

Chapter I

The Viewers' Active Role

This thesis entitled “Complex Seeing in Brecht’s *The Threepenny Opera*” tries to explore the issues that the play achieves the satiric goal by disrupting the viewers’ passive stance towards the play in order to generate a complex mode of seeing. Brecht wanted to develop the viewers’ critical consciousness, the part of the observing mind that holds the drama at arm’s length and judges not the action of the story but the reason for presenting the characters.

Brecht’s *The Threepenny Opera* deviates from the theatre’s base goal of entertainment to turn the audience into a judge of human condition of betrayal and moral corruption it depicts. This thesis argues that the special theatrical manner in which the play is staged in accordance with the guidelines given by the playwright himself stirs the audience into the action, thereby disproving those critics who discount Brecht’s satiric vision in the play.

Brecht’s *The Threepenny Opera* has centered on modifications to Gay’s staging the asides to the audience, the placards announcing events, the songs that belie the often somber action taking place, and the harsh white lighting. However, Brecht also made small but significant changes to the storyline itself and these changes reveal his ideological leanings.

Against a background of lower-class street life in mid- 18th century London, filled with beggars, thieves and prostitutes, a ballad singer sings about Macheath. The

singer tells the audience how Macheath wears white kid gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints at the scenes of his crimes. Several people have disappeared after encounters with him, and his nickname is Mack the knife. At the end of the song, a man emerges from the crowd of street people and quickly exits. Jenny, the prostitute who later betrays Macheath to the police, identifies the man to us as Mac the knife.

A narrator introduces Peachum, who explains that he is in the business of “arousing human sympathy” saying that human being has the habit of quickly becoming the immune to the sufferings of others. He offers the examples of a beggar who gets a good sum of money from a rich man one day, less the next and none the day after that. He also refers to the bible’s teachings about Mercy, saying they were thin after a while.

A young man comes into the shop, and conversation reveals the nature of Peachum’s business. He controls which beggar begs on which corner, charges money for the privilege of working with him, takes the percentage of what each beggar earns in a day’s work and controls which methods of begging each beggar uses. He lists the various methods for the young man, including “The Pitiful Blind Man” and “The Young Man Who Has Seen Better Days”. During conversation with Mrs. Peachum whom he berates for not doing her job of preparing the beggars clothes properly, Peachum decides the young man is to work in Outfit D and tells him to get changed.

While the young man is gone, Peachum discuss the man who keeps coming by to visit their daughter Polly, referring to him as the captain. Conversation reveals that both Polly and Mrs. Peachum hopes he’ll propose marriage, but Peachum says he’ll

never let Polly marry, adding that business at the shop would become non-existent if she were no longer around for the men to look at. He then asks what the Captain's real name is, but Mrs. Peachum says nobody ever refers to him by name. She also mentions that the Captain always wears white kid gloves, leading Peachum to ask whether the Captain has other habits of the man with white gloves. They are both referring to Macheath. The young man comes back in, having changed, and he asks Peachum for advice on how to make more money. Peachum tells him to come back later in the evening, and the young man goes out after he's gone, Peachum tells Mrs. Peachum that the Captain is Mack the knife, and he runs upstairs to check on Polly. Mrs. Peachum utters a brief prayer that sound like a grace said before dinner. Peachum comes back down, saying that Polly's bed hasn't been slept in. Mrs. Peachum says that means she's gone to dinner with a wool merchant. Peachum says he hopes that's who she is with.

Light changes and the setting changes. The Peachum's step forward and sing. Peachum's lyrics referred to the difficulties of retaining control over children while Mrs. Peachum's song comically refers to romance, moonlight and the smooth words of lovers.

The play opens in the beggars shop owned by Peachum. Peachum has taken control of all the beggars in London and runs a shop that outfits the beggars and provides them with a location to Begin. A young man comes in and asks for a job. Peachum makes the man pay him first and then shows the man the five states of human misery before giving the man a costume to wear.

When Mrs. Peachum arrives he asks her about his daughter Polly. She tells him that Polly has been seeing a gentleman lately. When she describes the man Peachum realizes that is none other than Mac The Knife, London's most powerful criminal. He runs upstairs and sees that Polly didn't come home that night.

Meanwhile, Polly and Macheath have just broken into a stable where they are getting married. The rest of Mac's gang arrives and they bring in wedding presents. Everything has been stolen, including the stable. Soon the parson arrives as they sit down to eat. Polly provides them with some entertainment by singing a song. After she is done Tiger Brown the Sheriff arrives, but instead of arresting them all he greets Macheath as an old friend. Mac explains that he and Tiger Brown served together in the war and that has paid Brown kickbacks on every job ever since. After Brown leaves the men present Polly and Macheath a large bed to sleep in and then leave them alone.

Polly returns home to find her parents furious with her for marrying Macheath. She tries to defend the marriage, but they decide to take on Macheath and destroy him. Mr. Peachum tells his wife that he will go to Tiger Brown and make him arrest Macheath. Meanwhile, Mrs. Peachum agrees to go and bribe the whores whom Macheath goes every week. She is hoping that the whores will turn in Macheath.

Polly goes with her father and watches as Brown agrees to arrest Macheath. She then goes back to the stable where Mac is staying and tries to warn him. He does not believe her until she produces the charges that are being levied against him. Instead of being emotional, Mac focuses on his business. He hands the business over

to Polly and tells her what to do. Soon thereafter his gang arrives and Mac informs them that Polly will be their boss while he goes away. Mathew tries to challenge Polly's authority, but she threatens to kill him if he opens his mouth again; the other thieves applaud her and accept her leadership.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Peachum approaches Low-Dive-Jenny, a prostitute, and convinces her to turn in Macheath should he be foolish enough to show up at the brothel.

The evening in the brothel, one of Mac's men is trying to convince the whores that Macheath would not be so foolish as to show up. However, no sooner does he say this than Mac arrives and sits down. Jenny takes Mac's palm and reads it, warning him that a woman will betray him. He thinks she means Polly. Jenny soon sneaks out while Mac is talking with the whores and gets the police and Mrs. Peachum. Constable Smith enters and tries to arrest Mac, who knocks the man down and jumps out the window. Unfortunately for him, Mrs. Peachum is standing there with the other police officers. They take him away. Jenny walks up Macheath's man who has fallen asleep while reading and missed the entire scene.

Now in prison, Mac is afraid that Tiger Brown will learn that he has seen playing around with Brown's daughter Lucy. She soon arrives and is horrified to see him in jail. To complicate matters further, Polly arrived and claims Mac as her husband. Both women argue; Lucy indicates that she is pregnant and therefore has a better claim to Mac, but Polly is "legally" married to him and she has papers to prove it. Mac chooses to support Lucy instead of Polly because he is more afraid of Tiger Browns. Mrs. Peachum than arrives and drags Polly away. Lucy, happy to finally be

alone with Mac again, hands him his hat and cane and leaves. When Constable Smith returns he tries to get the cane, but Mac is faster than he is and manages to escape. Brown enters the cell and is relieved to see it empty. However, Peachum also arrives and threatens to disrupt the coronation if Brown does not find Macheath and arrest him again immediately.

