

## New Man to New Woman: Women In Brecht and Expressionism

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Following hard on the heels of expressionism, Brecht's early work was shaped by expressionism's apocalyptic fervor, its sense that modern "progress" was proving the source of its own downfall, and its charge to find or create a "New Man"--a social savior and progenitor of a more benevolent form of human relations than the modern period had recently witnessed. Critics debate the nature of expressionism's influence. Some insist that Brecht entirely rejected expressionism and others--like Theodor Adorno--insist that early epic and expressionist theatre were similarly "infantile."<sup>1</sup> But no critic has fully recognized the extent to which Brecht develops the emergent but stalemated figure of the "New Woman" in late expressionism.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout his work, Brecht modifies and extends the expressionist fantasy that a woman will bear the fruits of the New Man's inspiration and consequently enable utopian regeneration. He does so in part by engaging or, in his words, "dialecticizing" the difference between what appear to be the late expressionist woman's two alternatives: passive adoration and cold activism. From the satirical image of Anna in *Drums in the Night* through the comic-utopian education of Pelagea in *The Mother* and the ironic juxtaposition of Katrin and Mother Courage in *Mother Courage*, Brecht breaks down the opposition between love and social power in which the late expressionist woman seems trapped. Brecht turns the opposition into a contradiction. He locates the materialist and idealist interests that polarized expressionism in and between female characters. In so doing, he subverts the patriarchal model

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dominant throughout expressionism, displaces attention from the alleged but failed New Man to his female counterpart, and liberates her from the only and equally sterile roles his domination allows: romantic subservience or anti-romantic rejection. He nonetheless sustains the expressionists' primary ideal of social regeneration and the expressionists' primary figure for that ideal: the family. In effect, by extending the ironic and self-critical aspects of expressionism, Brecht realizes the expressionist ideal. He projects a woman who is, for her very human responsiveness, socially progenitive. This woman is no more positively expressed than in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. In the character of Grusha, ironic dialectics yield to affirmation of a maternal type that not only synthesizes materialist and idealist interests but gives new life to the expressionist dream of a New Family of man.

In the following pages, I trace the development of the female character in early expressionism through *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. I begin by considering the appeal and limitations of the expressionist pregnancy *topos*--the thematic configuration of women around their ability to bear the New Man's children. I then outline late expressionism's critique of the New Man model and show Brecht's extended critique and reconfiguration of what might be called the "New Woman" character. My aim here is to provide a basis for reassessing the expressionist dimensions of Brecht's women and for reconsidering Brecht's relation to expressionist utopianism. The development of the female character from early expressionism through Brecht's late work suggests that Brecht no more simply rejected expressionism than he depended on its "infantile" aspects. Rather, a selective review of Brecht and expressionism suggests that the expressionists' sometimes ironic, usually utopian preoccupation with pregnancy, birth, and rebirth governs Brecht's culminating claims for "motherliness."

### The Expressionist Pregnancy *Topos*

Early to mid-expressionism alternated between sexism and saintism. Biologically capable of bearing the "New Generation," the expressionist woman's sexual potency was limited to that of Madonna or whore: she facilitated or impeded the alleged New Man's *elan vital*--his ability to repudiate his "parent" society by generating his own. Later expressionism questioned the New Man model itself; it suspected that the New Man--around whose apocalyptic promise it had shaped its own dreams--was no more than the egotistic, idealistic residue of the kind of autocratic system he was meant to usurp. These suspicions were reflected in signs that the New Woman's devotion was misplaced. Among other things, literal sterility, the breakdown of family relations, incest and destructiveness suggested that the New Man model was corrupt. The New Man's female counterpart passively mirrored his ideological or emotional bankruptcy and the consequent impossibility of genuine social rebirth. Finally, only the woman's capacity for love and the

woman alone--the woman who has repudiated both the New Man and romantic love in the interests of social activism--survive the New Man's failed idealism.

The woman's role in expressionism is part of a thematic matrix that might be called the pregnancy *topos*--the prevalent analogy of pregnancy, social rebirth and love. Benjamin Webb gives us a working summary of this analogy:

The woman was necessary to the "New Man," who sought the rebirth or resurrection of mankind through love not only for a complete understanding of love, but also in a more literal sense: only the woman could give birth to a race of "New Men" which the activist Expressionists advocated. Without a woman, the "New Man" was hopelessly sterile. Thus the woman fulfilled a two-part role in Expressionism generally and in the ideal of the "New Man" specifically: she was the means by which the "New Man" could subjugate his ego and thereby learn to love others fully, and she was to be the mother of the race of "New Men."<sup>3</sup>

In the context of particular plays, however, this summary requires two important qualifications: the woman's role is rarely active and, even in the early plays, its depiction is often ironic.

Although it has often been characterized as such, early expressionism was not all bombast and sentiment.<sup>4</sup> Certainly, Carl Sternheim's farces and Yvan Goll's surrealist burlesques critically parodied the conventions of the middle-class. But even less explicitly comic works showed some ironic distrust of the romanticism with which they have been so often charged. *The Burgers of Calais* by Georg Kaiser (whose dialectical wit Brecht especially admired<sup>5</sup>), for example, indirectly features the pregnancy theme.<sup>6</sup> There are, in fact, no women in the play but the success of the New Man--Eustache de Saint-Pierre --is reflected in images of birth and pregnancy. The play does not treat these elements uncritically, however.

Faced with the imminent English siege of Calais, the Burgers decide to martyr six leaders rather than surrender the whole town. When seven come forward, a new challenge is upon them: who will be the last to arrive at the market place in the morning and thus be freed of the call to martyrdom? Eustache de Saint-Pierre is the last to arrive--though on a death bier. In order to humble the others' reluctance to bear out in action what they hold so dearly in thought, he commits suicide--an action heralded by images of birth and rebirth: Eustache de Saint-Pierre's blind father cries, "I have seen the New Man--this night he was born!";<sup>7</sup> the King of England's son--the future King --is born; and all gather in peace and humility before the image of Saint-Pierre's resurrection: "*the upper part [of the church facade] depicts the elevation of the dead man: he stands free and untrammelled in the sky--six heads are turned up towards him in wonder.*"<sup>8</sup> But while the play unreservedly affirms

self-sacrifice, community obligation, and pacifism, it nonetheless does so ironically. The suicide itself is a trick. And the coincidental birth of the King's son--not unlike the arrival of the Queen's messenger at the end of *The Threepenny Opera*--suddenly transports the play into the realm of the fairy-tale. It self-consciously frames the action in such a way that the audience members can no more feel this "happy end" is inevitable than they can resist its utopian appeal. In the end, the audience is charged with responsibility for its own rebirth and regeneration. Like the six remaining Burghers, the audience members are denied the comfortable belief that others will bear that obligation for them.

