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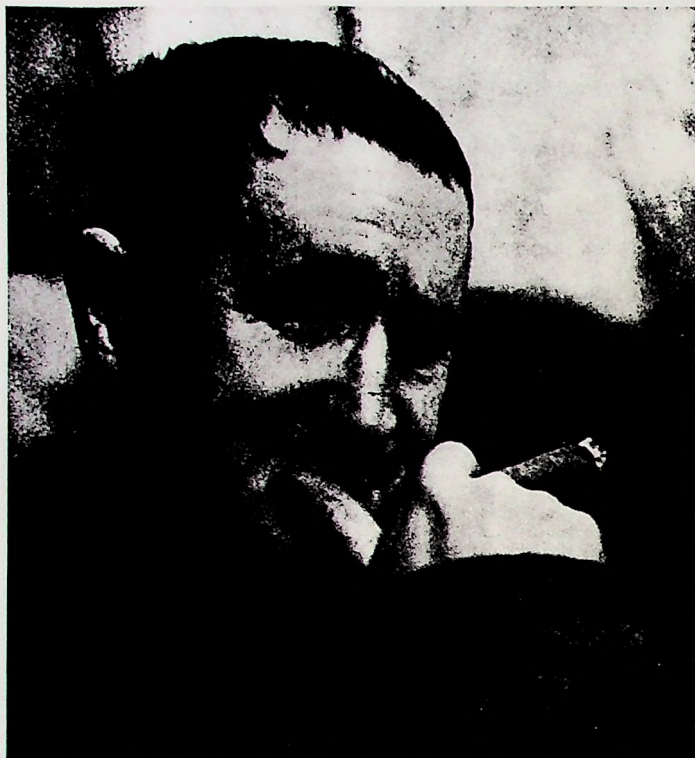
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INTRODUCTION

Television drama today still has as its main influence the Aristotelian approach to drama that Brecht was fighting against.

Brecht argued that Aristotelian drama produced only a superficial representation of reality and that its devotion to empathy had a hypnotic effect that rendered the spectators passive observers, unable to remove themselves from the fate of the characters so as to judge the influence of society on their lives. So, for Brecht the breakdown of illusion was necessary to expose the social forces acting on his characters so that the audience could not only be entertained by the play, but also learn from it. By saving his characters from mysterious fates from which there was no escape and by exposing 'fate' as being of Man's devising, Brecht similarly hoped to teach his working class audience to see and question the social forces that controlled their own lives and thus open up the possibility of their being released from the 'fate' of their class.

Brecht's theories and techniques intended for the theatre can be re-interpreted and applied to the exposure of Television's illusion that it is a 'Window on the world', which belies its bias and capitalist ideology. This will allow the modern television audience to adopt a new critical viewing point on the medium which will make it less an inseminator of cultural propaganda and reduce its success as a selling medium, with the consequence that its potential as a medium of true communication and education will be greatly increased.



1. Bertolt Brecht

BRECHT AND THEATRE

the third Pacific

Richard Sorge

1939 to 1941 in Japan

1941-42

1942 to 1945 in England

1945 to 1948 in the U.S.A. via the U.S.S.R.

1948 to 1952 in the U.S.S.R. (The first section of Brecht's work on political and dramatic theory)

1952 to 1955 in the U.S.S.R. via the U.S.S.R.

1955 to 1958 in the U.S.S.R. via the U.S.S.R.

1958 to 1960

1960 to 1962 in the U.S.S.R.

1962 to 1965 in the U.S.S.R.

1965 to 1968 in the U.S.S.R.

1918-19

1919-20

1920-21

1921-22

1922-23

1923-24

1924-25

1925-26

1926-27

1927-28

1928-29

1929-30

1930-31

1931-32

1932-33

1933-34

1898 Born on the 10th of February.

1918 Baal

1922 Dickicht

Mann ist Mann (Man equals Man)

1927 Mahagonny

1928 Die Dreigroschen Opera (The Threepenny Opera) , Music

Kurt Weill.

Married Helene Weigel.

1929 Leherstucke

Depression in Germany, political instability, seizure of power by Hitler and The National Socialists.

1930 Der Flug der Lindberghs

St. Joan of the Stockyards

Die Massnahme (The Expedient)

Die Mutter

1931 Die Rundkopfe und die Spitzkopfe

Kuhle Wampe

1933 He went into exile to escape the Nazis, to Denmark.

1935-38

Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches (Fear and Misery of

the third Reich)

Mother Courage

1939 He went to Sweden

Galileo

1940 He went to Finland

1941 He went to the U.S.A. via the U.S.S.R.

Der Gute Mensch von Sezuan (The Good Person of Szechwan)

Mr. Puntilla and his Servant Matti

1943 A scriptwriter on Fritz Lang's film Hangmen also Die

1945 Das Kaukasische Kreide Kreis (The Caucasian Chalk

Circle)

1947 Returned to Europe.

1951 Founding of the Berliner Ensemble.

1956 Died 14th August.

Although Man has always had religious rituals and festivals which were theatrical in format, the invention of Theatre has generally been attributed to the Ancient Greeks and this is backed up by the fact that the word 'Theatre' is derived from the Greek 'Theatron' meaning 'Seeing place'. It is not only the Greek derivation of its name that is still impressed upon this art form today, but the theories developed by the Greek, Aristotle about what, and how theatre should present, are still very influential. Indeed the rules and presumptions that Aristotle made for theatre have been influential on its form right throughout the centuries with even the technologically innovative advances of Cinema and Television bowing to their ruling. Within television, in fact, we find that it is not only Drama that has been influenced by Aristotle's ideas, but all television programmes.

Aristotle believed that the purpose of tragedy was psychological, not social. According to Aristotle tragedy should aim to bring about 'Katharsis', a cleansing of the emotions which would be achieved by the play evoking fear and pity in the spectators and consequently purging them of those feelings. To achieve this Aristotle laid great emphasis on plot; it was he who first insisted on the rule of thumb now taken for granted, that a plot should have a beginning, middle and end, and that it should proceed from one to the other in logical succession. He also professed that Art is an imitation of Reality.

Bertolt Brecht challenged the traditional theatre that still acted out Aristotle's ideals, and demanded a new type of theatre more appropriate to the modern world and the political and creative turmoil of the Germany of his day. For Germany of the 1920s and '30s, poised between the two world wars and still



3. Erwin Piscator

reeling from the effects of the October revolution, found itself also undergoing many artistic revolutions, including the Theatre of Piscator and The Agit Prop groups, Expressionism, The Bauhaus and the influence of the Russian Formalists, and the effect of the new technologies of the Gramophone, Radio and Sound Film. Within this new context Brecht found Aristotelian theatre too static to represent the rapidly changing world¹. Brecht felt that theatre's concern with imitating reality had resulted in the creation of illusions that were nothing but a mere, useless mimicry. He felt that reality should not be imitated but should be represented which would create a greater understanding of it. Consequently Brecht disapproved of the 'realistic' sets which admitted the viewers through an invisible 'fourth wall' and was critical also of the 'naturalistic' style of acting which meant the actors aim to persuade everyone, even themselves that they are the characters they are portraying and that they're undergoing the emotions entailed in the part. Brecht argued that a technique that is based on making the spectator believe the actors are the characters they're portraying is not suitable for disseminating truth. For it was truth that Brecht was chiefly concerned with, not a superficial imitation which would hide, as happens in real life when one is immersed in living, the social forces operational under the immediately visible surface. For it was social issues Brecht felt that drama should be dealing with, not psychological ones. The illusionistic nature of traditional theatre 'takes people away' from the concerns of their real lives and makes them 'live through' a story, it seduces them into identifying with a character so that they get emotionally involved and get 'carried away'. Brecht likened this result of illusion to hypnosis or drug-taking and felt that although the audience enjoyed the escape it offered them, it left them

emotionally exhausted and none the better equipped to deal with their lives.

It wasn't just the set and acting that produced a superficial reality, but the form of the plays. For they were built on a narrative structure (originating from Aristotle) that was also an unreal format, that only owed its acceptance as naturalistic to the long tradition that had conventionalised it and thus made it seem to people the natural way to represent things. As he says himself: " The Bourgeois Theatre's performances always aim at smoothing over contradictions, at creating false harmony, at idealisation. Conditions are reported as if they couldn't be otherwise; characters are individuals incapable by definition of being divided, cast in one block, manifesting themselves in the most various situations... if there is any development it is always steady, never by jerks; the developments always take place within a definite framework which cannot be broken through. None of this is like reality, so a realistic theatre must give it up."² This 'unreal' theatre allowed the spectators "...to swap a contradictory world for a consistent one, one that they scarcely know for one of which they can dream."³ and this he felt rendered them "...a cowed, credulous, hypnotised mass."⁴

For Brecht all this had a political significance which had to be addressed as he believed "...for Art to be "unpolitical" means only to ally itself with the ruling group."⁵ He felt that the illusions of theatre were distracting its audience from examining the real world and that instead " The illusion created by the theatre must be a partial one, in order that it may always be regarded as an illusion. Reality, however complete, has to be altered by being turned into art, so that it can be seen to be alterable and treated as such."⁶ However the

'unreal' realism that traditional theatre presents suited the Bourgeoisie because they required nothing from it but entertainment with high- cultural pretensions, and it suited the working class because it offered them some escapism to distract them from their pre- determined way of life. But Brecht wanted to offer them something more positive, he wanted Theatre to not just offer entertainment but to also educate and to project a picture of the world based on "...models of men's life together such as could help the spectator to understand his social environment and both rationally and emotionally to master it."⁷ Therefore in his theatre his aim was to "...hand the world over to their minds and hearts, for them to change as they think fit."⁸ this is why he was against illusion - it was deluding and distracting from his objectives and emotionally involved the spectators so much so that they were incapable of learning anything positive. By breaking illusion and presenting his audience with a more truthful representation of reality he hoped to give them a more critical standpoint from which to view society.