That night Peachum outfits his beggars with signs and clothes in an effort to ruin the coronation parade the next morning. The whores arrive, led by Jenny, and ask for their reward for turning in Macheath. Peachum refuses to pay them on the grounds that Mac escaped already. Jenny, in a fit of rage, tells that Mac is a far better man than any of them. She then accidentally reveals that Mac had gone straight to her place and comforted her, and that he is now with another whore named Suky Tawdry. Peachum is elated by this information and promises to give the whores the reward money. He sends one of his beggars to get the police.

Tiger Brown arrives only few minutes later. Brown has decided that rather than arrest Macheath it would be far easier for him to arrest Peachum and all the beggars, thereby preventing them from ruining the coronation. Peachum merely ignores Brown's threats and points out that there are far more beggars than there are police. He asks Brown point-blank how it would look if several hundred men were clubbed down on the day of the procession. Unable to arrest Macheath and gives him the address where Macheath is staying. Peachum lastly sends the beggars to the jail rather than the coronation. Polly goes to visit Lucy in an effort to find out where Mac is. It turns out that

neither of them knows his whereabouts, causing Polly to laugh and state that Mac has stood them both up. They soon here noise in the hallway and realize that Mac has been rearrested. Mrs. Peachum shows up with window's clothing and makes Polly change into it.

The next morning, the same day the coronation procession is set for, Macheath is brought out of his cell and locked into a public cell. He going to be huge at six in the morning, and has only an hour to live. He offers Smith one thousand pounds in cash if Smith will let him escape, but Smith refuse to make any promises. Jake and Matthew arrive and Mac asks them for money; they say that it will be hard to get anything so early in the morning but leave promising to find something. Polly also arrives and tells Mac that his business is going well but that she has no money on her Brown finally enters cell as well and he and Macheath settle their accounts recall that Mac pays Brown backs for helping him. Having failed to get the money, Smith refuses to help Macheath.

Soon thereafter all of the characters return and stand next to the cage. Jake and Matthew apologize for not getting the money in time and tell Mac that all the other crooks are stealing elsewhere. Even the whores have showed up to watch him die Mac gives a last speech in which he claims all the small crooks are being pushed aside by corporate interests. Peachum then stands up and gives the final speech, arguing that since this is an opera and not real life, they will save Macheath. Brown enters in the form of mounted messengers and brings a special order from the Queen. She has

decided to pardon Macheath and to also elevate him to a hereditary knighthood. Mac rejoices his good luck while Peachum remarks that such a thing would never happen in real life.

Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* has been fascinating the various critics' attention from its early arrival in the literary scenario. However, critics are not of the same view while observing it. Some have observe it while philosophical implications while others aproached supporting Brecht's satirical tone on the capitalistic system of social structure.

Louis Marvick in his "Brecht, Shakespeare and the Dynamic of Black Humor" has discussed the philosophical implications of black humor as exemplified in the play *The Threepenny Opera* by Brecht. "The disparity that gives the blackness to black humor suggests an affinity with nihilism, the 'condition' or 'state' of mind in which nothing appears to save value or meanings. In the play there is an absence of true image being a well being because there is no awareness of what is right. To despair of this attempts amounts to an endless suspension of judgment and to the denial of all certainties: instead of truth which puts one in possession of the only genuine images of being and well being. The nihilist has only the sense of lack the realization that essential truth is missing (40).

This analysis of Marvick shows that he sees in *The Threepenny Opera*, a deviation from depicting the ground reality of the society and moving towards the philosophical dimension.

On the other hand some critics have been seen and penetrated this play from different perspective where they scratch if complying with Brecht's satirical tone. The elevate Brecht's epic theater mode of play. Critics like Siegfried Mews in his "Bertolt Brecht and world literature" has analyzed and essays and by Brecht which are associated with world literature of calling Brecht "One of the world's most elective writers and his eclecticism resulted in charges of plagiarism during 1920, notably in the case of *The Threepenny Opera*, scholars have more recently taken an entirely different view of Brecht's provocatively stated "Laxity in matters of intellectual property. (89)

Another critic, Esslin on *Brecht: the Man and His Work* discusses about Brecht's attempt to escape Nihilism by turning to Marxism. As "assumed constant struggle between rational intent on the one hand and poetic, sub-conscious impulses on the other" (93).

Even among critics who shore similar ideologies there is disagreement about the nature of Brecht's works, just as critics Bernand F. Dukore points out several biblical references in *The Threepenny Opera* citing both obvious allusions and ones that are cloaked in metaphoric language of the latter, Dukore argues that there are numerous examples that compare the character Macheath to Jesus Christ as: "Peachum sings of the desirability of being given bread to eat and not a stone" Referring to Mathew 7:9 (or what is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?) (344)

Regarding Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*, critic Harold Clurman, in his essay titled "*The Threepenny Opera*", in his lies like truth; he mentions that in the three penny an appeal that audience can't trace to heroic events such as the great depression as well as more personal themes. Such as regret as loss" (144)

Like the "greatest story ever told", the story of Jesus, the protagonist of *The Threepenny Opera* is betrayed by a former intimate. But there is the similar ends, or rather, diverts to mirror opposites. Macheath is not a savior like Christ but a moral corrupt, not a paragon of virtue but a fountainhead of sin, not the archetypal human idea but a base man of bestial instinct. In contrast to Jesus, he marries the women with whom he has been sleeping in a stable rather than being born of chaste women in a stable. The wedding gown and gifts are not humble attire and ritual offering but stolen goods.

Despite these appositions to one of the best-known symbol of purity, Macheath is not a completely evil figure. He has some appeal, especially to the whores and women of low virtue. He is gallant in his way, cuffing his gang member for not displaying enough gentility to his new bride; he has courage or at least disdain for his fate; and he has a loyal friendship with his army Buddy Jackie Brown. He has a roguish charm but his personality is presented not as a role model but as a warning against the seductive quality of such a dishonest life.

Nor is Macheath the only false idol in the play. Peachum is in the business of guiding beggars to larger profited falsely earned in the name of charity. He preys upon the generosity of the public, justifying his use of false wound and artificial limbs

with his own twist on the biblical homily” Give and it shall be given unto you.”

Peachum agrees that people are jaded and more ghastly representations of poverty.

Yet the proprietor takes a whopping the very purpose of begging through his swindling.

Peachum also betrays his own daughter by having her new husband arrested. The whores are the chorus of this play, and they are as corrupt as the main characters. Low-Dive Jenny, a former lover of Macheath, betrays him for a handful of money, which she is denied when Macheath escapes. In fact, Macheath has escaped due to the betrayal of the jail guard, whom the robber has bribed. Furthermore, the whores know Macheath has escaped and effectively are betraying Peachum when they demand payment for the job that was not satisfactory completed. The list could go on, including Jackie Brown, who seesaws morally as he wrestles with remaining loyal to Macheath versus shaving his own reputation and livelihood. The ubiquity of the corruption and betrayal in *The Threepenny Opera* goes beyond social criticism to a kind of macabre, black humor.