Similarly, Reinhard Sorge's *The Beggar* self-consciously compares two versions of the social savior--the poet and the technocrat--represented respectively by the son and the father.<sup>9</sup> In order to realize himself and his particular vision of social relations, the poet-son poisons both his mother and father. The fact that the "Girl" has conceived his child suggests the fulfillment of his dream in a new generation; the unborn child symbolizes hope for a more humanistic future. But, as John Styan suggests, "we must also hope that this child does not choose to poison *its* parents."<sup>10</sup> In effect, the Beggar has only supplanted his father's egotistical idealism with his own. His activist ideal and avowed love for the Girl are equally false. Consequently, the unborn child threatens repetition more than it promises regeneration.

Both Kaiser's *Burghers of Calais* and Sorge's *The Beggar* put the pregnancy *topos* and the New Man's romantic idealism on critical display. While they remain fully committed to the need for the kind social regeneration the New Man model in general represents, they test the value of its particular representations against a standard of genuine selflessness and practical efficacy. Even a play such as Hasenclever's *Humanity*--usually grouped with the most "naive" expressionist dramas--so relentlessly counterpoints pregnancy, birth, and death that all but the least romantic traces of hope are undercut.<sup>11</sup>

Still, despite expressionism's sometimes ironic dimensions, women in expressionism serve a primarily emblematic function. They are, indeed, pivotal to the New Man's success; his success often turns on her submission, adoration or simple loyalty. But insofar as this is true, they are flat characters--naive, faithful types--and they are entirely passive. In fact, the passivity of the woman in expressionism is so great that she is in no way capable of participating in the kind of "coordinate interaction" Webb attributes to the Man and the Woman in Kokoschka's *Murderer the Women's Hope*, for instance, a play often considered the keynote of expressionism.<sup>12</sup> According to Webb, *Murderer* shows the process by which a man and woman reach "a higher and purer level of existence."<sup>13</sup> And the dawn and crowing cocks at the end of the play certainly suggest Christian resurrection and purification. But this second coming has less to do with achieving "a higher and purer level of existence" than with achieving absolute, male domination. At the end of the play, the Man leaves the Woman dying, trapped in a cage like an animal, and walks off

in the direction of the fleeing crowds. He kills the people before him *"like mosquitoes and leaves red behind."* It is this grand and misanthropic triumph that is heralded by the *"crowing of cocks"* and that only ironically symbolizes spiritual liberation.

The role of the woman in expressionism is so narrowly and symbolically defined that women typically lack identity apart from their relation to a potential New Man. In no uncertain terms, women--particularly in early expressionism--required the New Man for self-realization.

This kind of paternalism is perhaps most dramatically reflected in August Stramm's *The Awakening* (1915).<sup>14</sup> *The Awakening*, like *Murderer*, describes and affirms the apocalyptic transformation of an entire community/world through the efforts of one man. In *The Awakening*, this man is a kind of amoral giant. His strangeness and sexuality threaten the bourgeois community. They call him "Devil." But when he proves himself the force not only of destruction but also of reconstruction, when fire and flood ravage the town, he insists they will "Rebuild! Rebuild!" and finally emerges a New Man, the Master Builder of a new age. At this point, a character designated by "It" in the opening table of characters enters. Here however, apparently enlivened by recognition of the god-in-the devil, she is identified as "Girl." And when she confirms the New Man's identity, when she in effect gives him his new identity and power, she gains a new, third identity: at the critical moment, her character tag shifts from "Girl" to "She":

- GIRL: *exhausted, breathes*] I identified! Identified you!  
 HE: *steps even nearer to her, gently, hesitantly*] You? You? Sister?  
 GIRL *trembles.*  
 HE: *hard up against the GIRL, whispers hotly*] Sister?  
 GIRL *trembles and clings with great effort to the wall.*  
 HE: *bends over, without touching, his hands clasped behind his back*] You're afraid?  
 SHE *lays back her head and looks up into his eyes, her whole body trembling.*

*The fiery glow outside dies down, distant shouting.*<sup>15</sup>

Sexually and socially, each is reborn in the other. "She" promises never to "awaken"--never to question his dominance or the validity of their relationship --as women before her have. The crowds gather in "silent reverence" around them. Silence prevails. And despite his Zarathustran belief to the contrary, so do the bourgeois values that were only apparently washed away in the flood. In fact, they are only all the more deeply entrenched. Where the church once stood, "He" stands, commanding the kind of obedience, the kind of eternal sleep, the Girls' prototype--Eve--once refused. Renewed sleep and

willed ignorance replace the potential for genuine political consciousness and change. As "She" submits to the New Man's command, as the New Woman and New Man reassert a pattern of absolute male domination and absolute female dependence, so too the social system is stabilized according to a radically reactionary pattern.

In *From Morning to Midnight*, Georg Kaiser elaborates the bleak consequences of this apparent triumph.<sup>16</sup> As in many of his plays, Kaiser dismisses the New Man's romantic and apocalyptic claims in favor of testing his real valor. In *From Morning to Midnight*, the alleged New Man fails the test: his hypocrisy is measured in his wife's victimage. The Cashier's awakening, like that of the hero in Stramm's *Awakening*, takes the form of righteousness masking moral ineptitude, bourgeois egotism, and a complete incapacity to love. It entails, in effect, withdrawing his love from his wife to himself. He takes with it her humanity and identity. She is reduced--not unlike the Woman in *Murderer*--to animalism. The bonds of family life are broken. She loses her self, husband, and children. Her children become unrecognizable to her; she calls them "monkey-faces" and asks, "who are you?"<sup>17</sup>

The role of the woman throughout expressionism is perhaps best summarized by the Stranger in Strindberg's proto-expressionist play, *To Damascus* (1898): it is woman's destiny either to save or to destroy.<sup>18</sup> Or, in effect, to be destroyed--because it is apparently in the New Man's power to ignite that destiny. The New Man's regenerative potential depends on the quality of his love for a woman and on her ability to bear his children. She is, in this sense, a life-force, but: an entirely passive one. Lacking even the sexual resonance of Wedekind's Lulu, she is flatly conceived and flatly characterized. Nevertheless, she provides the measure against which the efficacy of the alleged New Man is gauged.

Late expressionism does show some signs of regret for locking itself, and its audiences, into this kind of typification. But its mode of apology is less corrective than it is self-condemning. The sexual relations in the plays becomes increasingly static, sterile, self-destructive, and fruitless. They seem to reflect the playwrights' own increased disillusionment in the prospect of a New Man, a sense that, as artists, they had failed in their own mission to reconfigure social relations through the image of the New Man. Still, the New Man's New Woman remains a measure of his perceived effectiveness; the maternal, familial love which she so resolutely represents and which he repeatedly fails to bring to fruition remains an ongoing standard of social, utopian practice. In other words, despite his failure, her emblematic power does not fail. She thus survives the New Man's demise.