Another factor of the traditional theatre that he was concerned with breaking, was the concept of fate. He wanted to expose it as nothing but acceptance and reconciliation to circumstances. Brecht didn't offer his audience characters who's lives were dictated by a predestined fate because he didn't want the working class members of his audience to accept the 'fate' pushed on to them by the modern version of the ruling class - the Capitalising Bourgeoisie. In traditional theatre a characters' fate was decided by their temperament and so their actions were seen to be unavoidable as stemming out from the type of person they were. But Brecht wanted to show his characters as always changing not as static characters condemned to a fate because of their personality. He wanted to show up personality to be something formed and effected by social surroundings and not

something branded inescapably on a person from their birth. He wanted to depict both his characters and the world as being capable of change. In questioning and, in his own work, challenging, these long accepted mores of theatre, Brecht hoped to illuminate the fact that the dominant viewpoint was so because it was the viewpoint of the dominators, that there were other ways of viewing and representing things that could alter your way of seeing them and consequently your attitude towards them. With this in mind Brecht wanted to turn the modern scientific way of examining things onto the field of social relations for he felt that "...the sciences, for all their success in exploiting and dominating nature, have been stopped by the class which they brought to power - the bourgeoisie - from operating in another field where darkness still reigns, namely that of the relations which people have to one another during the exploiting and dominating process. This business on which all alike depended was performed without the new intellectual methods that made it possible ever illuminating the mutual relationships of the people who carried it out. The new approach to nature was not applied to society."⁹ But Brecht with his *Epic Theatre* which he often called the *Theatre of the scientific age* proposed to do just that.

The object of the performance is to make it easier to give an opinion on the incident. Its main purpose is that. The Epic theatre is a highly skilled theatre with complex contents and far-reaching social objectives. In setting up the street scene as a basic model for it we give it the clear social function and give the Epic theatre criteria by which to decide whether an incident is meaningful or not."¹⁰

With this as its example we see that the Epic theatre was clearly as a social commentary or report which has as its function the provision of sufficient information for decisions to be made and action to be planned. Consequently "the main subject

The concept of Epic Theatre was not new, Brecht tells us how close it was to old Asiatic theatre which had a similar expository character, and also that similar didactic tendencies are found in the Medieval mystery plays, in Classical Spanish theatre and in the theatre of the Jesuits. He also cites Elizabethan theatre as having employed techniques similar to those used in the Epic theatre.

To illustrate the concept of the Epic theatre Brecht gives the example of the street scene which he calls 'Natural Epic theatre'¹⁰ By the street scene he means the demonstration by a witness of a street accident, where the behaviour of driver or victim or both is re-enacted in such a way that bystanders are able to form an opinion about the accident. He describes the street scene as a model for the Epic theatre because it is "...a meaningful phenomenon with a clear social function that dominates all its elements. The performance's origins lie in an incident that can be judged one way or another, that may repeat itself in different forms and is not finished but is bound to have consequences so that this judgement has some significance. The object of the performance is to make it easier to give an opinion on the incident. Its means correspond to that. The Epic theatre is a highly skilled theatre with complex contents and far-reaching social objectives. In setting up the street scene as a basic model for it we pass on the clear social function and give the Epic theatre criteria by which to decide whether an incident is meaningful or not."¹¹

With this as an example we can see the Epic theatre more clearly as a social commentary or report which has as its function the provision of sufficient information for decisions to be made and action to be planned. Consequently "The main subject

GESCHICK TUN IST BEDEUTEND ALS FÜR
EINER MITLIEBT UND IN IHR FEHLER
MIT ODER IM BUCH MIT DEN AUGEN
IN VEREIN MIT ANDEREN LAUT SINGT.



4. "Der Flug der Lindberghs" at the Baden-Baden Music Festival 1929. Brecht is standing on the right.

...the artist
show the world
country its task
how it may be
regards its audience
motion through
of thinking, wanting
Brecht's consideration
including them in
great barrier
play. This further
audience having
consequently also
traditional theatre
...the reactions
different types

of the drama must be the relationships between one man and another as they exist today...Once I've found out what modes of behaviour are most useful to the human race I show them to people and underline them. I show them in parables : if you act this way the following will happen, but if you act like that then the opposite will take place. This isn't the same as committed art. At most paedagogics."¹²

Brecht took this idea of teaching through theatre even further in his series of *Lehrstuckes* or 'Learning plays', most of which were written with the idea in mind that the audience should participate. Examples of *Lehrstucke* are *Der Flug der Lindbergs*, which was written for radio, and *Die Massnahme* in which several workers choruses, 400 singers in total, took part, assisted by some professional actors who played the solo parts.

He contrasts the learning play with Aristotelian drama saying: "...the Aristotelian play is essentially static; its task is to show the world as it is. The learning play is essentially dynamic; its task is to show the world as it changes (and also how it may be changed.)"¹³ and he goes on to say that the former regards its audience as a mob who can only be reached through its emotion whereas Epic theatre treats its audience as a collection of thinking, reasoning individuals capable of making judgements. Brecht's consideration for his audience was also behind his including them in the performances an idea that broke down the usual barriers between those presenting and those watching a play. This further underlined his belief in the necessity of the audience having an active attitude towards productions and consequently also life, rather than the passivity that traditional theatre required and created.

Brecht contrasts the reactions of the audience to the two different types of theatre in the following passage:

BRECHT ON THEATRE: 1918-1932

DRAMATIC THEATRE

plot
implicates the spectator in a stage situation
wears down his capacity for action
provides him with sensations
experience
the spectator is involved in something
suggestion
instinctive feelings are preserved
the spectator is in the thick of it, shares the experience
the human being is taken for granted

he is unalterable
eyes on the finish
one scene makes another
growth
linear development
evolutionary determinism
man as a fixed point
thought determines being
feeling

EPIC THEATRE

narrative
turns the spectator into an observer,
but
arouses his capacity for action
forces him to take decisions
picture of the world
he is made to face something
argument
brought to the point of recognition
the spectator stands outside, studies

the human being is the object of the inquiry
he is alterable and able to alter
eyes on the course
each scene for itself
montage
in curves
jumps
man as a process
social being determines thought
reason

5. Dramatic Theatre vs. Epic Theatre

In Brecht's illustration techniques were an effective way to change the spectators' attitude to a play from its present state

" The Dramatic theatre's spectator says: Yes, I have felt like that too - Just like me - it's only natural - It'll never change - The suffering of this man appal me because they are inescapable - that's great art, it all seems the most obvious thing in the world - I weep when they weep, I laugh when they laugh. The Epic theatre's spectator says: I'd never have thought it - That's not the way - That's extraordinary, hardly believable - It's got to stop - The sufferings of this man appal me, because they are unnecessary - That's great art: nothing obvious in it - I laugh when they weep, I weep when they laugh." ¹⁴

To bring about this change of attitude Brecht employed what he called Alienation, or 'making strange' techniques, which he said were "...designed to free socially conditioned phenomena from that stamp of familiarity which protects them against our grasp today" ¹⁵ by which he meant that things which are familiar seem natural and are therefore taken for granted and not questioned and he was of the opinion that "When something seems 'the most obvious thing in the world' it means that any attempt to understand the world has been given up." ¹⁶ "Nobody can be a mathematician who takes it for granted that "Two plus two makes four"; nor is anybody one who fails to understand it. The man who first looked with astonishment at a swinging lantern and instead of taking it for granted found it highly remarkable that it should swing, and swing in that particular way rather than any other, was brought close to understanding the phenomenon by this observation, and so to mastering it. Nor must it simply be exclaimed that the attitude here proposed is all right for science but not for art. Why shouldn't art try, by its own means of course, to further the great social task of mastering life?" ¹⁷

To Brecht Alienation techniques were an effective way to change the spectators attitude to a play from its present state

BRECHT ON THEATRE: 1938-1947

'DER MESSINGKAUF': AN EDITORIAL NOTE

ACTOR: From your account it sounds as if Shakespeare added a fresh scene every day.

DRAMATURG: That's it. I mean, they were experimenting. They were experimenting just as Galileo was at that time experimenting in Florence and Bacon in London. And so it is as well to produce the plays in a spirit of experiment.

ACTOR: People think that's sacrilege.

DRAMATURG: If it weren't for sacrilege the plays wouldn't exist. (124/75.)

Or, on addressing the audience directly:

WORKER: I'm for realistic acting.

PHILOSOPHER: But it's also a reality that you are sitting in a theatre, and not with your eye glued to a keyhole. How can it be realistic to try and gloss that over? We want to demolish the fourth wall: I herewith announce our joint operation. In future please don't be bashful; just show us that you've arranged everything in the way best calculated to help us understand.

ACTOR: That's official, is it, that from now on we can look down at you and even talk to you?

PHILOSOPHER: Of course. Any time it furthers the demonstration.

ACTOR (*muttering*): So its back to asides, to 'Honoured Sirs, behold before you King Herod', and to the girls showing off their legs to the officers in the boxes . . .