The purpose of Brecht’s plays was to create an experience that would force audiences out of their common perceptions of bourgeois theatre. His plays sought to instill a willingness to work for social change. Thus, ultimately, Brecht’s plays were designed as tools of moral and social propaganda, yet they strangely lack what most propaganda, by definition, carries with it: a design for a utopian social paradise that social reform might achieved. Brecht’s plays are largely pessimistic: they offer what

biographer Martin Esslin chose as the sub title to his book *Brecht*, a “choice of evils” rather than the choice between a right and a wrong way to live.

This aspect of Brecht’s work has garnered most critical attentions and warrants further contemplation. In *the Threepenny Opera*, the opera format already stretching the viewer's sense of realism is made even more alien through constant reminders of the artifice of the play. Placards announcing the events and songs, asides to the audience, and lyrics incongruent with the action disrupt and sully any positive sentiments being expressed. For examples, when Brown and Macheath reminisce about their days in the army, the ditty they sing cynically celebrates the fate of all soldiers to be chopped into tartar (ground meat). When Peachum complains about his lot of in life, he sings that God has humankind in a trap that is a "lord of crap". In both cases, what be profound social commentary is turned into a sick joke. In places, Brecht does address seriously the social ills he wants his audience to face and be moved to change. But he does not offer answers or a rectifying course of action. Rather than offer pat solutions to complex social problems, Brecht forces the spectator to ponder their own remedy.

Epic theater (sometimes called "open" theater) was the unique invention of Brecht. He designed epic theater as a "dialectica" educational experience to deviate from the theater's base goal of entertainment to run the spectator into a judge. Brecht's drama is designed to stir the audience into action. He attempts to accomplish this by disrupting the viewer follows the action, but also thinks about the construction of the play and fabrication of its characters at the same time.

Although Brecht's ideas about theater had a profound influence on later playwrights, his immediate effect on audiences was not as successful. Spectators sometimes developed empathy for his characters in spite of his "alienating" techniques. This initial failure was due on his large part of Weill's music; which many theatergoers found alluring; the intoxicating music often gave viewers the impression that the play's events were fantasy and thus removed from their own world. Critics have also pointed to the characters' rakishly amusing behavior; the love story albeit twisted between MacLeish and Polly, and Mac health's happy ending as reason for audiences to misinterpret the play as light entertainment.

Thus, this research attempts to study Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* focusing upon the issue complex seeing rather than passive observer. Evidence will be drawn from Brecht's plays as well as from the vast crops of Brecht criticism. The second chapter which follows the first chapter deals with the methodology, the epic theater. The third chapter theory to study Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* and finally, the fourth chapter concludes the research and presents the findings.

Chapter II

Epic Theater: A Theoretical Methodology

The Concept of the Epic Theater

The concept of the epic theater was originated by Bertolt Brecht the theoretician of his poetic practice. It indicates above all that this theater desires an audience that is relaxed and follows the action without strain. The audience to be sure, always appears as a collective, and this differentiates it from the reader, who is alone with his text. Also, this audience, being a collective, will usually feel impelled to react promptly. This reaction, according to Brecht, ought to be a well-considered and therefore a relaxed one—in short, the reaction of people who have an interest in the matter. Two objects are provided for this interest. The first is the action; it has to be such that the audience can keep a check on it at crucial places on the basis of its own experiences. The second is the performances; it should be mounted artistically in a pellucid manner. This manner of presentation is anything but artless; actually, it presupposes artistic sophistication and acumen on the part of the director.

Epic theater appeals to an interest group who “does not think without reason”. Brecht does not lose sight of the masses, whose limited practice of thinking is probably described by this phrase. In the endeavor to interest the audience in the theater expertly, but definitely not by way of mere cultural involvement, a political will has prevailed.

Bertolt Brecht's 1938 play *The Threepenny Opera* was his most financially successful play and the work with which he is most closely identified. The play is an early example of his "epic theater" consisting of theatrical designed to awaken audiences to social responsibility. Epic theater uses "alienating" devices, such as placards, asides to the audience, projected images, discordant music and the epic theatre was likewise often objected to as moralizing too much. Yet in the epic moral arguments only took second place. Its aim was less to moralize than to observe. That is to say is observed and then the thick end of the wedge followed the story's moral. Of course we cannot pretend that we started our observations out a pure passion for observing and without any more practical motive, only to be completely staggered their results.

The epic theatre is the broadest and most far-reaching attempt at large-scale modern theatre. It has all those immense difficulties to overcome the always comfort, the vital forces in the sphere of politics, philosophy, science, and art.

Generally there is felt to be a very sharp distinction between learning and amusing oneself. The first must be useful but only the second is pleasant. So we have to defend the epic theatre against the suspicion that it is largely disagreeable, humorless, indeed strenuous affair. Brecht developed the alienation effect as a way of alerting audience to the constructed nature of stage events. While the realistic theatre claims that the theatre and the drama, actor and character, stage and the dramatic locale are the same. Epic theatre shows how they are different. In so doing, Brecht argued, the epic theatre enables the audience to ask how with what purpose, to what

effect stage practice is king this drama come about. And so leads the audience to take a more critical view of the process of the theatre. Epic acting then comments on itself as 'acting.' The stage is not unified as a single dramatic locale, but always remains a visible stage.

Brecht also argued that epic drama should be structured differently than realistic plays. Instead of the apparently organic, 'casual' action of realistic drama, Brecht's are written in series of episodes. This technique, Brecht argued, allows the actors and the audience to reconsider the character's possibilities for the action change a fresh in each scene.

By calling the audience's attention to how the play comes into being onstage, epic theater encourages the audience to develop a dialectical sense of how social reality in the theatre and in the world at the stage comes into being, how it is made through the interaction of individual and social forces. In the same way, the interaction to material reality and ideology is done. Epic theatre has had an enormous influence on drama and theater around the world.

The Plot

The epic theater purposes to "deprive the stage of sensation derived from subject matter. Thus an old story will often do more for it than a new one. Brecht has considered the question of whether the incidents that are presented by the epic theater should not already be familiar. The theater would have the same relationship to the plot as a ballet teacher has to his pupil, his first task would be to loosen her joints to the greatest possible extent. This is how the Chinese theater actually proceeds. In his

essay "The Fourth Wall of China" Brecht states what he owes to this theater. If the theater is to cast about for familiar events, "historically incidents would be the most suitable." Their epic extension through the style of acting, the placards and captions is intended to purge them of the sensational. In this vein Brecht takes the life of Galileo as the subject of his latest play. Brecht presents Galileo primarily as a great teacher who not only teaches a new physics, but does so in a new way. In his hands, experiments are not only an achievement of science, but a tool of pedagogy as well. The main emphasis of this play is not on Galileo's recantation; rather, the truly epic process must be sought in what is evident from the labeling of the penultimate scene. As a prisoner of the inquisition, Galileo continues his scientific work until his death. He succeeds in smuggling his main works out of Italy.

Epic theater is in league with the course of time in an entirely different way from that of the tragic theater. Because suspense belongs less to the outcome than to the individual events, this theater can cover the greatest span of time. The same is true of the earlier mystery plays. The dramaturgy of Oedipus constitutes the counter pole of epic dramaturgy.