Late expressionist disillusionment with the New Man manifested, first of all, in the emergent prevalence of self-destructive, incestuous relationships. Walter Sokel has demonstrated the way in which incest is a late expressionist figure for guilty narcissism, a combined image of self-hatred and self-love often signifying a flight from impotence.<sup>19</sup> R.S. Furness identifies at least one

instance in which incest, like murder and suicide, is symptomatic of militarism run amuck.<sup>20</sup> Georg Kaiser's play, *The Protagonist* (1921), explicitly critiques the would be New Man's delusions of grandeur through the figure of incest.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the emergent figure of incest, several other shifts in the depiction of women in late expressionism suggest increased disillusionment with the New Man ideal. These shifts include: entrenched misogyny, complete loss of faith in the pregnancy *topos*, and a mixed sense that what little remains of the activist ideal resides with the woman.

Entrenched misogyny is most explicit in late Kokoschka. Kokoschka's play *Job* (1917), for instance, was written 10 years after *Murderer the Women's Hope*.<sup>22</sup> But while it is stylistically very different from the heavy-handed, Freudian mythologizing of the earlier play, it only develops the woman-hating found there. Stylistically, Kokoschka brutally parodies the religious and psychological images that dominate his early work. He borrows much from Sternheim's domestic farces and takes up the Dadaesque impulse in Goll. But he goes further than either Sternheim or Goll in the direction of pure burlesque: in less than a dozen pages, he deflates myths from Adam and Eve through the Oedipal complex. Still, the object of *Job* is proof that woman is man's cross to bear. In this scene, for instance, Job's wife Anima falls "like a ripe apple" from the window of the room in which she had been entertaining Mr. Rubberman, the psychoanalyst. She lands, buttocks first, on Job's head --on which cuckold's horns have grown into antlers:

*[Job] collapses under Anima's weight and dies. At the window, MR. RUBBERMAN is still after her virtue in an obvious way.*

ANIMA, *reproachfully*. But no--dear Mr. Rubberman, what do you think?

PARROT. But no, Mr. Rubberman . . .

ADAM, *gently*. You've placed your wife too high in the heavens. Only now when she falls can you see through her and see her bottom.<sup>23</sup>

For its very incisiveness, the anti-romantic bathos in *Job* is more sexist even than earlier expressionist romanticization of women. In the end, Adam states explicitly what had been only implicit in *Murderer*: "the doctor invents the disease, the patient foots the bill."<sup>24</sup>

In addition to incest and misogyny, women in late expressionism suffer the literal impossibility of fulfilling their own maternal desires. By the 1920s, the pregnancy *topos* that had characterized early to mid-expressionism had assumed the futile cast of impotent men, barren women, and patently sterile relationships. Throughout much of late expressionism, the woman lacks the absolute faith in the New Man's mission that characterized, for instance, the Girl in Reinhard Sorge's *The Beggar* or Stramm's *The Awakening*. She remains

loyal but to the extent that her loyalty is misplaced, she has cause for extreme embarrassment and immense frustration. Webb's treatment of this tendency in late expressionism is comprehensive.<sup>25</sup> He cites, for instance, Kaiser's *Gats* (1925) in which the Captain poisons his lover's wine, inducing sterility and mocking her desire to bear his children, and Schmidtbonn's *Der Geschlagene* in which the New Man charges his wife with adultery, only to end up making a public display of his own impotence.

In each of these cases, the New Man's infatuation with a mission is proportionate to his inability both to love and to bear children. The New Man is now locked into failure and his wife or lover bears the brunt of his inevitable demise. At the same time, her capacity for loyalty--however misplaced--is privileged. Though she suffers for the New Man's narcissism and false idealism, and though she still lacks means for self-fulfillment without the New Man, her capacity for love is no longer simply counterpart to his ideal. Her love, in its various forms, stubbornly resists the discreditation to which the New Man's various forms of idealism are subject. It is the sole and exclusive vestige of regenerative potential.

Only in Ernst Toller's 1927 *Hoppla!* does this potential take active form.<sup>26</sup> Naive, frightened and nervously romantic in the prologue to the play, Eva Berg asks her fellow prisoner/revolutionary, Karl Thomas, "Would they bury us together if we asked them?"<sup>27</sup> Eight years later, after Karl's release from the lunatic asylum, Eva is the voice of reason. She answers Karl's plans for flight: "You're disgusted with politics? Do you imagine you could break away from them?"<sup>28</sup> She mocks the very pregnancy *topos* to which both Karl the activist and Toller the dramatist seem to cling. Eva tells Karl that he can no longer live with her:

KARL THOMAS: Is the landlady complaining?

EVA BERG: I'd soon stop that.

KARL THOMAS: Then why can't I?

EVA BERG: I must be able to be alone. Understand me.

KARL THOMAS: Don't you belong to me?

EVA BERG: Belong? That word is dead. Nobody belongs to anybody else.

KARL THOMAS: Sorry. I used the wrong word. Am I not your sweetheart?

EVA BERG: Do you mean because I've slept with you?

KARL THOMAS: Doesn't that bind us?

EVA BERG: A glance exchanged with any stranger in the street can bind me closer to him than any night of love.

KARL THOMAS: Then what *do* you take seriously?

EVA BERG: Play I take seriously . . . I am a living human being. Have I given up the world simply because I've been a fighter? The



idea that a revolutionary must renounce the thousand little joys of life is ridiculous.

KARL THOMAS: What is . . . sacred to you?

EVA BERG: Why use mystical words about human things? You stare at me. As I speak to you I notice that the last eight years when you've been "buried" have changed us more than a century would have changed us in normal times.

KARL THOMAS: Yes, I think sometimes that I belong to a generation that has disappeared.

EVA BERG: What the world has gone through since that episode!

KARL THOMAS: You talk like that about the Revolution!

EVA BERG: That Revolution was only an episode. It is past.

KARL THOMAS: What is left?

EVA BERG: We are. With our will to Honesty. With our strength to work anew.

KARL THOMAS: And suppose during one of these nights you started a child?

EVA BERG: I wouldn't give it birth.

KARL THOMAS: Because you don't love me?

EVA BERG: How you miss the point. Because it would be an accident. Because I shouldn't deem it necessary.

KARL THOMAS: . . . Help me, help me! The flame which once burned is out.

EVA BERG: You deceive yourself. It burns in another way. Less sentimentally.<sup>29</sup>

On the basis of this exchange, Robin Endres observes:

Eva not only puts Karl's idealism in its place, she also gives no countenance to his romanticization of *her*. Thus Toller, in making the post-Expressionist revolutionary a woman, has not only outgrown his artist-as-political-saviour stage, he has also overcome the romanticism-woman-hatred complex of which his earlier Expressionist plays provide numerous examples.<sup>30</sup>

But Eva's role in the play is minimal. The play is, in fact, the culmination of Toller's growing sense of the futility of political activism. As so many critics have suggested, Karl's suicide anticipates Toller's own.<sup>31</sup> For though by 1927, Toller may have "outgrown" the Zarathustran confidence that characterized his earlier plays, *The Transformation* (1918) and *Mass Man* (1919)--or what Endres calls his "artist-as-political saviour stage," *Hoppla!* gives no indication that he took confidence in any other form of political activity. The play is in many ways a cynical critique of political involvement in general. It decries the fickleness and vacuousness of so called commitment. It reflects Toller's

developing sense that the revolutionary and reactionary forces in Germany were nearly interchangeable. In *Hoppla!*, the pacifist, Thomas Kilman, becomes the War Minister. And even as Karl plans to assassinate him, the reactionary forces take care of it for him. For Karl, the revolutionary ideal of community which fired his involvement is entirely lost. Charged with Kilman's assassination, he is confined to an isolation cell. An anonymous prisoner's exhortation to stop knocking (the prisoners' Morse code) precipitates his suicide. The prisoner warns: "If you go on doing this there'll be no hope for us." But the silence itself consumes Karl's last traces of hope. He responds:

. . . The dance is beginning all over again? Waiting once more--waiting, waiting . . . I can't. Don't you see? What is it that drives you on? Have done with it all! Nobody hears, nobody hears. Nobody. We speak and do not see one another . . . We love and do not know one another. We murder but are unaware of one another. Must it always be so--always? You there, shall I never understand you? No! No! No! Why do you burn and destroy and lay waste to the earth? To forget everything? Everything to no purpose! Go on riding on your merry-go-rounds! Dance, laugh, weep, beget. Enjoy yourselves! I jump off . . .<sup>32</sup>

Eva, however, has the last word. After learning of their imminent release, the prisoners abandon themselves to knocking, to trying to notify Karl that at least this wait is over. After a deep silence, and before a deeper darkness throughout the prison, Eva observes: "He makes no sign."<sup>33</sup>

Rather than Toller having outgrown his expressionist phase, history seems to have outgrown Karl/Toller. The end of the play is bleak. The loss of "the old faith" echoes worldwide. The "cinematographic interludes" show the chronological depths of lost idealism; the radio scene shows its breadth.<sup>34</sup> The "light of day" of which Eva insists Karl is afraid is nowhere visible.<sup>35</sup> Still, one interlude within the play reserves some hope for the liberation of women in the work force. In five images, it takes us from "women in harness" to "women as police."<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the play ends with Eva. The final image is not--as in the manner of more naive expressionism--one of either the alleged New Man's crucifixion or apostolic regeneration. It is, rather, of a woman signifying absence. Eva is the trace of a world forever deferred.<sup>37</sup> Her presence testifies to miscommunication, to failed community, to the loss of passionate ambition and yet also to the persistence of some ideal beyond Karl's "expressionist" sensibility. Toller's own faith has burnt to an ember. Revolution, by the old standards, no longer exists. To the extent that Eva represents a genuinely "new" woman, a woman freed from both the sexism and saintism of earlier expressionism as well as from the perceived constraints of motherhood and familial devotion, she represents a future--but a very dark one.

The woman survives the New Man's failures and excesses in two forms. On the one hand, she symbolizes a degree of love and genuine selflessness which the New Man cannot meet but which is in itself impotent. On the other hand, she symbolizes the kind of power obtained through the abnegation of such love. That is: only insofar as Eva resists the idealistic attachment to motherhood, love and rebirth that seem to entrap the "Girl" does she hold any real social promise. Toller seems acutely aware of the trade-off here. We cannot help but feel a deep nostalgia in the final image of Eva--a nostalgia not necessarily for the fires of lost idealism but for a more supple, more compassionate symbol of human relations--for what Brecht will call "motherliness": the principle of productive goodness in a bad world.

### Brecht's "New Woman"

Expressionism culminates in the frozen alterity of the idealistic "Girl" and the materialist Eva. Exclusively, each is equally unacceptable. Brecht dialecticizes their difference. He locates their opposing characteristics in single characters or character relations in such a way as to provoke new alternatives and a renewed vision of social change. He does so by qualifying the pregnancy topos in at least three significant ways. First, like Eva, Brecht's women tend to be alone. Whether by choice or circumstance and except insofar as they are thus represented critically (as in *Baal* and *Drums in the Night*), they are not the passive counterpart of a dominating male figure. Secondly, unlike Eva, Brecht's women are defined by some aspect of their maternal capacity. And thirdly, each female character or maternal "type" is counterpointed either by another version of herself (e.g. Shen Teh and Shui Ta in *The Good Person of Szechwan*), by her son (e.g. Pelagea and Pavel in *The Mother*) or by another female character (e.g. Anna and Augusta in *Drums in the Night*, *Mother Courage* and *Katrin* in *Mother Courage*, Grusha and the governor's wife, Natella Abashvili in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*). In these ways, Brecht at once displaces the patriarchal construct that dominates the New Man model and empowers the mother as a figure of social change. He resists affirming either an idealist or materialist type but through their ironic juxtaposition enlivens the possibility of realizing the expressionist dream of a renewed family of man in concrete, material terms. Motherhood becomes, in Brecht, both an ideal and a locus of contradiction. The emergent imperative is for the audience to resolve, for example, the difference between Shen Teh's dream of bearing the leader of a new generation, "a new conqueror . . . Who will carry the mail from man to man/Across pathless deserts" and Shui Ta's sense that feeding this vision of selflessness requires the very material greed it resists.<sup>38</sup>

In his earliest plays, Brecht criticizes the New Man/New Woman model without developing a clear alternative. He thus extends the late expressionists' own self-conscious critique. Critics have charged that he also simply extends expressionist misogyny.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the women in *Baal* and *Drums in the Night*

are flatly characterized. They are depicted as sexual objects who are at least as dominated by their own sexual desires and bourgeois dependency as by would-be New Men. But this characterization is neither romantically admired (as in Kokoschka's *Murderer the Women's Hope*) nor comically displayed (as in Kokoschka's *Job*). It is, rather, a subject of dialectical critique.

Brecht no more affirms the characterization of women in *Baal*, for instance, than he affirms the characterization of the play's title character, Baal--the Dionysian, impulsive, amoral rogue who takes his name and lifestyle from a pagan fertility god. Baal is appealing--if only for his bold vitality. But his appeal ultimately fades with the realization that pure, asocial vitalism is an idealistic fantasy. In the end, Baal can no more escape the claims of human society than he can outlive death.

The contradictions within Baal's avowed vitalism are reflected in his attitudes towards women. These attitudes are reflected, in turn, in two sets of feminine images in the play: those associated with the earth and seasonal fertility and those embodied by the female characters and pregnancy. Female characters do not themselves take a prominent role in *Baal*. But Baal's relation to women and pregnancy does allow us to see how, even in his earliest work, Brecht is criticizing aspects of expressionism from within the framework of the expressionist pregnancy *topos*.