PHILOSOPHER (*muttering*): The hardest advance of all: backwards to common sense. (127/47.)

Or a new qualification of Brecht's view of empathy:

ACTOR: Does getting rid of empathy mean getting rid of every emotional element?

PHILOSOPHER: No, no. Neither the public nor the actor must be stopped from taking part emotionally; the representation of emotions must not be hampered, nor must the actor's use of emotions be frustrated. Only one out of many possible sources of emotion needs to be left unused, or at least treated as a subsidiary source - empathy. (125/21.)

6. Extract from 'Der Messingkauf'

of "...general passive acceptance to a corresponding state of suspicious enquiry."¹⁸ and they would enable theatre to, at last, satisfy and challenge 'scientific man' and make it no longer a presumption that he "...hang his brains up in the cloakroom along with his coat"¹⁹ when he goes to see a play.

The objective of Alienation techniques was to prevent the audience from identifying with the characters and 'setting themselves in their place' which would stifle their reasoning faculties and consequently prevent them from being critical about the situations presented. Instead it aimed to place the characters opposite the audience where they could be seen objectively so that criticism of them is possible. This is why Brecht wanted the actors to act in such a way that would prevent the audience from empathising with their characters. This required that they refrain from the common practise of traditional theatre, that of 'hypnotising' themselves and the audience into believing that they are the character they're portraying, and that instead they would incorporate into their representation their own 'showing' and not allow themselves to become invisible or be 'raped' by their character. The idea is that a character should be imitated only as a means to illustrating the story, without the illusion that the actor is the other being created. To help them acquire this new attitude to acting Brecht recommended that the actors should memorise their own reactions to the characters' actions on their first reading of the play and keep these in mind in their later performance, particularly if their own attitude or actions would be different to that of their character. Also, he recommended that in rehearsals the actors would put prefixes to their lines, such as: "He stood up and exclaimed angrily..."²⁰ or "He smiled and said with forced nonchalance..."²¹. This would help the actors to maintain an attitude of detachment and remain aware that they



7. Brecht's own production of "Mann ist Mann" 1931.

... inside him." ... an example would give us of how to when to ... again the the actor playing Mary Kay's fear of death did so by whitening his face with make-up rather than allowing his acting to become influenced by a fear of death from within himself.

Brecht can infer a certain amount of criticism for these ideas, as people used to traditional theatre maintained that his use of alienation techniques resulted in an emotionless theatre. The same critics dismissed his advice as impractical because they failed to assess the equity the audience expected to feel. In answer to this Brecht argued: "It is a frequently recurring mistake to suppose that this - yes - kind of production simply does without all emotional effects; actually emotions are only clarified in it, standing clear of subconscious origins and sweeping nobody away." ... he felt that this led to a sort of liberation of emotion because "The alienation effect intervenes, not in the form of absence of emotion, but in the form of emotions which need not correspond to those of the character portrayed. We never worry the spectator any feel a sensation of

are 'quoting' a character. Similarly he recommended that stage directions be spoken out loud. The alienation, of the actors from their parts, that resulted from these exercises was to be memorised and used in the performances or alternatively the directions could be spoken during them by a prompter.

By these means the actor is kept apart from the emotions of his character and this is subsequently communicated to the audience preventing them from feeling sympathetic emotions. In place of the subjective portrayal the actors had to find more objective ways of communicating their characters: "...everything to do with the emotions has to be externalised; that is to say it must be developed into a gesture. The actor has to find a sensibly perceptible outward expression for his character's emotions, preferably some action that gives away what is going on inside him."²² An example Brecht gives us of this is when in *Man equals Man* the actor playing Galy Gay's fear of death did so by whitening his face with make-up rather than allowing his acting to become influenced by a fear of death from within himself.

Brecht came under a certain amount of criticism for these ideas, as people used to traditional theatre maintained that his use of alienation techniques resulted in an emotionless theatre. The same critics dismissed his actors as incompetent because they failed to arouse the empathy the audience expected to feel. In answer to this Brecht argued: " It is a frequently recurring mistake to suppose that this - epic - kind of production simply does without all emotional effects: actually emotions are only clarified in it, steering clear of subconscious origins and carrying nobody away."²³ He felt that this led to a sort of liberation of emotion because " The alienation effect intervenes, not in the form of absence of emotion, but in the form of emotions which need not correspond to those of the character portrayed. On seeing worry the spectator may feel a sensation of

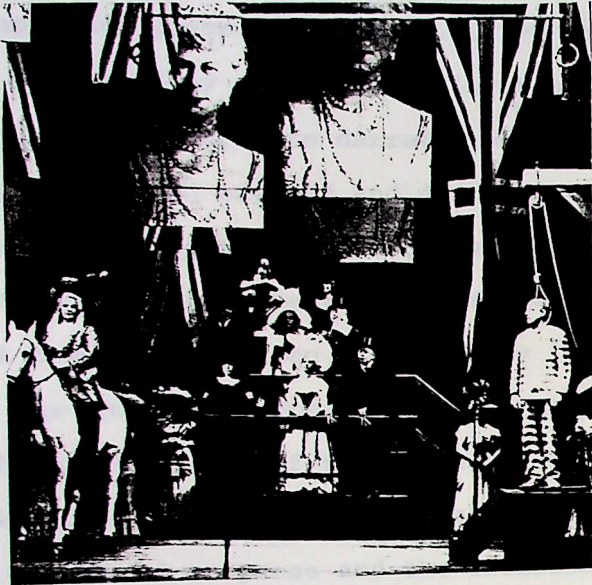


8. Half-high curtain and screens for
 "The Threepenny Opera" 1928-29

The set also had a role to play in alienating the audience. Brecht insisted that the stage be very brightly lit so as not to conceal, but rather emphasize that "...arrangements have been made to show something" He also insisted that the source of light be clearly visible in contrast to traditional theatre's efforts to make the lighting which was part of their scenery with illusion. In many productions he used a 'half high' curtain which allowed the audience to see the stage-hands changing scenes behind it. Traditional theatre's sets which used real furniture or illusionistic painted sets in order to imitate as closely as possible the appearance of real places were also rejected by Brecht who felt the set should, like the actors, illustrate and represent reality rather than reproduce it. With this in mind, Brecht was able to employ the innovations of his contemporary Piscator, and used film projections as part of the setting. These allowed the set itself to adopt an attitude to the events on the stage: "...by big screens revealing other

joy..." etc.²⁴ Consequently reason has the upper hand and issues cannot be blurred by too much emotional involvement with the protagonists. He sights the fascists as an example of people who have used the incitement of emotion for their own interests and therefore he rejects the belief of traditional theatre that emotions are universally human and timeless, and he insists instead that they are private and limited and "...always have a quite definite class basis; the form they take at any time is historical, restricted and limited in specific ways."²⁵In addition to their attitude to empathy the actors could employ the further alienation technique of addressing the audience directly during their performance, so breaking the usual illusion of an enclosed world upon the stage into which the audience is spying, and underlining the fact that the production is being presented to the audience for their examination.

The set also had a role to play in alienating the audience. Brecht insisted that the stage be very brightly lit so as not to conceal, but rather emphasise that "...arrangements have been made to show something"²⁶ He also insisted that the source of light be clearly visible in contrast to traditional theatre's efforts to hide the lighting which was part of their concern with illusion. In many productions he used a 'half high' curtain which allowed the audience to see the stage-hands changing scenes behind it. Traditional theatre's sets which used real furniture or illusionistic painted sets in order to imitate as closely as possible the appearance of real places were also rejected by Brecht who felt the set should, like the actors, illustrate and represent reality rather than reproduce it. With this in mind, Brecht was able to employ the innovations of his contemporary Piscator, and used film projections as part of the setting. These allowed the set itself to adopt an attitude to the events on the stage: "...by big screens recalling other



9. "The Threepenny Opera" as produced in 1968,
directed by a student of Brecht's, Peter Paditzsch.

Fig. 1. a trumpet, a drum, a clarinet and electric guitar that lit up. This was lowered from the stage beams and used to give the impression of musical directions, not that the songs sprang directly from the action, but to visibly indicate the shift to another artistic level. This lifting meant above the reality of the action.

This makes it clear that the music also was employed as an alienation effect to interrupt the action and often to comment on it also, or to take up a different attitude to it than that formerly illustrated. Like the lighting, the musicians were placed where they could be seen, so their performances could have their own little moments, independent contributions and at suitable parts in the play.