The Untragic Hero

The French classical theater made room in the midst of the players for persons of rank, who had their armchairs on the open stage. To us this seems inappropriate. According to the concept of the "dramatic element" with which we are familiar, it seemed inappropriate to attach to the action on the stage a nonparticipating third party as a dispassionate observer or "thinker." Yet Brecht often had someone like that in

mind. One can go even further and says that Brecht made an attempt to make the thinker, or even wise man, the hero of the drama. From this very point of view one can define his theater as a epic theater. This attempt is taken furthest in the character of Galy Gay, the packer. Galy Gay, the protagonist of the play *A Man's a Man*, is nothing but an exhibit of the contradictions which make up our society. It may not be too bold to regard the wise man in the Brechtian sense as the perfect showcase of its dialectics. In any case, Galy Gay is a wise man. Plato already recognized the undramatic quality of that most excellent man, the sage. In his dialogue he took him to the threshold of the drama; in his *Phaidon* to the threshold of the *Passion play*. The medieval Christ, who also represented the wise man, is the untragic hero par excellence. But in the secular drama in the west too, the search for the untragic hero has never ceased. In always new ways, and frequently in conflict with its theoreticians, this drama has differed from the authentic- that is, the Greek – form of tragedy. This important but poorly marked road, which may here serve as the image of a tradition, went via Roswitha and the mystery plays in the middle age via Gryphius and Calderon in the Baroque age; later we may trace it in Lenz and Grabbe, and finally in Strindberg. Scenes in Shakespeare are its roadsides monuments, and Goethe crosses it in the second part of the *Faust*. It is a European road, but a German one as well provided that we may speak of road and not of a secret smuggler's path by which the legacy of the medieval and the Baroque drama has reached us. It is this mule track, neglected and overgrown, which comes to light today in the drama of Brecht.

The interruption

Brecht differentiates his epic theater from the dramatic theater in the narrower sense, whose theory was formulated by Aristotle. Approximately, Brecht introduces his art of the drama as non- Aristotelian, just as Riemann introduced a non- Euclidian geometry. This analogy may bring out the fact that it is not the matter of competition between the theatrical forms in question. Riemann eliminated the parallel postulate; Brecht's drama eliminated the Aristotelian catharsis, the purging of the emotions through empathy with the stirring fate of the hero.

The special character of the relaxed interest of the audience for which the performances of the epic theater are intended is the fact that hardly any appeal is made to the empathy of the spectators. Instead, the art of epic theater consists in producing astonishment rather than empathy. To put it succinctly instead of identifying with the characters, the audience should be educated to be astonished at the circumstances under which they function.

The task of the epic theater, according to Brecht, is not so much the development of actions as the representation of conditions. The representation doesn't mean reproduction as the theoreticians of Naturalism understood it. Rather, the truly important thing is to discover the condition of life. This discovery of condition takes place through the interruption of happenings. The most primitive example would be a family scene. Suddenly a stranger enters, the mother was just about to seize a bronze bust and hurl it at her daughter; the father was in the act of opening the window in order to call the policeman. At the moment the stranger appears in the doorway. This

means that the stranger is confronted with the situation as with a startling picture: troubled faces, an open window, the furniture in disarray. But there are eyes to which even more ordinary scenes of middle class life look almost equally startling.

One of the most widely discussed elements of Brecht's theory is his concept of alienation, a concept implicit in almost all the other elements of the theory. In the original German Brecht's word for his concept *Verfremdung*, sometimes translated as "estrangement". It refers essentially to a process of forcing the audience to see things in a new light, to "alienate", the audience from what has become familiar to it.

The idea of alienation is by no means completely original with Brecht. The English Romantic Poet Shelley is one of many who have defined the poet's task as making us look upon familiar people, objects, and situations as if seeing them for the first time, when they were first strange to us. Brecht points out that one becomes in this sense "alienated" from one's mother when she remarries. One sees her then in a new light, as another man's wife, and it is almost as though one had never seen her before.

The Quotable Gesture

In one of his dramatic poems on dramatic art Brecht says: "The effect of every sentence was waited for and laid bare. And the waiting lasted until the crowd had carefully weighed our sentence." In short, the play was interrupted. One can go even further and remember that interruption is one of the fundamental devices of all structuring. It goes far beyond the sphere of art. To give only one example, it is the basis of quotation. To quote a text involves the interruption of this context. It is

therefore understandable that the epic theater, being based on interruption, is in a specific sense, quotable one. There is nothing special about the quotability of its texts. It is different with the gestures which fit into the course of the play.

Making gestures quotable is one of the substantial achievements of the epic theater. An actor must be able to space his gestures the way a typesetter produces spaced type. This effect may be achieved, for instance, by an actor quoting his own gesture on the stage. What is a device of the subtlest kind of the epic theater generally becomes an immediate purpose in the specific case of the didactic play. Epic theater is by definition a gesticulatory theater. For the more frequently we interrupt someone in the act of acting, the more gestures result.

The Didactic Play

In every instance, the epic theater is meant for the actors as much as for the spectators. The didactic play is a special case largely because it facilitates and suggests the interchange in between audience and actors and vice versa through the extreme paucity of the mechanical equipment. Every spectator is enabled to become a participant. And it is indeed easier to play the “teacher” than the “hero”.

A clerical sternness is applied to instruction in a modern technique –here, that of aviation: later, that of the class struggle. This second application may be seen almost fully in *mother*. It was particularly daring undertaking to keep a social drama free of the effects which empathy produces and which the audience was accustomed too. Brecht knew this and expressed it in an epistolary poem that he sent to a New York workingman’s theater when *mother* was produced there. “We have been asked:

will a worker understand this? Will he be able to do without his accustomed opiate, his mental participation in someone else's uprising, the rise of other ; the illusion which whips him up for a few hours and leaves him all the more exhausted, filled with vague memories and ever vaguer hopes?"

The Actor

Like the picture in the film, epic theater moves in spurts. Its basic form is that of the shock with which the single well- defined situations of the play collide. The songs, the captions, the lifeless conventions set off one situation from another. This brings about intervals which, if anything, impair the illusion of the audience and paralyze its readiness for empathy. These intervals are reserved for the spectators' critical reaction to the actions of the players and to the way in which they are presented. As to the manner of presentation, the actor's task in the epic theater is to demonstrate through his acting that he is cool and relaxed. He too has hardly any use for empathy, for this kind of acting the "player" of the dramatic theater is not always fully prepared. Perhaps the most open minded approach to epic theater is to think of it in terms of "putting on a show."

Brecht wrote, "The actor must show his subject, and he must show himself. Of course, he shows his subject by showing himself, and he shows himself by showing his subject. Although the two coincide, they must not coincide in such a way that the difference between two tasks disappears". In other words an actor should reserve for himself the possibility of stepping out of character artistically. At the proper moment he should insist on portraying a man who reflects about his part. It would be

erroneous to think at such a moment of romantic, irony, as employed by Tieck in his *Puss of Boots*. This irony has no didactic aim. Basically it demonstrates only the philosophic sophistication of the author who, in writing his plays, always remembers that in the end the world may turn out to be a theater.