As the opening "Chorale of the Great Baal" tells us, Baal sees material nature as distinctly feminine. The natural world is, for Baal, both mother and lover. It is both the "dark womb"--"a woman's womb"--and "that lusty woman . . . who laughs when yielding/To the man who'll stand the pressure of her thighs."<sup>40</sup>

But even the "Chorale" warns us of the limits of Baal's vitalism. Baal's love of life stumbles on the edge of human attachment and responsibility embodied in the image of new life, "babies":

Once a woman, Baal says, gives her all  
 Leave her; that's as far as she can go.  
 Other men should represent no risk at all;  
 Even Baal is scared of babies, though.<sup>41</sup>

Baal does treat women like disposable commodities. But underlying his principles of detachment and intensity is the fear of pregnancy. Baal associates pregnancy with death and decay:

Once the pale mild summer has ebbed and they have soaked up  
 love like sponges, they turn back into animals, cross and childish,  
 ungainly, with fat bellies and flowing breasts, and with damp, clinging  
 arms like slimy squid, and their bodies degenerate and become  
 heavy unto death. And with enormous screams, as though bringing

forth a cosmos, they give birth to a tiny fruit. They spit out with pain what they sucked in with joy.<sup>42</sup>

With similar show of realistic candor, Baal mocks the beggar Maja's lullaby:

MAJA (leaning on Bolleboll, sings)  
 Shut your eyes, dear, to see is to weep  
 Shut them to sorrow and sleep, baby, sleep.

BAAL (brutally)  
 Float down the river, with rats in your hair,  
 Everything's lovely. The sky is still there.<sup>43</sup>

Baal shows his nervousness at new life in his attempts to hide it. While appearing to embrace all of life, he runs from both its pain and consequences. In fact, it is Baal--the great advocate of looking life straight in the face--who shuts his eyes to the fruit of his sexual exploits: Emilie's shame, Johanna's suicide, Sophie's pregnancy.<sup>44</sup>

Occasionally, Baal's conscience rises against its repression. Johanna's Ophelia-like ghost haunts Baal's mock-lullaby and his "Song of the Drowned Girl."<sup>45</sup> Twice, as if performing a cleansing ritual, Baal goes down to the river to wash. And, in his last moments, Baal clearly hopes to exorcise the memory of murdering his pal, Ekart.<sup>46</sup>

Ronald Speirs claims that these "scruples" exist in the play "only to be trampled down." For Speirs,

... the play argues that moral considerations are simply a means of evading the imperative of the appetites, a form of weakness which must be overcome if the human animal is not to be prevented from living life to the full by the spurious illusions of communal bonds conjured up by his fear of existential isolation.<sup>47</sup>

But this is to take Baal's perspective at face-value and to ignore the fact that neither Baal nor Brecht is reconciled to a flat paganism.<sup>48</sup> Baal's problem is that no matter how far he goes into the woods and away from ordinary, human society, he can no more escape the claims of humanity than he can simply commune with nature. In his attempts to do so, he simply becomes more alienated from nature, himself, and, above all, the processes of fertility he avowedly represents.

In *Baal*, we see the failure of the New Man either to fulfill his personal ambitions or to provide a convincing alternative to the social *status quo*. *Baal* is, in this sense, a radical critique of the Nietzschean aspect of the expressionist New Man. But *Baal's* critical force derives from affirmation of another aspect, the expressionist pregnancy *topos*. That is, Baal's vitalism fails to the very extent that it cannot accommodate the prospect of a child. With each step,

Baal runs from both pregnancy and social involvement and consequently from the kind of social rebirth the literal birth of a child in expressionism seemed to promise. Hence, Baal-as-New-Man is no more viable than any of his predecessors.

In *Drums in the Night*, Brecht takes his critique of expressionism one step further by parodying the potentially reactionary dimensions of the pregnancy *topos*. These dimensions are embodied in Anna, the pregnant daughter of a munitions manufacturer, who is torn between her romantic attachment to Kragler, the would-be New Man, and her sexual attachment to Murk, the would-be heir to her father's factory.

Anna is defined by her pregnancy and her pregnancy is defined by its lack of regenerative significance. On the one hand, it is the fruit of her relationship with Murk, a relationship built on the exchange of sexual commodities. On the other hand, it is a sign of her infidelity to Kragler. It consequently signifies--according to the New Man *mythos* both he and she entertain--the fruitlessness of his own, regenerative endeavors. Thus, though Anna sees herself as a kind of New Woman, her pregnancy is associated with sickness--with throwing up, with the absence of menstrual blood on the sheets that should have, as her mother says, been "put in the wash," with the "sick feeling" of fear and trembling that attacks Anna, her mother, Murk, and Kragler alike.<sup>49</sup> Brecht himself compares Anna's pregnancy to a venereal disease insofar as they share sensational appeal. For Brecht, venereal disease is the last "marketplace of our feelings." It satisfies the need for sensation and feeling in a world in which genuine, erotic possibility is apparently exhausted. Brecht condemns Anna not because she is a woman but because she promotes a sexual system based on satisfying culinary desires. Even Murk's sexual utilitarianism improves by comparison with Anna's pure consumerism. According to Brecht, for Anna:

... a man is not an article for use but a cheap luxury. . . . She thinks she will get more from that atmosphere of obscene sexuality: from lying with Kragler in a pregnant condition.<sup>50</sup>

What Brecht misses in Anna but finds incipient in the prostitute, Augusta, and more fully realized in Augusta's later counterpart, the prostitute Shen Teh in *The Good Person of Szechwan*, is *eros* or regenerative sexuality--sex that "gives rise to associations."<sup>51</sup>

In much the same way that the Girl's pregnancy in *The Beggar* promised a renewed cycle of violence, Anna's pregnancy prefigures only the degenerative possibilities of a system based on the commodification of sexual interest. While she plays the part of the New Woman with vigor and commitment, the part is worn out; it will no longer suffice to mask her apathy, passivity, and consumerism, to hide the fact that she uses the New Woman's romantic-revolutionary appeal to support the fulfillment of her own bourgeois desires.

Clearly, Brecht finds aspects of the expressionist pregnancy *topos* dangerously reactionary. He nonetheless remains attached to its central motif: the mother or potential mother as a figure of social regeneration. In plays after *Drums in the Night*, Brecht explores ways in which to clear the New Woman model of residual romanticism and consequently to liberate the mother's social potency from its reactionary constraints.

In *The Mother*, Brecht moves from dialectical critique to dialectical transformation. He does not so much show the contradictions implicit in what he calls "the old type of mother love" as he shows Pelagea Vlassova's transformation from "the old type" of mother into "a new and effective variety."<sup>52</sup> Pelagea's transformation consists in dialecticizing her roles as mother and social activist: in broadening her sense of family to include all mothers' children; in socializing her maternal instincts; in relinquishing the passive relation to husband, child, and state to the role of social actor.