In the Threepenny Opera music was used as far as to make the subject itself into an alienation technique, when he plays the

simultaneous events elsewhere, by projecting documents which confirmed or contradicted what the characters said, by concrete and intelligible figures and sentences to support mimed transactions whose sense was unclear..."²⁷ Therefore the setting also had a role to play and film within it became "... a new gigantic actor that helped to narrate events."²⁸ but which simultaneously blocked empathy and destroyed illusion. Brecht and the set designer, Caspar Neher, used the set as part of their "...idea of toppling the theatre form its exalted pedestal and dragging it down to the milieu of the lowly 'dive'..."²⁹ Often in his plays, *The Threepenny Opera*, for example, the titles of the songs and brief summaries of the scenes to come, were projected on the backdrop of the stage. These served to interrupt the action and rid it of suspense and the illusion that it was a spontaneous, unrehearsed event, consequently underlining, yet again, that it was being presented for the audience's examination. In *Mother Courage* a musical emblem consisting of "... a trumpet, a drum, a flag and electric globes that lit up."³⁰ was lowered from the flies before each song to give the impression of musical insertions, not that the songs sprang directly from the action, and to visibly indicate the shift to another artistic level "... lifting music above the reality of the action "³¹

This makes it clear that the music also was employed as an alienation effect to interrupt the action and often to comment on it also, or to take up a different attitude to it than that formerly illustrated. Like the lighting, the musicians were placed where they could be seen, so their performances could become "...little concerts, independent contributions made at suitable parts in the play."³²

In *The Threepenny Opera* Brecht even goes so far as to make the content itself into an alienation technique, when he plays the

educative elements - voiced in the songs or in moralising scenes, against the more orthodox, entertaining scenes : "...the educative elements were so to speak built in : they were not an organic consequence of the whole but stood in contradiction to it; they broke up the flow of the play and its incidents, they prevented empathy, they acted as a cold douche for those whose sympathies were being involved...The play has a double nature. Instruction and entertainment conflict openly."³³ This is reflective of Brecht's episodic use of scenes so that each stands and speaks for itself and is not dependent on what comes before it, or leading to what will follow as is found in the linear development of traditional drama. This episodic structure was itself an alienation technique as it interrupted the action and allowed reflection and appraisal of it. These episodes, as seen in *The Threepenny Opera* , for example, could be played off one another so allowing their contrast to add another dimension of meaning. This is surely a technique that Brecht had learnt from the, then relatively new, medium of film and the pioneering montage techniques of his contemporary Eisenstein.

Brecht also carefully considered the effect of the language of the play on his audience being careful to ensure that it "...be free from parsonical sing-song and from all those cadences which lull the spectator so that the sense gets lost."³⁴ With this in mind he favoured the use of rhyme-less verse with irregular rhythms or everyday speech, which he could play off one another, as he did with the other elements.

It can be seen from all this, where each part of the production - set, music, acting, language - takes its turn in breaking into the representation to comment on it, that Brecht didn't agree with the ideal of the *Gesamkunstwerk* or 'Total work of art' where different elements harmonise together, which concerned many of

his contemporaneous countrymen. Of this idea he said: "...let us invite all the sister arts of the drama, not in order to create an 'integrated work of art' in which they all offer themselves up and are lost, but so that together with the drama they may further the common task in their different ways; and their relations with one another consist in this: that they lead to mutual alienation."³⁵ He goes on to say: "Once the content becomes, technically speaking, an independent component, to which text, music, and setting 'adopt attitudes'; once illusion is sacrificed to free discussion and once the spectator, instead of being enabled to have an experience, is forced as it were to cast his vote; then a change has been launched which goes far beyond formal matters and begins for the first time to affect the theatre's social function."

It must be noted that although Alienation techniques formed the backbone of Brecht's theories for Epic theatre in the 1930s and 40s, and are discussed in detail in his *Short Organum for the theatre* of 1948, his most important theoretical work, as his work developed he tended increasingly towards the abandonment of this technique employing empathy more and more often until in the Berliner Ensemble's publication *Theaterarbeit* in 1952, of which he was the editor and a major contributor, there is no mention of this technique at all.³⁶ This change of tactic was obviously a response to his audiences' continual empathy with his characters against his intentions. After responses to his 1949 production of *Mother Courage* he was forced to conclude: "Deep seated habits lead theatre audiences to pick up on the characters' more emotional utterances and forget all the rest."³⁷ As early as 1941, he had written in his diary: "It must never be forgotten that *non-Aristotelian theatre* is only one form of theatre; it furthers specific social aims and has no claims to monopoly as far as the theatre in general is concerned. I myself

can use both aristotelian and non-aristotelian theatre in certain productions."³⁸ His use of Aristotelian devices can be seen in his more traditional plays, for example, *Senora Carrar's rifles* and *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich*.

His loss of faith in this technique and consequent adoption of others as more effective in achieving his social objectives is appropriate to his insistence that means should be subordinate to ends and his despising any sign of 'machinery working for its own sake'. Unfortunately Bourgeois art is often overly concerned with technique and style with the result that Brecht's theories and techniques are discussed today, while his objectives and social commitments, which he was really concerned with, are treated as of secondary importance and glossed over as merely the vehicle on which these interesting techniques were hung.



10. "Die Mitter", the final scene of Theatre
Union's production, New York 1935.

- 11. 1935 p-77.
- 12. 1935 p-78.
- 13. 1935 p-79, 80-81.
- 14. 1935 p-80.
- 15. 1935 p-81.
- 16. 1935.
- 17. 1935 p-82.
- 18. 1935 p-83.
- 19. 1935 p-84.
- 20. 1935 p-85.
- 21. 1935 p-86.
- 22. 1935 p-87.
- 23. 1935 p-88.
- 24. 1935 p-89.
- 25. 1935 p-90.
- 26. 1935 p-91.

1. *History of the theatre* p:288.
2. *Brecht on theatre* p:277.
3. *Ibid* p:188, no.28.
4. *Ibid* p:188, no.29.
5. *Ibid* p:196, no.55.
6. *Ibid* p:219.
7. *Ibid* p:133.
8. *Ibid* p:185, no.22.
9. *Ibid* p:184, no.17.
10. *Ibid* p:121.
11. *Ibid* p:128.
12. *Ibid* p:67.
13. *Ibid* p:79.
14. *Ibid* p:70-1.
15. *Ibid* p:192, no.43.
16. *Ibid* p:71.
17. *Ibid* p:96.
18. *Ibid* p:192, no.44.
19. *Ibid* p:26.
20. *Ibid* p:136.
21. *Ibid*.
22. *Ibid* p:139.
23. *Ibid* p:58.
24. *Ibid* p:94.
25. *Ibid* p:145.
26. *Ibid* p:141.

27. Ibid p:71.
28. Ibid p:78.
29. *theatre* p:91.
30. *Brecht on theatre* p:216.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid p:217.
33. Ibid p:132.
34. Ibid p:193, no.47.
35. Ibid p:204, no.74.
36. Ibid p:246.
37. Ibid p:221.
38. Ibid p:135.

BRECHT AND CINEMA

In 1927 Brecht decided to turn to film-making, in collaboration with Hans Eisler, who had written music for many of his productions at that time, and the director Gerd Hanel, he wrote *Die Dreier* which was, unfortunately, Brecht's only experience of film work which he had had previous to this. It followed shortly after the disastrous attempt to mount *The Three Penny Opera* which had been rejected by many of the leading theatres in Germany. He then turned to the cinema as a means of reaching a wider audience and he wrote *Die Dreier* for the UFA company which was then the leading film company in Germany.

Later, in 1931, Brecht decided to return to film-making and he wrote *Die Dreier* which was his only film work. He was the only writer to have a living working film industry. However the only reason he was able to do this was that he was a socialist writer for *The New York Times* and this gave him a certain amount of freedom and his work was not subject to the same restrictions as the work of other writers. He was able to produce a number of films which were well received and his work was highly regarded by the public. He was also able to produce a number of films which were well received and his work was highly regarded by the public. He was also able to produce a number of films which were well received and his work was highly regarded by the public.

James Michener in his book *The American Scene* writes: "Brecht's work was a social effort to make use of the mass media in order to reach the masses. He was a living witness to the general revolution of the artistic activity of his country at that time which had been initiated by the German Expressionists and the production of his own work. He was a living witness to the general revolution of the artistic activity of his country at that time which had been initiated by the German Expressionists and the production of his own work. He was a living witness to the general revolution of the artistic activity of his country at that time which had been initiated by the German Expressionists and the production of his own work.

KUHLE WAMPE ODER WEM GEHORT DIE WELT ?

KUHLE WAMPE OR WHO DOES THE WORLD BELONG TO ?

In 1931 Brecht turned to film-making. In collaboration with Hans Eisler, who had written music for many of his productions at that time, and the director Slatan Dudow, he made *Kuhle Wampe*, which was, unfortunately, Brecht's only experience of film over which he had real control. It followed shortly after the disastrous attempt to screen *The Threepenny Opera* which resulted in a court case when Brecht found he had little control over the film company's interpretation of his script, which he lost.

Later, in exile, Brecht worked in Hollywood where he attempted to earn a living writing film scripts. However the only record he made of his film work there was that he was a script-writer for Fritz Lang's *Hangmen also die* in 1943. From this silence on his activity in film we can assume that the commercial restrictions on the medium meant he found the work unsatisfying and not worth mentioning. He did record the undertaking of some projects envisaging the adaptation of the methods of the parable plays to the hollywood genres, but sadly, these came to nothing.¹

James Pettifer in his essay *Against the stream - Kuhle Wampe*² deduces that Brecht turned to film in 1931 as an effort to avoid the general restrictions on left artistic activity in Germany at that time which had already resulted in police interference with the productions of his *Leherstukes Die Mutter* and *Die Massnahme*. Brecht had, all the same, great problems with censors before *Kuhle Wampe* was finally allowed to be shown. An interest in film was only to be expected from a man already so obviously influenced by the medium, and a branching out into that area was natural from someone so concerned with modernity and

experimentation. However Theatre remained his main interest as it had a greater cultural centrality than film at that time, a situation that has been reversed today.