To what extent artistic and political interests coincide on the scene of epic theater will become manifest in the style of acting appropriate to this genre. A case in point is Brecht's cycle *The private life of the Master Race*. It is easy to see that if a German actor in exile were assigned the part of an SS man or a member of the people's court, his feelings about it would be quite different from those of a devoted father and husband asked to portray Moliere's Don Juan for the former, empathy can hardly be regarded as an appropriate method, since he presumably cannot identify with the murderers of his fellow fighters. Another mode of performance, which calls for detachment, would in such cases be right and fitting and particularly successful. This is the epic stagecraft.

In Brecht's theater, as in all theater, the actor is of supreme importance. What is unusual in Brecht's theater is that Brecht argues against the actor's becoming the character he plays. It is the actor's job to "demonstrate" the character. In an important passage Brecht clarifies this idea by comparing the actor to an onlooker who is describing an accident he has witnessed. Occasionally, the onlooker finds it necessary to "Act" to show us what the people involved in the accident- say, the pedestrian stuck by an automobile- did. We do not confused the onlooker demonstrates what the pedestrian did.

Theater on Dias

The aims of the epic theater can be defined more easily in terms of the stage than of new drama. Epic theater allows for a circumstance which has been too little noticed. It may be called the filling in of the orchestra pit. The abyss which separates the players from the audience as it does the dead from the living; the abyss whose silence in an opera heightens the intoxication –this abyss, of all elements of the theater the one that bears the most indelible traces of its ritual origin, has steadily decreased in significance. The stage is still raised, but it no longer rises from an unfathomable depth; it has become a dais. The didactic play and the epic theater are attempts to sit down on a dais.

If Brecht's play does seem strange to us, it is perhaps because we are familiar to the conventions of the "theater of illusion" the basic convention of this theater is that what we are watching on the stage life itself. It is as though we look into a room, the fourth wall of which has magically been rendered invisible. No device which may shatter this illusion, such as a direct address to the audience, is permitted sets, lighting, make-up and acting are all designed to intensify this illusion.

Accustomed as we have become to the theater of illusion, we sometimes make the mistake of concluding that is the only of true way theater as a whole. The theater of Shakespeare, for example with its blank verse, its soliloquies, and its simplified staging has little to do with the theater of illusion.

The Epic Structure

According to Brecht, the traditional dramatic form is based on artificial and unnecessary restrictions. The play deals with the single action, is limited in the range of time and space it covers and each scene is important only for what it contributes to the whole. As an alternative, Brecht suggests an epic structure based on the epic, a looser, narrative form, which is of its nature episodic and in which each episode is significant, not only for what it contributes to the whole, but in itself.

The epic differs further from the dramatic form in that, as narrative, it deals with past events rather than with the imaginary present of the drama, which unfolds before us if it were happening for the first time. In his “epic” theater, Brecht wants the audience to see the action as something that has happened in the past, in a particular time and place, and that now being re-enacted. Again, the audience is not permitted the illusion that what is on the stage is life in the process of being lived.

The “epic” structure in itself is one of Brecht’s theories. The implications of the structure must be realized in the staging. Brecht was less interested than many of his contemporaries in changing the shape of the stage, or physical relationship of the stage, or the physical relationship of the stage of auditorium. What he wanted to change was the relationship between the audience and what happens in the stage. The audience must not be hypnotized into accepting the theater as real. Since part of the hypnotic effect of the contemporary theater is derived from the darkened state of the auditorium, Brecht often argued that the lights in the auditorium should remain lit. In this way, the audience would remain fully conscious, intellectually alert as he wished

them to be. They would be better able to judge what goes on the stage, rather than merely accepting it passively as so often occurs.

Brecht also insisted that the devices used on the stage should not be aimed at fooling the audience into forgetting that they are in the theater. If a scene is set at night, simply hang up an artificial moon to indicate that it is night, rather than using artificial lightening to create the illusion that is real night. Let the stage always be bathed in brilliant light, so that the audience may see clearly all that is happening. In his early writing, Brecht even insisted that the sources of light themselves should be placed in clear view of the audience, but he later modified this idea when experience taught him that it resulted in undesirable distraction.

Characters

Brecht again voiced the most thorough critique of realistic action. To Brecht, the problem of realistic acting was that it should be “character” as a finished product rather than revealing how the character had come to being. Both through the social forces described in the drama and through the decisions taken by the actor as a part of performance.

Brecht argued that the actor should acknowledge that he or she both empathizes with the character and demonstrates the character to the audience that acting is both feeling and showing at the same time. The dialectical approach invites the audience to see how the actor is making the “Character” and allows public to interpret both the process and product of theater art the dramatic “character” and the actor’s labor.

The stage began to be instructive, oil, inflation, war, social struggles, the family religion, the meat market; all became subjects for theatrical representation choruses enlightened the Spectators about facts unknown to him.

Films showed a montage of events from all over the world. Projections added statistical material. And as the background came to the front of the stage so people's activity was subjected to criticism. Right and wrong course of action were shown. People were shown who knew what they were doing and others who did not. The theater became an affair for philosophers as wish not just to explain the world but also to change it.

Brecht deplores the use of sentimentality and the notion of audience empathy for characters. He attempted instead to create a performance style which was openly didactic. The actor was asked to alienate himself or distance himself from the character he played – to demonstrate his character rather than to embody that character in a realistic manner. In Brecht's view the ideal actor was one who could establish a critical objectivity toward his character which would make clear the character's social function and political commitment.

In attempting to repudiate the magic of the theater, he demanded that it be made to seem nothing more than a place for workers to present meaningful parable of life. He in no way wished to disguise the fact. The stage personnel and actors are merely workers who are engaged in doing a job o work.

In every way, Brecht attempted to prevent the audience from becoming swept up in an emotional, sentimental both of feelings. His goal was to keep the audience

'alienated' or 'distanced' from the literal events depicted by the play. So they would be free to concentrate on the larger social and political issues which the play generated and reflected.

When we turn to examples of episodic structure, we see a sharp contrast. Episodic drama begins relatively early in the story and does not compress the action but expands it. The force in episodic drama is centrifugal, moving out embrace additional elements.

In a typical episodic play the action begins relatively early in the story and covers an extensive period of time – sometime many years. It also ranges over a number of locations. In one play we can go anywhere to a small antechamber, a large banquet hall, the open countryside, a mountaintop. Short scenes alternate with longer ones.

Chapter III

Complex seeing in Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*: A Textual Analysis

Brecht wishes to provoke his audience into thinking what it was seeing. He is issuing a call to his audience to consider the actual circumstances of the characters instead of judging them abstractly. To do this, he interrupted the story with a song or a speech by a narrator. Often they serve to break up the action and caused the audience to become unattached from the character.

In the first scene of the first act, it is morning in the Peachum business emporium, where the proprietor outfits beggars for their swindling careers. The scene opens with Peachum singing his morning hymn to the glory of human betrayal and deception. He sings as: no they can't

Bear to be at home all tucked up tight in bed.

It's fun they want

You van bet they've got some fancy

Notions brewing up instead. (11)

Peachum appeals to the audience to consider the complexities of his business: raising human sympathy often necessitates counterfeit misery, because the public has become so jaded that its donations diminish over time. The theory is that when a story is stopped in this manner, the audience has an opportunity what it has seen and to relate the drama onstage to other aspects of life.