At the play's outset, Pelagea is associated with all of the characteristics of a maternal type defined by opposition to social agency: she is a nurturer, a feeder, whose efforts to nurture and feed are circumscribed by her son, Pavel's, paycheck. As his paycheck grows smaller, so her own and Pavel's feelings of discontent grow larger. But while his take the form of social activity, hers simply lead to feelings of superfluity, futility, and impotence. She mourns the weakness of her role:

... It's not easy for me to have to set such soup before my only son. He's so young, hardly grown up yet. He is so different from his father. He reads these thick books; and he never did think the food was good enough for him. And now the soup has gotten worse yet. He just gets more and more discontented. . . . There he goes turning up his nose at the soup again. I can't do a thing to make it any better. It won't be long now, and he'll notice I am no help to him any more--just a burden. What right do I have, anyway, to eat here and live in his room and buy my clothes out of his paycheck? He'll go on his own way yet. And what am I to do--I, Pelagea Vlassova, forty-two years old, the widow of a worker and the mother of a worker? Before I spend a single kopek I look and look at it. I try things first one way, then another. One time I'm skimping on wood for the fire, the next time I skimp on clothing. Nothing helps. I see nothing to be done.<sup>53</sup>

Pelagea passively suffers not only the indirect violence of an ever reduced paycheck but recrimination for her son's revolutionary activities. When the police suspect the presence of the workers' printing press in Pelagea's home, they destroy her belongings and threaten her with worse punishment, expecting that she will--out of fear, ignorance, and habit--enforce conservatism.

Pelagea feels her role as nurturer and protector on the brink of exhaustion. Her maternal resources are depleted. Like the idealist type of New Woman with which Anna desperately identifies, the "old" type of mother with which Pelagea has always identified suddenly seems dysfunctional or functional only insofar as it supports the *status quo*. In the face of obsolescence, however, Pelagea does not reject family feeling in favor of materialist aggression in the manner of Toller's Eva. Rather, she finds active ways in which to implement her maternal role. In the process, her maternal role takes on public significance.

Pelagea's new activity generally takes the form of dialectical play-inversions and often comic subversions of the "old" world of which her passivity was a part. She learns to play her "old" self in order to fulfill larger, more specifically historical aims. When she visits Pavel in prison, she makes a great show of weeping and keening her son's fate; under her breath, she asks for the addresses of peasants sympathetic to the workers' movement. When Pavel dies, she receives her neighbors' condolences with *praxical* proverbs, new sayings that interrupt the passivity long sustained by their Biblical counterparts. She tells them: "the fate of man is man," "Do not fear death so much, but rather the inadequate life!," "Better the Bible torn apart than the food spilled."<sup>54</sup> She moreover justifies stealing her neighbor's felt to mute the printing press because "it's a very good thing for her children that papers like ours are published."<sup>55</sup>

Through participation in "the good cause," Pelagea both regains and loses her son.<sup>56</sup> In the ninth scene, Pavel visits home after leaving prison and before going into exile. Busy, urgently taking pages from the printing press, the Mother cannot pause to fulfill her traditional duties--to feed and tend to her son. Irony cannot hide Pavel's initial disappointment:

PAVEL (*cutting a slice of bread from the loaf while the others continue to print*): The mother of the revolutionist Pavel Vlassov takes the pages out. Does she pay any attention to him? Not at all! Does she make him his tea? Does she run his bath water? Or kill the fatted calf? Not at all! He flees from Siberia toward Finland, the icy gusts of the North wind in his face, the volleys of the gendarmes in his ears, and he finds no sanctuary where he might lay his head down--save in a print shop. And instead of bending over him to stroke his hair, his mother is taking the pages out!<sup>57</sup>

But the fulfillment of Pavel's desire for home and maternal care is postponed while he "*takes his place opposite THE MOTHER at the printing machine.*"<sup>58</sup> For a few moments, reciprocity replaces unilateral maternal care; mother and son meet as if for the first time in the light of shared, public work. Across the printing press, mother and son "*recite*" their concerns. The rhythms of their work govern the rhythms of their talk and, in turn, shape a new relationship.



But this new and strange ritual is cut short by the arrival of the comrades who are to lead Pavel to Finland and the subsequent news that Pavel has been killed on the way. One effect of Pavel's death is to further enlarge the mother's motherliness. In the absence of her son, her commitment and self-sacrifice are turned to entirely public ends. Another effect, however, is to generate regret for the loss of private care. We cannot help but feel that the fulfillment of Pavel's desire for at least a few moments of traditional maternal attention was mistakenly postponed. Together, however, admiration for the mother and pity for Pavel strengthen our desire for the kind of social changes that will enable more gentle tending.

The late expressionists found the New Man's infatuation with a mission suspect. It more often than not seemed a function of narcissism or latently reactionary idealism. The New Woman continued to symbolize selfless loving but, in the end, she could be no more effective than the New Man. Late expressionism was caught in a strictly patriarchal system that required that, were a woman like Eva to assume a socially active role, she must relinquish exactly those feminine attributes that make her an appealing alternative to the New Man. In effect, the expressionist polarization of the New Man and New Woman supported the very system it was meant to resist. And while late expressionism was radically self-condemning, it never questioned its underlying patriarchal values.

In *The Mother*, Brecht collapses the New Man/New Woman dichotomy. He replaces the New Man with the New Woman--in part out of a sense of historical necessity (all of the would-be New Men are jailed or killed) and in part out of a sense that the bourgeois family model is an inadequate basis for a new or renewed family of man. For Brecht, the expressionist dream of regeneration was mired in the habits of the past generation. By replacing the New Man with the New Woman, he also inscribed a new family model: he replaced unilateral care with generational reciprocity, patriarchal domination with male-female dialectics, and missionary narcissism with motherliness. Certainly, Brecht's new New Women are not entirely new: they are defined by specifically Christian principles of love; their roles are almost entirely limited to that of the mother, regardless of how private or public; and they are easily subject to charges of idealism.

With *Mother Courage* and *The Good Person of Szechwan*, Brecht shows some remorse for the heroic depiction of Pelagea. He returns to the more critical mode of *Baal* and *Drums in the Night* in order to find material implementations for the positive ideals he associates with the Mother. In each play, the contradictions within the materialist-idealist matrix of late expressionism are reflected in the dialectical oppositions within and between female characters.

Mother Courage is the cynical realist for whom virtue is "what pays."<sup>59</sup> She survives by cunning exploitation of the wartime economy and yet remains blind to the fact that her survival depends on the continuation of the very war

that kills her children. Katrin complements Mother Courage's cunning with innocence. While Mother Courage haggles for Swiss Cheese's life, Katrin runs without hesitation into a burning house to save a crying baby. But the war punishes Katrin's pure motherliness with isolation: she is scarred and muted by war injuries; she can no more decry the injustices she witnesses than she can realize her own sexual, maternal instincts. Her motherliness is made entirely public and selfless by the same kind of apparent necessity that makes Mother Courage's private and selfish. Katrin's shattered hopes for personal fulfillment are transformed into public action. When she hears that children in the sleeping city of Halle may be massacred, she groans in horror. And while the Protestant peasants quietly ask God to "think upon the children in peril," Katrin climbs to the roof and beats a drum so loudly that the town awakens to its own defense.<sup>60</sup> Of course, the Protestant peasants call her heartless and the Catholic soldiers shoot her down. Katrin dies, the city of Halle is momentarily delivered, and Mother Courage and the war go on.