Kuhle Wampe is structured into four independent, but interconnected parts, which are divided and introduced by self contained pieces of music, accompanied by pictures of the urban and rural environment of Berlin, where the film is set. The four parts deal with:

PART 1: The suicide of a youth which was based on a real incident which Slatan Dudow found in a newspaper. It shows the youth taking part in the bicycle 'race' of job searching, where so few jobs were contested for by many, and his return home unsuccessful to face the criticism of his father who thinks his son mustn't be looking hard enough for work as he has remained unemployed for seven months. The son, when alone, in an impassive emotionless way, removes his wrist-watch and jumps out the window to his death. This part of the film is concerned with addressing the terrible unemployment problems in Germany at the time.

Between 1929 and 1932 unemployment there rose from 13.2 per cent of the working population to 43.8 per cent. This coincided with reductions in unemployment benefits, as in January 1930, 80 per cent of the unemployed were drawing unemployment benefit but by December of that year only 57 per cent were, and the decree of the budget of that December projected for 1931, provided for a further considerable reduction in unemployment assistance.³

PART 2: A Court judgement on the family's failure to pay their mounting rent arrears which comes to the conclusion that "with a little goodwill" they could have done so, and therefore can only hold themselves responsible for their eviction. This is decreed by the court official 'In the name of the People'. The

family are forced to move in with the daughter's boyfriend who lives in a campsite called *Kuhle Wampe*, once intended as a holiday place but now full of people in similar predicaments to their own. There the daughter becomes pregnant and the young couple are pressurised into getting engaged. During their engagement party however the daughter breaks off the engagement and leaves with a girlfriend.

PART 3: This depicts the communal preparations for, and the subsequent event of, a Proletarian Athletics meeting, and is thoroughly political in character. About 4,000 worker-athletes participated in this section which recalls Brecht's *Leherstuckes*. The young couple meet at the event and are reunited, the girl has succeeded in getting an abortion with the help of her girlfriend.

PART 4: The journey home from the meeting, when a crowded S-Bahn carriage becomes the scene for an inter-class discussion, on the subject of the destruction of Brazilian coffee, in order to maintain prices, introduced by a businessman reading aloud from a newspaper article to his companion. Within this overall structure, each part itself is built up in an episodic way, with great use of montage techniques, for example, a cut to the young man's bicycle wheels spinning urgently on the road in his search for work, as his father accuses him of not looking hard enough for a job; or a series of 'baby' pictures, as the young couple walk to the bus-stop in the new awareness of their pregnancy - starting with pictures of children who they seem to pass on the way, and proceeding to an associated chain of shots including adds for *Nestle* and *Nivea*, which show the idealised image of motherhood that advertisements portray; children's shoes in shop displays; dolls and toys.

Like in his plays, Brecht uses titles and signs to anticipate the action of the film and comment on it, often ironically. For example, he opens the film with the title "One Unemployed Less" which is to be the comment of a woman on the suicide, later in the episode. This comment, it should be noted, is spoken directly to the camera as, on the stage, Brecht encouraged his actors to speak directly to the audience. Another woman's comment, also delivered in this manner, that the young man had had the best years of his life ahead of him serves subsequently as the rather ironic title of the next section of the film: "The Best Years of a Young Person's Life." Within the episodes, the use of signs is seen when in the apartment a shot of a framed saying, "Don't worry about tomorrow and its troubles, it's a joy to care about those we love" shown as if the young man is looking at it just before he gets up to jump out the window, and so seems to make an ironic comment on his suicide. In the campsite just prior to the engagement party of the young couple, who have reluctantly agreed to get married, a sign saying "Hearty Congratulations" seems, similarly, a sarcastic comment on how inappropriate many of those social platitudes are.

Brecht also embraces in *Kuhle Wampe* film's facility for recording documentary material, which he had already used in his stage settings. Here he uses it to show newspaper headlines, which supply the context of the unemployment problem at the start of the first part of the film, and also in the 'partition' pieces of film, when he presents us with actual workers' apartment buildings (framed in a dramatic way so as to communicate a feeling of confinement), the countryside around *Kuhle Wampe*, and the factories and scenes of industry of Berlin.

The third part of the film, that dealing with the Athletics meeting, has also a documentary feel to it, particularly from the modern viewpoint, as the mass meeting and

emphasis on solidarity, seem a peculiarity of Brecht's time. Within this part of the film we see an example of the *Agit Prop Theatre* which influenced Brecht. During the meeting *The Red Megaphone* group act out the eviction of a family, accompanied by banjos and drum playing, whistling, acrobatics and singing: "Red Megaphone, Megaphone of the masses, we'll tell you what oppresses you..."

Another song, the "Solidarity" song, which the youths sing at the meeting, and which reappears several times in the film during the third and fourth sections, has an important message to impart. During the depiction of the sports it says: "Learn to win, from the pennies of deprivation you have bought your boats..." and later: "...don't forget wherein lies our strength: Our Solidarity!" This song has the last word in the film, finishing with: "Forward! and don't forget our strength, Whether starving or fed, Forward! and don't forget our solidarity, Forward! and don't forget who's street is the street, Who's world is the world." Here we see where the alternative title to the film comes from, the provocative question "Who does the world belong to?"

Although the music is used here with a marching beat to add to the power and emotional strength of this song (though the chorus of the voices of 4,000 workers was enough to do that), music is often used within the film in the more independent way that Brecht aimed for in his theatre productions. The music in the 'partition' scenes is one example of this, and another is when the young couple go walking in the woods near *Kuhle Wampe*, and it almost seems a typical, idyllic love scene, accompanied by a song going "The game of the sexes begins anew every spring...", except that the music doesn't seem to be achieving quite the right tone and its discordance with the expected mood creates a 'tongue in cheek' attitude towards the scene.

As in his plays, this film does not forget the value of entertainment and it is entertaining even when it is at its most didactic. The final episode is an example of this, when in the S-Bahn carriage the discussion on coffee-burning lays bare the crazy injustice of the capitalist system through the sentence of one young woman: "There must be fewer goods than are needed or else there's no profit." and points out the necessity that those who don't like the world as it is, must change it. Despite the seriousness of these points and the fact that this incitement to change was the crux of the film, as it had also been that of Brecht's plays, they are communicated in this episode with wit and a careful orchestration of amusing incidents. A group of old women who take the discussion off in their own merry side track, and start discussing how best to make coffee, one woman insisting "You mustn't boil coffee or put it in a tin pot" in the midst the political discussion, is one example of this, another is a shot showing a small, well-dressed man thoroughly enjoying his own rhetoric as he monologues on the subject to a large, bald, muscle-headed man, who had obviously been chosen by the small man as the receptor of his argument, specifically for his silence and lack of opinion.

As in his plays Brecht also employs in the film social gestures or 'pregnant moments' for example, a brief exchange between the young couple when he says "Did you go?" and she says "It was too dirty. I don't want to destroy my life." From this brief exchange we deduce that she is pregnant and can also get an idea of Abortion in their society, and how dangerous it is in their social situation in particular. The matter of fact manner of her brother when he is committing suicide, in the first part of the film, also has the effect of a social gest. The censor of the film recognised this which lead Brecht to admire him greatly, of the incident he says: "Going out of the building, we did not hide

our esteem for the acute censor. He had penetrated far deeper into the substance of our artistic aims than our most well-wishing critics. He had read us a little lecture in realism. From the standpoint of the police."⁴ He goes on to record what the censor said of the suicide: "No-one disputes your right to portray a suicide. Suicides happen. Further, you can even show the suicide of an unemployed worker. That also happens, I see no reason to hush it up gentlemen. I do however object to the way you have depicted the suicide of your unemployed worker. It is not in the interest of the public which I have to defend. I'm sorry, but I must make an artistic objection....Yes, it will surprise you, but I object on the grounds that your portrayal does not seem to me human enough. You have not depicted a human being, but rather, let us admit it a type. Your unemployed worker is not a real individual, not a man of flesh and blood, different from all other men, with particular worries, particular pleasures, ultimately with a particular fate. He is very superficially portrayed, as artists pardon me this strong expression for the fact that *we learn too little about him*, but the consequences are of a *political* nature, and this forces me to protest against the release of your film. Your film has the tendency to present suicide as typical, as matter not of this or that (morbidly inclined) individual, but as the fate of a whole class! It is your opinion that society induces young men to commit suicide by refusing them the possibility to work. And you really do not bother to go on to indicate what advice should be given to the unemployed to bring about a change in this situation. No, gentlemen, you haven't behaved as artists, not in this case. You did not try to present a single, shocking case, something no-one could have objected to."⁵ In answer, Brecht made a speech in defence of the film in which it is obvious he was not too proud to lie about his artistic intentions, he records "I

strongly denied the accusations. I cited individual features we had given our young unemployed worker. For example, the fact that before he hurled himself from the window, he took his wrist-watch off. I claimed that this purely human feature alone had given us the inspiration for the entire scene. That we did in fact show other unemployed workers who did not commit suicide - to wit , 4,000 of them, for we had also filmed a large workers' sports club. I protested against the monstrous suggestion that we had not acted artistically, and hinted at the possibility of a press campaign. I was not ashamed to claim that my artistic reputation was at stake."⁶

However, the censor was not to be so easily convinced and Brecht records that, to the astonishment of their lawyers "...a regular artistic debate unfolded."⁷ during which "The censor emphasised the fact that we had lent the suicide act a decidedly demonstrative character. He used the expression "somewhat mechanical" and insisted "You must admit that your suicide avoids everything in the way of impulsiveness. The spectator hardly wants to stop him, so to speak, as should happen in an artistic, human, warm-hearted presentation. Good God, the actor behaves just as if he was showing how to peel cucumbers! " "⁸

This latter remark is an illustration of how effective Brecht's rejection of empathy was and the censors' objection to it underlines how this alienating effect was of political significance. Throughout the film this lack of portrayal of emotion is notable, especially when no emotional response to the young man's death and their later eviction, is seen from his family, contrary to what you would expect from more typical story-telling, both in Brecht's time and today.