Bertolt Brecht used a narrator, and sometimes singers, in more drastic fashion. He wanted to startle members of the audience by a sudden shift from the main story of a foreign element. In *The Threepenny Opera*, the unnamed ballad singer serve as a kind of Greek chorus, commented and explaining the play's action as it unfolds. He lighted, and disconnected episodes to frustrate the viewer's expectations for simple entertainment. This "theatre of illusions" as anti-realists such as Brecht termed it, allowed the audience to comfortably and passively view a production without being changed by it. It was Brecht's intention to use drama to invoke social change, to shake his audiences out of their complacency and expect more from the theatre than entertainment.

open the story with a grotesquely playful tale of Mac the knife, an actual historical character who murdered prostitutes in London.

Throughout *The Threepenny Opera* the ballad singer punctuates the action with distastefully mordant commentaries on the seamy action of the play, sung to a discordant tune. He sings the play's best known musical number. The pieces are meant to fit together not play itself, but rather in the minds of spectator.

The songs in Brecht deserve some discussion because they are as famous as the play itself. Often they serve to break up the action and cause the audience to become unattached from the characters. This is evident in the first scene where Mr. and Mrs. Peachum sing a song under the spotlight which has nothing to do with their real characters. As: "you ramshackle Christian, awake! Get on with your sinful employment (6)

Peachum singing his morning hymn to the glory of human betrayal and deception. He appeals to the audience to consider the complexities of his business. Peachum to the audience: something new is needed. My business is too hard, for my business is arousing human sympathy (6). By raising human sympathy often necessitates counterfeit misery, because the public has become judged that its dentations diminish over time.

This shifts slightly when Polly sings her 'Pirate Jenny' song. The song can be seen as an analogy for Polly's own life, in that she is rescued by the thieves from her family of beggars, similar to the wash-girl getting rescued by pirates.

In an interlude, Mrs. Peachum and low-dive Jenny step in front of the Curtain to sing "The Ballad of Sexual Obsession's":

There goes a man who's won his spurs in battle

The butcher, he. And all the others, cattle

The cocky sod! No decent place lets him in.

Who does him down, that's done

The lot? The women [...] (40)

The song was not sung in the original performance because the actress refused to perform it, but it doesn't serve to foreshadow the fact that Mac the knife will inevitably go to the whores. It also lends a new symbolism to the nick name Mac the

knife, which now receives sexual meaning. It refers to the numbers of women Mac has had sex with.

In the same way, in scene six act two, Macheath and low-Dive Jenny come out in front of the curtain and sing the 'second threepenny finale' as:

You gentleman who think you have a mission

To purge us of the seven deadly sins

Should first sort out the basic food position

Then start your preaching that is where it begins [...] (55)

The song that ends the act is one of the most famous lines, 'food is the first thing, Morals follow on', serve as a basis for much of the action in this play. It is an attack on the audience. Instead of morally judging what Macheath, the beggars, the whores and the thieves are doing, the song tells the audience to sympathize with them. By putting food before morals, Brecht is issuing a call to his audience to consider the actual circumstances of the characters instead of judging them abstractly.

Similarly, after Brown Leaves, the scene changes and Jenny steps forward to deliver the Solomon song. This famous song claims that Solomon was wise and therefore realized that all his efforts were in vain. The next stanza is the following: Cleopatra was lovely and whored herself to death, Caesar was courageous and got murdered, Brecht was curious and got driven overseas and Macheath has sexual urges that are about to get him hung. As: "Dear audience, we now are coming to the point

where we must hand him by the neck because it is the Christian thing to do proving that men must pay for what they take." (78)

Mac is placed on the scaffold and Peachum delivers the last speech. In it, he says that although it would be the 'Christian thing to do' to Macheath, they will not hang him since that ending might offend the audience. Instead, because this is an opera, Peachum, indicates that a man on the horse will come to rescue Mac. Sure enough, Brown soon enters and delivers a message that the queen has issued a royal reprieve. In addition, Macheath is made a hereditary knight and given a castle. Mac cheers at the news and Mrs. Peachum remarks that life would be nicer if such endings always occurred. Peachum then leads the company in the song for the poorest of the poor, a song that argues that since poor people always face injustice. They should not be persecuted for it.

In *The Threepenny Opera* the opera format-already stretching the viewer's sense of realism- is made even more alien through constant reminders of the artifice of the play. Placards announcing the events and songs aside to the audience and lyrics incongruent with the action disrupt and sulky and positive sentiments being expressed. For example, when Brown and Macheath reminisce about their days in the army as whose skin is black or yellow.

They quick as winking chop him into beefsteak tar tore (23). The drifty then sing cynically celebrates the fate of all soldiers to be chopped into tartar (ground meat). When Peachum complains about his lot in life, he sings that God had human kind in a trap that is a 'load of crap'.

In both cases, what might be profound social commentary is turned into a sick joke. In places, Brecht does address serious social ills he wants his audience to face and be moved to change. But he does not offer answer or a reifying course of action. Rather than offer pat solutions to complex social problems, he forces the spectator to ponder these issues and arrive at their own remedy.

When an actor sings he undergoes a change of functions. Nothing is more revolting than when the actor pretends not to notice that he has left the level of plain speech and started to sing. The three levels – Plain speech, heightened speech and singing must always remain distinct, and in no case should heightened speech represent an intensification of plain speech, or singing of heightened speech.

In no case therefore should singing take place where words are prevented by excess of feeling. The actor must not only sing but show a man singing. This aim is not so much to bring out the emotional content of his song but to show gestures that are so to speak the habits and usage of the body. As the four men saw the legs off the harpsichord and sing.

Bill Lawgen and Mary Syer were made man and wife a week ago When it was over and they exchange a kiss it was thinking. Whose Wedding dress was this?
(14) To this end he would be best advised not to use the actual words of the text.

The social elements that Brecht inserts into the play- a ruthless criminal, a wedding thief, an unjust reprieve zero in on the very societal flaws he urged his audiences to correct. Brecht explained why he included certain social structure. It is chiefly interested in the attitudes which people adopt towards one another, wherever

they are socio-historically significant. It works out scenes where people adopt attitudes of such a sort that the social laws under which they are acting spring into light. Brecht once again suggested acting tragic senses for their comic effect. Much of the way the first scene introduces Mac's 'white kid gloves' in order to cover his bloody hands; this scene introduces the furniture into a stable. As the conversation between Matthew and Mac clarifies that:

Matthew: Not a soul. Just the place for our wedding Polly enters in wedding dress: But it's a stable!

Mac: Sit on a feed-bin for the moment, Polly. To the audience: Today

This stable will witness my marriage to Miss Polly Peachum, who has followed me for love in order to share my life with me. (12)

His ironic comment along with the theatrical innovations of 'epic theater' are designed to provoke the viewer to think: Brecht said that it arouses capacity for action, forces him to make decisions. Brecht believed that humans adapted to the social settings in which they lived, that social; determines though. He wanted to appeal to his viewer rational side (not the empathic response) so that they could revise themselves and their society.