Shen Teh attempts to resolve the contradictions within Mother Courage and Katrin's versions of motherliness; she ends up torn apart by them. Generously responsive to others' need and greed, Shen Teh cannot maintain herself much less her expected child. She turns to cunning and guile to make her way: she invents an avaricious cousin, Shui Tah, who builds her business and promises sustenance for herself, her child, and her dream of a New Man, "a new conqueror."<sup>61</sup> But goodness--and poverty--will out. The more pregnant she becomes, the more difficult it is to maintain her disguise. And in the end, even the gods cannot mediate the stultifying paradox in which she finds herself. As an actor tells us in the epilogue, that is left to the thoughtful audience member:

Ladies and gentlemen, don't be annoyed  
 We know this ending leaves you in the void  
 A golden legend we set out to tell  
 But then somehow the ending went to hell.  
 We're disappointed too, struck with dismay  
 All questions open though we've closed our play. . . .  
 There's only one solution comes to mind:  
 That you yourselves should ponder till you find  
 The ways and means and measures tending  
 To help good people to a happy ending.  
 Ladies and gentlemen, in you we trust:  
 The ending must be happy, must, must, must!<sup>62</sup>

In *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, of course, Brecht provides the happy ending *The Good Person of Szechwan* lacks. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* is a "golden legend" in which the kind of gentle tending, mutuality, and social responsibility sorely absent in *Baal* and *Drums in the Night*, promised in *The*

*Mother*, and dialectically demanded by *Mother Courage* and *The Good Person of Szechwan* are fully realized. Grusha is Brecht's ultimate mother: she resolves the apparent contradiction between private and public concerns that restricted motherliness in the earlier plays. In Grusha, we see the delicate balance of Kattrin and Shen Teh's pure responsiveness, *Mother Courage's* wit and cunning, and Pelagea's broad view of family relations. In her plight and triumph, moreover, we see the fulfillment of the expressionist dream of a new family of man.

Grusha's journey begins one Easter Sunday in the ancient city of Gruzinia when war is announced and the governor Abashvili is deposed. The governor's wife immediately begins packing; the servants rush to save their own lives. In the panic to leave the palace, however, the governor's infant heir is forgotten. Only the servant-girl, Grusha, who is about to abandon the palace herself, hears or thinks she hears its faint plea:

the child

Called out to her, he didn't whimper, but said quite reasonably  
Or so at least it seemed to her.

"Woman," he said, "help me."

And he went on, not whimpering, but saying quite reasonably  
"Consider, woman, that one who does not hear a cry for help  
But passes by with distracted ear will never  
Hear again the hushed call of her lover nor  
The blackbird in the dawn nor the contented  
Sighs of the grape pickers at angelus."<sup>63</sup>

Grusha is moved by the child's utopian vision of a world in which nature, love, and work are harmoniously interwoven in the image of helpfulness. Against her own best interests, she takes the child, eventually adopts and baptizes it in a makeshift ritual at the foot of the Yanga-Tau glacier, and continues to learn from "Michael," just as Pelagea learned from Pavel, how to mother.

In the end, the play affirms the value of the child's charge. The days of disorder are over. The governor's wife returns to Gruzinia to reclaim her child and, through him, the governor's estate. She charges Grusha with theft. The case is brought before Azdak, the beggar-turned-judge who breaks the law like bread to feed his own coffers and the poor.<sup>64</sup> To determine the true mother, Azdak administers the test of the chalk circle: the child is placed in the center of a circle chalked on the floor; Grusha and Natella Abashvili are told each to take one of the child's arms and, at the designated moment, to pull the child out. As did King Solomon, Azdak decides in favor of the woman who lets the child go, who would rather give up the child than see it torn in half. But whereas King Solomon thus divined the child's biological mother, Azdak thus proves that true motherliness supersedes biology. Motherliness, for Azdak, is a broadly defined social instinct that, for its very breadth, challenges a more

narrowly defined patrilineal system and its attendant system of property rights. As the Singer tells us at the end of the play:

Things should belong to those who do well by them  
 Children to motherly women that they may thrive  
 Wagons to good drivers that they may be well driven  
 And the valley to those who water it, that it may bear fruit.<sup>65</sup>

By defining motherliness as a social rather than biological instinct, Brecht corrects some of the reactionary dimensions of the pregnancy *topos*. He subverts a strictly patrilineal, bourgeois family model and avoids the suggestion that the promised birth will simply entail the reproduction of dominant ideologies. The reciprocity of mother and child is evoked in the Singer's description of the baptism: "the helpless one adopts[s] the helpless one."<sup>66</sup> It is moreover evoked in Grusha's ongoing personal transformation and the subsequent transformation of the dominant society. In the last moments, whatever is left of the hierarchical and inhumane Abashvili regime yields to communal rejoicing. Azdak makes the intentional mistake of divorcing Grusha from the man she married to make Michael legitimate instead of divorcing a couple married for forty years. Grusha is free to marry Simon, the returned soldier to whom she became engaged and from whom she was separated the Easter Sunday she found Michael. Love and family relations are restored. Both chaos and hierarchy disappear in a gathering cloud of dancers: mother dances with child, husband with cook; the nearly-divorced old couple dance together; and more dancers enter as the magical feeling of what Victor Turner calls "spontaneous *communitas*" fills the stage and theatre.<sup>67</sup> At long last, the expressionist New Family rises almost phoenix-like from the ashes of injustice and disillusion.

In Grusha, Brecht corrects and resolves the expressionists' utopian model. He supplants the New Man with a New Woman fully capable of bringing the expressionist dream-vision of more humane and more productive social relations to fruition. The prologue to *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* reminds us, however, that this dream-vision must be understood in the context of existing social conditions. It introduces the body of the play as a morality play--a festive celebration of folk wisdom bearing specifically on the problem of how to decide rights to a disputed valley and, more generally, on the problem of how to live in the wake of the second World War.<sup>68</sup> In the light of the prologue, as a character in a political morality play, Grusha both fulfills an ideal and represents an alternative to contemporary practice: she at once enacts "motherliness" and charges us to do the same.

Certainly, the appeal and limitations of Brecht's "New Woman" bears further consideration.<sup>69</sup> But it is clear that Brecht no more simply rejected the expressionist pregnancy *topos* than he simply repeated its futile configurations. Brecht extended and developed the expressionists' mother symbology. He

displaced attention to the mother figure and dialectically engaged her counterpart. He thus relocated the New Man's alleged *elan vital* in the mother figure, relaxed the opposition of idealism and materialism that dominated late expressionism, and liberated both the mother from passivity and the female activist from the need to reject "motherliness." In this way, he aimed, at least, to help enact Shen Teh and the expressionists' dream of a new family of man -- a dream which, for each, seemed increasingly out of reach.