Kuhle Wampe, therefore, is an example of how the Alienation technique, originally devised for the theatre, can be

successfully applied to film, with the additional exploitation of film's 'External' viewpoint.

FILM AS AN EPIC MEDIUM.

Walter Benjamin, in his essay, *Art in the age of mechanical reproduction*⁹, points out the epic characteristics of film. In his book *Understanding Brecht* Benjamin even uses film to describe the Epic Theatre: "Epic Theatre proceeds by fits and starts, in a manner comparable to the images on a film strip."¹⁰ All this is not very surprising, after all it is obvious that Brecht, alert and willing to learn from all happening around him, insistent on the importance of experimentation, and eager to find the most up to date and efficient way of dealing with the modern world, was greatly influenced by film and borrowed many ideas from it. One such influence was film's natural episodic structure which Brecht adapted for his plays, paying special attention to the effects his contemporary, Eisenstein, achieved from the use of editing and montage, as can be seen from Benjamin's continuing description of Epic Theatre, saying that its "...basic form is that of the forceful impact on one another of separate, sharply distinct situations in the play."

Similarly Brecht's use of signs, titling scenes and songs, seems reminiscent of the silent films. Also interesting is his use of film as documentation as part of the setting in his plays, this is not only a use of the medium itself, but also a borrowing of its easy exploitation of such means, for example, think of how often newspaper headlines are shown in films as part of their story-telling. This adoption of film within the set makes him seem just one step away from presenting the whole production, actors and all, on film.

The external viewpoint film offered, it being such a visual medium, excited Brecht because it therefore had such potential to present the more externalised representation of emotions that Brecht was aiming for with his alienation techniques. This potential seemed even greater in view of the fact that that it was such a new medium and seemed therefore free of the bourgeois, literary, introspective traditions. As he himself said: "The film provides - or could provide - useful insight into the details of human actions...Character is never used as a source of motivation; the inner life of the person never supplies the principal cause of the plot and seldom is its main result."¹¹

Walter Benjamin was interested in the way the camera removes the actor from a direct rapport with the audience, again an example of how the very medium can be interpreted as an alienation technique. He says: "The artistic performance of a stage actor is definitely presented to the public by the actor in person; that of the screen actor, however, is presented by a camera, with a two-fold consequence. The camera that presents the performance of the film actor to the public need not respect the performance as an integral whole. Guided by the camera-man the camera continually changes its position with respect to the performance. The sequence of positional views which the editor composes from the material supplied him constitutes the completed film. It comprises certain factors of movement which are in reality those of the camera, not to mention special camera angles, close-ups etc. Hence the performance of the actor is subjected to a series of optical tests. This is the first consequence of the fact that the actors performance is presented by means of a camera. Also, the film actor lacks the opportunity of the stage actor to adjust to the audience during his performance, since he does not present his performance to the audience in person. This permits the audience to take the

position of a critic, without experiencing any personal contact with the actor. The audience's identification with the actor is really an identification with the camera."¹²

Not only did film distance the audience from the characters it portrayed, but it also proved an alienating force holding the actors back from identifying too closely with their characters, again because of the very nature of the medium and the way that films are made from many different 'shootings': "The stage actor identifies himself with the character of his role. The film actor very often is denied this opportunity. His creation is by no means all of a piece; it is composed of many separate performances."¹³

Benjamin felt that the speed of changing images possible in film corresponded to the new speed and change of modern life and that this very speed was also an epic characteristic of film as "The spectator's process of association in view of these images is indeed interrupted by their constant, sudden change. This constitutes the shock effect of the film, which, like all shocks, should be cushioned by heightened presence of mind."¹⁴ which was exactly the sort of attention Brecht wanted from his Epic Theatre.

Brecht and Benjamin were in a good position to appreciate the special nature of film because it was still a relatively new form in their time. However, today, immersed as most people have been in cinema and the similar medium of television, all their lives, these forms have a different, less Epic effect on us.

The modern film-maker, Eoghan Harris, however, pointed out to me some 'Epic' effects that are still applicable, for example, the sheer size of the cinema image that creates 'larger than life' people; and the more effective point that cinema-going requires a certain effort, you must decide to go, get there, pay to get in, and then the atmosphere in which you watch it, in a

darkened room with no distractions, are all conducive to attentiveness and a critical attitude. Taking the illustration (facing page:10) where Brecht lists the characteristics of Aristotelian and Epic theatre respectively, Eoghan Harris found that the characteristics of Epic theatre could all be applied to cinematic films.

It is interesting to note also the reciprocal effect that Epic theatre had on film. In some cases in film "...the directors search for expressive means draws close to the principles that lay behind Bertolt Brecht's concern with creating an Epic theatre, as revealed in all his plays and productions. Openly displaying to the receiver of the film message the means by which the dramatic action has been structured does, in fact, tend to estrange him from any possibility of suggestion, revealing at every moment the presence of a dramatic fiction and a mediating instrument of communication. To gain this end, the cinema resorts to making the actor look straight into the camera lens (Bergman, Godard), inserting evidently documentary material (Brass, Godard, Straub...), a direct relation between actor and spectator (in the narrative form of an unseen voice, or in the more aggressive one of apparent dialogue), subtitles (Godard, Pasolini) ; but it can also resort to the well calculated use of the sequence shot¹⁵ choosing from among the various takes those that make clearer the constructive and compositional effort lying behind the many elements that go to make up the film."¹⁶

Peter Watkin's inclusion of the cameras in the picture in his film *Culloden* is also part of this same idea. Their inclusion not only acts as an alienation effect, but also calls into question the role and effect of cameras, journalists and film-makers, on an event such as this. The idea of including cameras and reporters in the depiction of a historical event influenced

RTE's commemorative production of the 1916 rising, transmitted in 1966.

Despite his acknowledgement of film's epic features, Eoghan Harris is of the opinion that the most 'Brechtian' productions today, are those few popular films that manage to incite social criticism while employing purely Aristotelian techniques. For it is the Aristotelian dramatic form that the mass audience has been brought up on, expects, enjoys and, consequently, insists on. To them Alienation effects and any distanciation are a 'turn off', for something that requires work is simply too much trouble. Our societal structure has increasingly delineated the divisions between work and leisure, so that anything perceived to be like work in leisure time will not be tolerated. Consequently, Eoghan Harris believes that a Brechtian approach today would focus on the cinema, which, with more independence than television, has access also to a mass audience, and where the means of production, although structured by capitalism, can be used to subvert capitalism's power through the traditional, still popular, emotive and largely formulaised story-lines.

Colin Mc Cabe examines this question in his essay *Realism and the cinema: notes on some Brechtian theses*¹⁷ He describes, as Brecht did, the traditional and popular, realist approach as a "...heavily 'closed' discourse which fixes the subject in a point of view from which everything becomes obvious " but he maintains that if the subject matter is in contradiction with contemporary ideological discourses even this traditional approach can have a progressive effect.

The different approach of two film-makers to the question of public consciousness raising on the controversial topic of Nuclear war, is interesting in this context. Both films were made for television, which makes them even more interesting from my point of view. The two films are *The War Game* made in England in

1965 and directed by, the aforementioned, Peter Watkins, and *The Day After*, 1983 an American production directed by Nicholas Meyer.

Peter Watkins was of the opinion that "...there are as many possible forms of making film as there are blades of grass. But the media still clings virtuously to one form, the theatrical mode"¹⁸ which originates from Aristotle. As a reaction against this *The War Game* is executed in a documentary, *Cinema-Verite* style incorporating interviews, both real and scripted, and a news-reel-like commentary which is delivered by experienced BBC newsreaders. There is no conventional or theatrical story-line, although the material is presented in chronological order. Similarly, there is no conventional delineation of individual characters. Consequently, although the film is full of human drama, there is no melodrama. The film was based on facts and well researched scientific calculation so that it has a certain authenticity although it is a dramatisation and evaluation of events in Britain in a hypothetical future time.

In contrast to this Nicholas Meyer's film *The Day After* was firmly rooted in the conventions of commercial American television programmes. The first half of the film was devoted to establishing the generally likeable set of characters with all the appearances of conventional family drama, including adolescents in love and everyone's little problems, encouraging the viewer to identify with the characters. So, for the first half of the film you had a typically commercial set-up promoting the myth of the American family that prime-time viewers would feel comfortable with. When the disaster did appear, it was dealt with in the usual manner of a disaster movie, picturing the noble family struggling together against the horrifying odds.

So, although both film-makers were concerned with the same subject matter, they dealt with it in very different ways. The

reception of the two films is an illustration of the effectiveness of their different approaches.

The more experimental and innovative *The War Game* was so effective that its showing on television was banned (and so, in a way its effectiveness was ineffective). It illustrated too well how close is the possibility of Nuclear war, and illustrated the inadequacy of Home Office policy to handle such a war, if it should arise. After much debate and controversy the film was, however, finally released to the cinema-going public by the British Film Institute.