In act one, scene three of *The Threepenny Opera*, Peachum, the Beggar, 'King', rebukes his employer for their healthy, well-fed appearance:

Peachum *tries a false limb on another*: Leather is not good,

Celia; rubber is more repulsive. *To the third:* That swelling is going down and it's your last. Now we'll have to start all over again.

Examining the fourth; Of course natural scabies are never as good as the artificial kind. *To the fifth:* you're a sight! You've been eating again. I'll have to make an example of you. (29)

There is close link between satire and black humor. The blankness of this humor does not only derive from the introversion of normal values expressed through images of diseases of mutilation. If we ask why it is funny to say that natural scabies is not as good as the artificial kind, or why Peachum calls the healthy looking man a sight. We find ourselves drawn into a more elaborate explanation addressing the world of Brecht's play. A world in which the criminal is not the other because everyone is either a beggar, a thief or a whore, a world which celebrates the elevation of Mac the knife to the peerage on Coronation Day.

Peachum fussing over the appearance of his beggars then smells funny because it is motivated by larger forces to which it gives a homely aspect. He is a dealer in the commodity of human misery, no more and no less guilty than any other alienated participant in the rotten system. Black humor, we might conclude, enjoys a philosophical distinction beyond the reach of humor which is merely sick. There is nothing guilty or shamefaced about it, it does not snigger, but roars, as befits the magnitude of its disappointment.

Peachum is the proprietor of “The Beggar’s Friend, Ltd”. He runs the begging in London like an efficient business, outfitting the beggars, training them to perfect their methods, and assigning them districts in which to work. Peachum, like Fagin in Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist*, takes a percentage of each of the gang’s earnings, slowly getting rich while his employees live hand to mouth. Peachum needs Polly around his business to attract customers with her good looks. This exploitation of his daughter’s charms is disrupted when she falls in love with Macheath, marrying the thief without her father’s permission. True to his greedy and ruthless ways, Peachum solves the problem by selling Macheath out to the police. In *The Threepenny Opera*; the more different the set is appearance between acting and songs, the better its design. A great fairground organ was placed at the back of the stage, with steps on which the jazz band was loaded, together with colored lamps that lit up when the orchestra was playing.

Right and left of the organ were two big screens for the projection of drawings. Each time there was a song its little was projected on them in bug letters, and lights were lowered from the grid. As:

Lucy [...] so this is your Rose of Old Soho!

song lighting; golden glow. The organ is lit up. Three lamps

are lowered on a pole and the sings say:

JEALOUSY DUET (49)

A former hero turned master thief; Mac is the dark hero. His name eludes to the murderer Mac the knife in the play. His mother-in-law, Mrs. Peachum calls him a horse-thief and a highwayman. Macheath is also a womanizer who conducts simultaneous affairs with a variety of women. He plays the attentive husband to Polly while also pursuing an affair with his friend Tiger's daughter, Lucy.

Macheath is the Kingpin of the beggar gang, a jaded criminal and solve to his 'sexual urges'. He appears to pursue his lifestyle with little emotion of regret. He whistles nonchalantly when Polly reads him the list of charges the police have against him.

Polly: [...] you've killed two shopkeepers, more than thirty burglaries, twenty-three holdups, and God knows how many acts of arson, attempted murders, forgery and perjury, all within eighteen months. You're a dreadful man. And in Winchester you seduced two sisters under the age of consent. (52)

Macheath is an anti hero because his only response to the entire list of charges is that he thought the girl were twenty. His father-in-law, Peachum, turns Mac over to police to rid his daughter of him. In the father's eyes, Macheath is not a desirable match. Despite facing a sentence of death for his crimes, Macheath is tough and practical, brusquely ordering Polly to watch over his interests. He accepts his fate like the soldier he once was although he persists until the last minute in trying to bribe his way out of jail.

This is already a new device of Brecht's in this speech where by a character speaks direct to the audience, outlining his own situation. A device which he was to

use for purpose of alienation effect frequently later on with this, enters the note which also recurs in the later plays a number of times. The statement of a religious standpoint expressed with such irony as to seem an attack on religion on closer inspection, however it is seen that this also is a device, serving to introduce the demand for compassion in a roundabout way.

Peachum regards misery as a means of making money; at the same time his words have a ring of truth. And one of the most effective scenes in the opera is that in which Peachum parades his beggars in order to criticize the turn-out in which they hope to melt the public's heart and open its purse. The beggar are seen first in their normal appearance, a set of healthy rogues are transformed in front of the audience into cripples covered in sores, dressed filthy rags, holding placards declaring that they have suffered for Queen and country. Nothing but Perfection will do for Peachum, however he points out that there is a difference between melting the public's heart and frightening it off; only a nicely calculated poverty will produce financial is tacitly invited to reflect on the condition of the genuine poor who has no such expert as Peachum to instruct them.

Here, the technique of 'alienation' has been developed further. The scene depends on effect not on the direct participation of the audience in the happenings on stage which are deliberately 'acted out' but by their reacting from them and remembering more forcefully the true state of things.

For the most part of *The Threepenny Opera* contain no scenes where human beings enter into any relationship with one another, except in such a parodist form as

the friendship between Macheath and Tiger Brown. The audience is constantly being invited to draw conclusion from what he sees before it. While what it sees is presented in so based a form that conclusions are unreadable.

Almost every linguistics device used by Brecht can be reckoned among his estrangement effects. The essential feature is that they shall be in some contrast. The spectator's mind is brought to dwell on the opposite of what is said or performed, or two versions of an event are given simultaneously or a comparison is implied. The result is always that attention is drawn to other possibilities, while it is affirmed that only the one, Particular has taken shape. In case of the highwayman Macheath in *The Threepenny Opera* declares:

Mac hastily: you will be often sending the profits to Jack Polly's banking house in Manchester. Between us it's only a matter of weeks before I go over to banking altogether. It's safer and it's more profitable. In two weeks at the most the money will have to be taken out of business then off you go to Brown and give the list to the police. Within four weeks all that human scum will sagely in the cells at the Old Bailey. (37)

In this case, sometimes surprising is announced in a matter-of-fact tone of voice. And the spectator is expected to feel this surprise and react accordingly.

It was a long step from *The Threepenny Opera*, with its mixture of wit, facetious clowning breach popular members, occasional sharp prickling of the audience conscience and ultimate vagueness and irresponsibility to this downright propagation on an deal.

Indeed, while Macheath's robberies were presented as parallels to the normal activities of reinters and bunkers. They did not always appear to be as reprehensible as Brecht comments suggested: The moral aspect of the play emerged in such lines as: 'what is burgling a bank compared with founding once?' and eat first moral after.

In the same way, there are biblical parallels in the play. Those biblical references relate Macheath to Jesus, like Jesus, Macheath may be called a friend of publicans and singers. Very early in the play a link between them is made obliquely, when Mrs. Peachum learns that the man who has been courting Polly and Whom Polly intends to marry is Macheath. She exclaims in a double extender whose significance she doesn't realize: Mrs. Peachum: God in Heaven! Mac the knife! Jesus! Gentle Jesus! Meek and mild –Polly? Peachum comes down slowly (11).

In the wedding scene too there is a hint at this connection. The beginning of the new life; as Polly calls it between herself and Macheath, takes place in a stable. As soon as they enter he commands her to sit on the manger. Then Macheath's gang bring gifts-stolen, to be sure, but gifts nonetheless.

