnahme) 1930/1930
• *Saint Joan of the Stockyards* (Die heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfe) 1929-31/1959

• *The Exception and the Rule* (Die Ausnahme und die Regel) 1930/1938

• *The Mother* (Die Mutter) 1930-31/1932

• *Kuhle Wampe* (screenplay) 1931/1932

• *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Die sieben Todsünden der Kleinbürger) 1933/1933

• *Round Heads and Pointed Heads* (Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe) 1931-34/1936

• *The Horatians and the Curiatians* (Die Horatier und die Kuriatier) 1933-34/1958

• *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches) 1935-38/1938

• *Señora Carrar's Rifles* (Die Gewehre der Frau Carrar) 1937/1937

• *Life of Galileo* (Leben des Galilei) 1937-9/1943

• *How Much Is Your Iron?* (Was kostet das Eisen?) 1939/1939

• *Dansen* (Dansen) 1939/?
- *Mother Courage and Her Children* (Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder) 1938-39/1941

- *The Trial of Lucullus* (Das Verhör des Lukullus) 1938-39/1940

- *Mr Puntila and his Man Matti* (Herr Puntila und sein Knecht Matti) 1940/1948

- *The Good Person of Szechwan* (Der gute Mensch von Sezuan) 1939-42/1943

- *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui) 1941/1958

- *Hangmen Also Die* (screenplay) 1942/1943

- *The Visions of Simone Machard* (Die Gesichte der Simone Machard) 1942-43/1957

- *The Duchess of Malfi* 1943/1943

- *Schweyk in the Second World War* (Schweyk im Zweiten Weltkrieg) 1941-43/1957

- *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Der kaukatische Kreidekreis) 1943-45/1948

- *Antigone* (Die Antigone des Sophokles) 1947/1948
• *The Days of the Commune (Die Tage der Commune)* 1948-49/1956

• *The Tutor (Der Hofmeister)* 1950/1950

• *The Condemnation of Lucullus (Die Verurteilung des Lukullus)* 1938-39/1951

• *Report from Herrnburg (Herrnburger Bericht)* 1951/1951

• *Coriolanus (Coriolan)* 1951-53/1962

• *Joan of Arc (Der Prozess der Jeanne D'Arc zu Rouen, 1431)* 1952/1952

• *Turandot (Turandot oder Der Kongreß der Weißwäscher)* 1953-54/1969

• *Don Juan (Don Juan)* 1952/1954

• *Trumpets and Drums (Pauken und Trompeten)* 1955/1955
WORKS CITED