There was much controversy surrounding the showing of *The Day After* also, but this did not result in its being banned and instead acted as an advertisement for the film, with the result that it had an audience of 100 million on its first night of broadcast.

However, subsequent research has shown that the film somehow managed to have very little effect. Nine months after the film, Ronald Reagan, whose commitment to Nuclear Armament has always been clear, was as popular as he had been beforehand. In 1983 *Time* magazine reported on a poll, taken in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which indicated that the film had done little to change peoples' opinions on foreign defence policy: 58% of those polled still supported American defence policies, and 5% of those polled still felt that they could survive a nuclear war, as opposed to 7% before the broadcast. The author of the essay *Nuclear Consciousness on Television*¹⁹, James M. Welsh, the source of these figures, comes to the following conclusion: "Perhaps, therefore, *The Day After*, was ultimately regarded as merely dispensable entertainment, like almost all of what is usually seen on American Television during Prime Time. The audience is simply not conditioned to take such programming seriously."²⁰ These illustrations imply that neither approach was

adequate to the important educative task in question. It is obvious therefore that a different approach is necessary, and this is the subject of the next chapter.

1. This p.177.
2. This p.178.
3. This p.179.
4. This p.180.
5. This p.181.
6. This p.182.
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NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. *Screen Summer 1974* p:5.
2. *Ibid* p:49.
3. *Ibid* p:66.
4. *Ibid* p:49.
5. *Ibid* p:46.
6. *Ibid*.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid* p:47.
9. *Illuminations*.
10. *Understanding Brecht VII*, p:21.
11. *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* p:248.
12. *Ibid* p:230.
13. *Ibid* p:232.
14. *Ibid* p:240.
15. "...the sequence shot...meaning the use of a single shot, whether still or moving, without cutting, for the entire duration of a section or scene of a film" from, p:220, *Realism and the Cinema*, further described as "inherently more realistic" or as "promoting more realism".
16. *Realism and the Cinema* p:223.
17. *Screen Summer 1974*.
18. *Nuclear consciousness on television, Transmissions* p:178.
19. *Transmissions*.
20. *Ibid* p:182

BRECHT AND TELEVISION

It may be said that the successful efforts of
The Day After that nothing presented in the usual conventions of
television would be available or not be taken seriously. Fair
enough. In this case the day after reacted against the usual
conventions of television storytelling, and drew from rewarded
conventions instead to present his material with subtlety. He
didn't want his film to be entertainment, he meant it to be
educational. But it was not generally so, and consequently had to
place its commercial television and still hasn't been shown there.
Does this mean then that television is not capable of handling
real issues, and only goes there to create entertainment, taking
them solely as starting points for the usual treatment of
dramatic conflict or debate and discussion. All perhaps and
included so as to be as nearly removed as possible. This is
the opinion of John Hille, who describes television as "...a
medium of entertainment spiced with information." Brian
Kempster is also critical of the medium in this respect,
maintaining that it's concerned with "...distracting people from
their affairs with shows and distractions by diverting their
attention into a show". This objection with, and slavery to,
entertainment seems to be part of the very nature of television,
but I feel that this is largely determined by the medium's
subordination to commercial aims, which requires that it attract
the largest possible audience of all times for which the
sublime goal of entertainment is employed. I do not, however,
wish to give the impression that I would have television neglect
its ability to entertain, great and important again, and again,
in his theories for theatre. His beneficial materialism is in
entertainment, and this was always a consideration of his when
writing plays. It should not be forgotten however, so that
information is not treated as entertainment, it may be

It may be deduced from the rather unsuccessful efforts of *The Day After* that nothing presented in the normal conventions of television proves credible or can be taken seriously. Peter Watkins, in his *The War Game*, reacted against the normal conventions of television story-telling, and drew from newsreel conventions instead to present his material with authenticity. He didn't mean his film to be entertainment, he meant it to be didactic. But it was too powerfully so, and consequently had no place on commercial television and still hasn't been shown there. Does this mean then that television is not capable of handling real issues, and only uses them to create entertainment, taking them merely as starting points for the usual enactment of dramatic conflict or debate and discussion all packaged and concluded so as to be as easily consumed as possible? This is the opinion of John Ellis, who describes television as "...a source of entertainment spiced with information."¹ Brian Groombridge² is also critical of the medium in this respect maintaining that it's concerned with "...distracting people from what matters with shows and distracting us by distorting what matters into a show"³ This obsession with, and slavery to, entertainment seems to be part of the very nature of television, but I feel that this is largely determined by the medium's subordination to commercial usage, which requires that it attract the largest possible audience at all times for which the seductive power of entertainment is employed. I do not, however, wish to give the impression that I would have television neglect its ability to entertain, Brecht has emphasised again, and again, in his theories for theatre, how beneficial entertainment is to instruction, and this was always a consideration of his when writing plays. A balance must be maintained however, so that information is not simply used as entertainment, it may be

communicated in an entertaining manner, but it must be prevented from becoming subordinated to it and received only as such, as happens too frequently on television today.

If television is to be adequate to important social issues, such as the nuclear one, it is obvious that its usage and perception must be changed. A Brechtian critique of its conventions is one way of starting that change. However, we must bear in mind the lesson of Peter Watkins, who's film was too revolutionary with the result that it never achieved the broadcasting it had been made for. Consequently attempts at changing television mustn't change too much, too soon, or they may never get an airing. Brecht's recapitulation on the alienation techniques illustrates his acknowledgement of the audiences limited tolerance of innovation. What I propose however is a careful reapplication of the alienation technique to television with the aim of changing how people perceive and accept what the medium gives them, in the hope that they, themselves, will start questioning it and wanting it to change. I dare to presume that this reapplication of the technique will be more easily acceptable this time round, because it will be directed towards alienating people from the actual processes of television production rather than the more sensitive area of the portrayal of emotion and its subsequent evocation in the audience.

By these means the observatory, critical attitude that Brecht aimed to produce in his theatre audiences, would be encouraged in the modern television audience and serve to reduce their vulnerability to the suggestions of advertising and enable them to see clearly how useless and, therefore, unacceptable is the repetitive, malformed picture of life that television drama and "soaps" gives them. This attitude could teach them also, to not so innocently accept the contents of news broadcasts and the

descriptions of documentaries, as a clear unaltered view of the world. Programmes that shook people out of their consuming passivity and showed them the validity of a more observatory, critical attitude would revolutionise television and reopen its potential usefulness as a medium of true communication with an educative, creative and positive role to play in society.

Brecht was concerned with liberating man from a kind of slavery which subjected his body and labour to the interests of another, but today "...technology, in the hands of an elitest culture transferred him to a kind of slavery where his mind was subjected to the interests of another.."4 This sinister 'slavery of the mind' is what I believe a Brechtian approach should, and can, approach today. The fact of technology's control by an elite must be communicated, via the technology itself, to the mindless, formless mass that it has created. If the familiar conventions and structures of the medium, that allow, and conceal, this manipulation, can be 'made strange' and therefore brought into a questioning spotlight, then perhaps they can be changed for the better.

It is with all this in mind that we examine the concept of Television as an Epic medium.

TELEVISION AS AN EPIC MEDIUM.

Has Television, like its older sibling film, any intrinsic, Epic characteristics ? Television's small screen, flatter image and its domestic situation, full of distractions, contribute to a more casual attitude towards the medium, along with its appearance of being 'on tap', in an apparently, never ending supply. These all result in it being not very highly valued, with the consequence that it conducts a lower level of conversation than cinema and deals with things in a more trivial,

trivialising manner. Consequently television does seem to have fewer 'epic' characteristics.

One tactic of television, that is similar to Epic Theatre however, is that of having people address the audience directly, albeit through the camera. However, direct address on television is not something just anyone can employ, and it is very rarely seen on any of television's forms of drama, which are too Aristotelian and 'enclosed' to allow for such a cracking of the veneer of their illusory fiction. The privileged few, who may employ this tactic, are those who have a clear informative or didactic function: news-readers, weather forecasters, experts in programmes and commercials, or figures of public authority such as heads of government, or the church. The only other people who may address the camera directly are the television professionals who, as continuity staff, show hosts or interviewers, mediate and order television's content for the audience. Consequently, the direct address that is used in Brecht's theatre, and occasionally in cinema, as an 'epic' feature to break illusion and underline the importance of a message, is used in television primarily only in the latter case, and tends rather to be used to add to the 'privileged few's authority and power over the audience, which is largely an illusion in itself, and is not always to the advantage of the audience, as it makes them subordinate to, and controlled by, the message speakers.

ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION.