The most significant parallels as well as the most extended, concern the crucifixion. Like Jesus, Macheath is betrayed on a Thursday. And he is betrayed by his own kind his own people. Jenny and Brown Peachum resemble Caiaphas, for just as Peachum's business is in danger of being taken over by being superseded by Jesus. And Peachum hires Jenny to betray Macheath, as Caiaphas paid Judas to betray Jesus.

Moreover, it is to be inferred that Tiger Brown carries the role of Peter, for he- in effect-denies his friendship with Macheath. This is made explicit when Macheath is brought to jail.’

Brown after a long pause, under the withering glance of his former friend Oh Mac, it wasn't me [...] I did everything [...] don't look at me

Like that, Mac [...] I can't stand it [...] your silence is killing me.

Shouts at one of the constables; Stop tugging at that rope, you swine[...] say something, Mac say something to your poor Jackie [...] A

Kind word in his tragic [...] *rests his head against the wall and weeps*

He doesn't deem on worthy even of a word.

Goes out.(46)

In addition, Macheath, like Jesus, is to be executed on a Friday. The precise time is fixed; he is to be hanged at six o'clock. This was the hour when there came a darkness over the entire land that lasted until the ninth hour, at which time Jesus quoted the beginning of the twenty second Psalm:

Macheath: That miserable Brown. The living picture of a bad

Conscience and he calls himself a chief of police. It was a good idea not shouting at him. I was going to at first. But just in time it occurred to me that a deep

withering stare would send much colder shivers down his spine. It worked I looked at him and he wept bitterly. That is a trick I got from the bible. (47)

There is a biblical parallel to the circumstances during which Mac is released. Mathew tells us that during the feast of Passover the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. Macheath is pardoned by the queen because it is Coronation day.

In *Threepenny opera* we have a satiric retelling of the crucifixion in a manner which is in harmony with other satiric thrusts in the play. Brecht brings on stage many familiar elements. But he presents them through an unfamiliar angle of cession and so doing calls them into question for example: “Large vans are heard driving up. Half a dozen men come in carrying carpets, furniture, dishes etc with which they transfer the stable into exaggeratedly luxurious room” (13). In this way Macheath’s gang steal expensive furnishings and bring them into empty stable Brecht could have had the gang break into an unoccupied functions for the wedding ceremony.

However, by making the furnishings stolen goods, Brecht calls into question the manner by which their ‘legitimate’ owner’s acquired them. Similarly, by presenting the prostitutes as not unlike the respectable bourgeoisie- the stage directions at the beginning of act two scene five read: “An afternoon like any other; the whores, mostly in their shifts are ironing clothes, playing draughts, or washing a bourgeois idyll” (41)

Here, he emphasizes by implication the prostitution underlying the business and domestic dealings of the bourgeoisie. And by having the crook Macheath confide

to Polly that it is only a matter of weeks before he devotes himself exclusively to banking he calls into question the morality of the legal business of banking. Occasionally, this practice of s/castling a critical light on traditional values and attitudes is made explicit, as when Macheath asks, “what’s breaking into bank compared with founding a bank? “What’s murdering a man compared with employing a man?” (76) The immoral Macheath is therefore a more appropriate god than the human Jesus, for a while we pay lip service to the code of conduct of Jesus. We actually follow the action and subscribe to the code of conduct of Macheath. In addition, there is the implication that Brecht is mocking the concept of salvation through divine grace by making Christ figure, a scoundrel. He is deciding Christianity. Brecht wants us to infer that social regeneration must precede individual, religious regeneration

However, Brecht is not simplistic. The biblical parallel does not make this play simple antireligious document. There is one essential difference between Mac is released not executed. Certain aspects of the story of Macheath may parallel that of Jesus.

There is no vicarious redemption, Brecht implies. Macheath does not save mankind by his death. He does not purchase redemption with his blood. Salvation, social-salvation- remain to be achieved, presumably by the audience.

In the Opera's finale, Mackie the knife is saved from the gallows by the appearance, on horseback, of the corrupt John Brown. Sheriff of London, who brings a completely unwarranted pardon from the queen. As:

Brown: I bring special order from our beloved queen to have capital Macheath set at liberty fourth with-All cheer:- as it's the coronation and raised to the hereditary peerage. Cheers. The cost of Marmarel, like wise a pension of the thousand pounds to be his own usufruct until his death. To any bridal couples present Her Majesty bids me to convey her gracious wishes. (78)

Sense makes nonsense, and nonsense sense. The opposite is always true. But you can not even rely on this kind of truth, for truth is set spinning around its own axis and vanishes amidst which is dizzy revolution have evoked.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

After the detailed discussion and analysis on Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* from the perspective of epic theater, this research concludes that Brecht designed *The Threepenny Opera* to deviate from the theater's base goal of entertainment to turn spectator into a judge. It is a designed to stir the audience into action. He attempts to accomplish this by disturbing the viewer's passive stance towards the play in order to generate a mode of 'complex seeing' wherein the viewers follow the action, but also think about the construction of the play and the fabrication of its characters at the same time.

Similarly, in *The Threepenny Opera* Brecht uses music and songs. It is an attack on the audience. Instead of morally judging what Macheath, the beggars and the thieves are doing, the song tells the audience to sympathize with them. By putting food before morals, Brecht is issuing a call to his audience to consider the actual circumstances of the characters instead of judging them abstractly.

The Threepenny Opera is putting us in touch with an audience which was previously ignorant of us. The socially critical stance must not be abandoned for a moment. The main prop here was the music, which kept on destroying the illusions, the latter, however, had first to be created, since an atmosphere could never be destroyed until it had been built up.

In *The Threepenny Opera* characters as Macheath, Celia Peachum, Jonathan Jesemiah Peachum, Polly Peachum etc present their problems to audience through aside.

The Prologue of *The Threepenny Opera* presents Fair Day in Soho, a suburb of London, where beggars, thieves and whores ply their trades. A ballad singer steps forward to sing a frightening short simple song about Mac the knife which also invites audience's active participation.

Brecht also made some stylistic changes, transforming the protagonist, Macheath, into a morally ambiguous hero, emphasizing the parallels between Polly and Lucy, and creating the character of Sheriff Jackie Brown, a former army buddy of Macheath who protects his friend's criminal activity in exchange for a percentage of his spoils. Brecht's play places blame on capitalist society of eighteenth century aristocracy. Weill's discordant mesh of jazz, folk, and avant-grade music adds to the play's popular appeal, which was the polar opposite of what Brecht wanted. He designed his "epic theatre" to awaken the audience's critical judgment, not its empathy. Despite Brecht's designs, *The Threepenny Opera* has become one of the hallmarks of musical theater and his most popular play. While it is regarded in modern drama as a significant political work, it is equally revered for its unique music and darkly engaging characters.

In concluding point, all the characters, events and setting in Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* focus on the disruption of the viewer's passive stance

towards the play in order to generate a complex mode of seeing. It contains many of the major elements of epic theater; placards announcing the ballade singers, discordant music and a plot that frustrates expectations for romantic resolution.

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