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## Notes

1. T.W. Adorno, "Commitment," *Aesthetics and Politics*, trans. ed. Ronald Taylor (London: New Left Books, 1977) 183.

2. The continuity between Brecht and the expressionists' treatment of women has been generally ignored by both those critics who have addressed the role of women in Brecht's work and those who have addressed Brecht's relation to expressionism. See e.g. Franz N. Mennemeier, "Mother Courage and Her Children," *Brecht; Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Peter Demetz (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962) 138-151; Lee Baxandall, intro., *The Mother*, ed. Eric Bentley (New York: Grove, 1965) 9-32; John Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* (London: Methuen, 1967) and "Brecht and Expressionism," *Brecht in Context* (London: Methuen, 1984) 73-86; Sara Lennox, "Women in Brecht's Work," *New German Critique* 14 (1978): 83-96 and "Brecht, Feminism and Form: Theses Toward a Feminist Reutilization of Brecht," *Communications from the International Brecht Society* 13.1 (1983): 16-19; John Styan, *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1981) vol. 3; Douglas Kellner, "Expressionist Literature and the Dream of the 'New Man,'" *Passion and Rebellion: The Expressionist Heritage*, ed. Douglas Kellner and Stephen Bronner (South Hadley, MA: J.F. Bergin, 1983) 166, 200; and, most recently, Robin Holt, "Solomon, Brecht, and the Conception of Motherhood," *Gestus; a Quarterly Journal of Brechtian Studies* 2.4 (1986): 295-299.

3. Benjamin Webb, *The Demise of the 'New Man': an Analysis of Ten Plays from Late German Expressionism* (Goppening: A. Kummerle, 1973) 88-89.

4. This is typically the view of those critics who try to save Brecht from identification with expressionism. See e.g. Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* 108-109.

5. See, for example, Brecht's praise for Kaiser's *Heaven, Road, Earth* in his review of *Der Dramatische Wille*, Dec. 14, 1920, in the leftist, Augsburg paper, *Der Volkswille*, reprinted as "Brecht on Theatre: 1920," trans. James L. Rosenberg, *Tulane Drama Review* 7 (1962): 181-182.

6. Georg Kaiser, *The Burghers of Calais, Five Plays*, trans. B.J. Kenworthy, Rex Last, J.M. Ritchie, ed. J.M. Ritchie (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971) 75-133.

7. 130.

8. 132.

9. Reinhard Sorge, *The Beggar*, trans. Walter H. Sokel and Jacqueline Sokel, *Anthology of German Expressionist Drama*, ed. Walter H. Sokel (New York: Doubleday, 1963) 22-89.

10. John Styan, *Modern Drama* 3: 39.

11. Walter Hasenclever, *Humanity*, trans. Walter H. and Jacqueline Sokel, *Anthology of German Expressionist Drama*, ed. Walter H. Sokel (New York: Doubleday, 1963) 172-201. For Walter Sokel's keynote distinction between "naive" and "mature" expressionism, see *The Writer in Extremis* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 1959).

12. Oskar Kokoschka, *Murderer the Women's Hope*. trans. Michael Hamburger, *An Anthology of German Expressionist Drama*, ed. Walter H. Sokel (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963) 17-21.
13. Webb 88.
14. August Stramm, *Awakening, Seven Expressionist Plays*, trans. J.M. Ritchie and H.F. Garten, ed. J.M. Ritchie (London: Calder and Boyars, 1968) 33-49.
15. *Awakening* 47.
16. Georg Kaiser, *From Morning to Midnight, Five Plays*, trans. B.J. Kenworthy, Rex Last and J.M. Ritchie, ed. J.M. Ritchie (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971) 17-75.
17. *From Morning to Midnight* 45-46.
18. August Strindberg, *To Damascus* Part 1, *The Plays*. 2 vols. (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975) 2: 31.
19. See Sokel, *Extremis* 77-78.
20. See R.S. Furness, *Expressionism* (London: Methuen, 1973) 63-64.
21. See Georg Kaiser, *The Protagonist, Seven Expressionist Plays*, trans. J.M. Ritchie and H.F. Garten, ed. J.M. Ritchie (London: Calder and Boyars, 1968) 63-81.
22. Oskar Kokoschka, *Job*, trans. Walter H. and Jacqueline Sokel, *An Anthology of German Expressionist Drama*, ed. Walter H. Sokel (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1963) 158-171.
23. 169.
24. 170.
25. See Webb 88-126.
26. Ernst Toller, *Hoppla!*, trans. Hermon Ould (London: Ernest Benn, 1928).
27. 18.
28. 58.
29. 59-60.
30. Robin Belinda Endres, "Plays and Politics: An Analysis of Various Models of Twentieth-Century Political Theatre," diss., York University (Canada), 1976, 44.
31. For similarities with Toller's life history, see Toller, *I was a German*, trans. Edw. Crankshaw (London: John Lane. 1934).
32. *Hoppla!* 140.
33. 142.
34. 95-101.
35. 61.
36. 54.
37. I have rather liberally adapted Houston Baker's analysis of the blues "signature" here. See *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984).
38. Brecht, *The Good Person of Szechwan*, trans. Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: vintage, 1976) 6: 70.
39. See, e.g., Timothy Wiles, *The Theater Event* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980) 74, and Peter Heller, "Nihilist into Activist: Two Phases in the Development of Bertolt Brecht," *Germanic Review* 28 (1953): 145.
40. Brecht, *Baal*, trans. William E. Smith and Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1971) 1: 3-4.
41. 3-4.
42. 10.
43. 44.
44. 40.
45. Although not referred to as such in the Manheim edition, Baal's ode to Johnanna is commonly referred to as the "Song of the Drowned Girl." *Baal* 45-46.
46. See *Baal* 57.
47. Ronald Speirs, *Brecht's Early Plays* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1982) 27.
48. Charles Lyons makes this point in "Bertolt Brecht's *Baal*: The Structure of Images," *Modern Drama* 8 (1965): 317.
49. Brecht, *Drums in the Night*, trans. William E. Smith and Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays* (New York: Vintage, 1971) 1: 63, 73.

50. Brecht, "Preface to *Drums in the Night*" (written sometime after Brecht's move to Berlin in 1920), *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1971) 1: 376-377.
51. 376-378.
52. Brecht, "Notes to *The Mother*," *The Mother*, trans. Lee Baxandall (New York: Grove, 1965) 140.
53. Brecht, *The Mother*, trans. Lee Baxandall (New York: Grove, 1965) 37-38.
54. 114, 117, 118.
55. 102.
56. See Pelagea's song, "Praise for the Common Cause," *The Mother* 105-106.
57. *The Mother* 103.
58. 104.
59. See Brecht, *Mother Courage*, trans. Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1972) 5: 48, 149.
60. 205.
61. Brecht, *The Good Person of Szechwan*, trans. Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1976) 6: 70.
62. 103-104.
63. Brecht, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, trans. Ralph Manheim, *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1974) 7: 159-160.
64. The metaphor here is suggested by Eric Bentley's trans., *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht (New York: Grove, 1961) 107.
65. *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* 229.
66. Brecht, "Contradictions in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*." *Collected Plays*, ed. Ralph Manheim and John Willett (New York: Vintage, 1974) 301.
67. See Victor Turner, "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual," *From Ritual to Theatre* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982) 45-51.
68. See the prologue to *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, "The Dispute Over the Valley" 139-144.
69. For a critique of Brecht's "New Woman" from a feminist perspective, see Lennox, "Women in Brecht's Work."

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