Another feature that makes television appear an even less likely candidate for the airing of Brechtian views is the overriding control capitalist economics have on its format. The great expense of the medium has led to it selling itself to commercial interests, with the result that programmes are not

only dependent on advertisers for their funding, but are also answerable to them in their content. Their role appears increasingly to be the enticement of the audience so that they will watch the advertisements. The Australian critic, Humphrey McQueen even goes so far to say that "...commercial mass media are not news and features backed up by advertising; *on the contrary*, the commercial mass media are advertisements which carry news, features and entertainment in order to capture audiences for the advertisers...It is a complete mistake to analyse the relationship between media and advertising by supposing that the media's prime function is to sell advertised products to audiences. On the contrary, the media's job is to sell audiences to advertisers.⁵

Television's format certainly seems to be designed to show- case the commercial, its structure being made up of short programmes sandwiched in between, and interrupted by, advertisements. Indeed, the line between programmes and advertisements seems to be increasingly blurred, for example, all the travel programmes, which are effectively commercials to encourage people to take foreign holidays, despite the feeble gesture of omitting the actual names of specific travel companies. Another blurring of the divisions is the orchestration of commercials and programmes which can make the programme appear a mere back-up to the message of the ads, for example, the placing of an ad for Italian pasta and sauces in the break of a film set in Italy, or the placement of Air-companies' ads in the breaks of the travel programmes. Indeed, many of the life-styles 'sold' in television drama, the imported American 'soaps' being a prime example, are appropriate to the consumerist messages of the commercials. Of the more 'down to earth' working class 'soaps' such as *Coronation street* or *Eastenders* it has been said, that the "...ads recall the gloomy soap characters from their

distresses and prescribe for them the cure which television itself has devised for our woes - the contentment of consumerism.⁶

An alarming example of the power of advertising over the content of programmes is the trouble Jack Dowling had with his programme *Home Truths* which started broadcasting on RTE in September 1967.

HOME TRUTHS ON ADVERTISING

Home Truths objectives were:

- " 1. To provide a family magazine for viewers whose incomes (per head of household) is #13-10-0 or lower. This will take account of family multiple incomes of the estimated national average of 1.75 of the basic head of family income: #23-12-6.
2. To entertain as large a section of the community as possible.
3. To promote standards of family and personal health and hygiene.
4. To inform viewers of their rights in law and custom and their opportunities of availing of voluntary and private means of improving their standards of living.
5. To help viewers in the above income groups to use their incomes rationally and get the best possible value.
6. To promote an interest in a varied and pleasant diet of well-cooked food.
7. To discover and investigate any malpractices in administration or commercial practice which have a direct bearing on the foregoing and to right them as far as fair comment and publicity permit."⁷

It can be seen from these objectives that the programme had social objectives that would surely have had the approval of Brecht. Specifically directed towards low-income families it aimed to provide them with consumer advice with which to combat the biased, non-stop flow of 'Buy' messages, from all sides in this, our consumerist society, but especially from television: "It was...a working-class programme for working-class households and families - and partisans on their behalf to the extent that they were underprivileged and imposed upon by business, Government, administrators and, regrettably, the 'mass' media."^e

Specific issues with which the programme dealt are necessary illustrations here. One programme followed the cost of Mackerel from the moment of its catch to its arrival on the household table, uncovering a wholesale retail profit of 280%. Another series of programmes dealt with pharmaceutical preparations, particularly cosmetics, and exposed their excessive profits and claims. A further investigation examined just how 'free' were the gifts offered by various products.

The programme was, not very surprisingly, not too popular with the business community, and was constantly being threatened with civil action and high-court orders from various companies whose shady dealings had been exposed. However, its greatest trouble came from within the television station itself, starting with the Advertising Sales Manager, who complained that the programme was adversely effecting advertising, resulting in a loss of revenue for the station. Subsequently, the Director General and the Controller also voiced their disapproval. As a result of this growing disapproval, Jack Dowling was advised to take a holiday, as it seemed that he might be nervously exhausted by the pressures of production, and a break would give him an opportunity to reflect on the policy of the programme. On his return, however, his direction of the programme continued to

displease the Authorities, who insisted that the station could not afford the exposure of truth that it was transmitting, and that they had a duty to their advertisers, and had been receiving complaints from the Advertisers Advisory Council. A meeting was called with the aim of changing the policy of *Home Truths*, at which it was decided that a script of the programme should be sent to the Advertising Sales Department a week in advance of each programme, to enable them to adjust the advertising on the night of broadcast so as to avoid the embarrassment of, for example, the placement of cigarette ads just after a critic item on smoking by a medical representative of the Department of Health. The summing up of the meeting by the controller was to the effect that: "1. There was a moral objection to Jack Dowling's conduct of the programme - one could not accept advertising and then 'slay' the advertisers.

"2. That he would have to 'gut' Home Truths. The expression was his."⁹

Jack Dowling refused to part from his brief, and asked to be relieved as Producer of the programme, which he was immediately granted. In answer to subsequent unrest among the station's union, the Advertising Sales Manager wrote a letter to the Controller in which he says: "...the Sales Division has no desire to be involved with Programme Content, but on the other hand, advertisements represent more than two thirds of our income and programme producers have a responsibility to keep this Division informed of items likely to effect the sales effort. This is almost exclusively to ensure that the placement of advertisements is not a source of embarrassment either to RTE of and advertiser."¹⁰

This episode is a perfect example of the domination of advertising within television, and how, consequently it has an

unrivalled position from which to manipulate the television viewer, it being invited into their sitting-rooms to play in their unguarded leisure time. Regrettably advertising has the greatest adverse effect on the low-income families that *Home Truths* had hoped to help because it continually presents them with pictures of life in which affluence and the idea that its achievement is desirable, is the norm, even though they, themselves, are living a very different sort of reality. With this in mind, can we agree with the American Federal Communications Commissioner's description of television as:

" - the wealth of the poor, - the privilege of the under-privileged and the executive club of the excluded masses."¹¹ ? A further indicator of the commercial bias of television is its habit of regarding its audience as consumers and as a market who will 'buy' or not 'buy' their programmes by using the on and off switch on their set. As the programme considers the public as a market, it aims to reach as large a market as possible, so as to increase the advertising revenue, therefore programming is dictated by the lowest common denominator of cultural awareness so as to be acceptable to the largest number of 'consumers'. These considerations result in television being run by the techniques of business management with little regard to cultural or true communicatory considerations. Similar in effect is the medium's belief that it is communicating with the 'masses' on which Raymond Williams was of the opinion "The whole notion of the 'masses'...was an unconscious conspiracy on the part of manipulative elites. They were an invention that permitted the transmission of control ideas in a one way traffic. Often television and radio as they are actually used, *prevent* communications. Potentially, they *are* communication."¹²

How has such a potentially valuable medium been allowed to become subordinated to the role of a manipulatory tool which can

be easily bought by big businesses? Even if the opportunity to advertise was available equally to small and big businesses alike, it might have some redeeming feature, but prime-time advertising slots on RTE are auctioned with the result that the richest companies can buy the best opportunities to further increase their profits and consequently, further dominate the market, at the expense of the smaller entrepreneur. Many Advertisements are entertaining and people can enjoy watching them, often they are better made than the programmes they are featured alongside, if only the talent dedicated to selling goods in this manner could be applied to making programmes which would be of more general benefit. It must be acknowledged that:

"Everything that entertains, educates. If it is entertaining, the worst canned rubbish or the most insidious commercial will educate and form the mind of the viewer. In an environment increasingly influenced by television, it seemed likely that few would escape this mind-forming effect."¹³ and the very worrying thing is, that what television is teaching us through its programming at the present time, is an absorption in trivia and a consumerist attitude. With this in mind, can we let television continue in this way, perhaps with the result that society will amuse itself to cultural death, to rephrase the rather melodramatic, but perhaps true, title of Neil Postman's book about the medium.¹⁴?

Television's large access to the population, and an increasingly international one at that, means it cannot, and should not, be allowed to proceed in its present irresponsible manner. More time is spent watching television than any other activity apart from work or sleep, no other spare time activity rivals it.¹⁵

It is today's true mass medium, the question that must be asked is, is it being true to the interests of its audience, or

is it manipulating them ? Is it true that "The ideas and images now being transmitted 'in the air' serve the political and economical interests of the communications industry rather than the interests of the public."¹⁶ ?

The example of *Home Truths* has already answered these questions. Len Masterman is of the opinion in his *Teaching the Media* that Media education is vital because of the uncritical acceptance of the media, by the majority of the population, as an unbiased information and entertainment source, which allows their manipulation by the message inseminators, both broadcasters and advertisers, and poses also a dangerous threat to democracy: "In a world in which images are fast becoming of greater significance than policies, in which slogans often count for more than rational argument, and in which we will all make some of our most important democratic decisions on the basis of media evidence, media education is both essential to the exercising of our democratic rights and a necessary safeguard against the worst excesses of media manipulation for political purposes."¹⁷ Media education is necessary to change television viewers' attitudes from the "...general passive acceptance to a corresponding state of suspicious inquiry."¹⁸ that Brecht here spoke of in regards to his theatre audiences. Len Masterman gives in his book many exercises in media education for use in schools, but I feel that this is something that should be addressed by the medium itself.

The first aim of media education must be to challenge the myth that television is a 'window on the world'. One of the functions of television, that most experts on the subject can agree on, is to provide information. People depend on television for News coverage. The television news, backed up by the similar coverage by other media, is the only picture of the world, outside of their own lives, that people have available to them. Whether this means that it is a 'window on the world', with the

implied transparency of that term, a truly objective view, is another question, and one that news-watchers should be aware of. "As Enzensberger pointed out many years ago. "There is no such thing as unmanipulated writing, film, or broadcasting." Our democracy would be a great deal healthier if media professionals openly acknowledged that, if the public understood it, and if we all acted upon it. At a stroke this would reduce the power of the media to project their representations as objective evidence, produce less mystificatory and more illuminating journalism, and give audiences a more realist understanding of the media's capabilities and limitations."¹⁹

The medium's insistence on its own objectivity is seen by some to be intentionally mystificatory: "Since one of the principal functions of television is to convey the dominant ideology of society, the impression of immediacy or lack of intervention is important. What appears to be immediate is less likely to be questioned."²⁰ and this has an adverse effect on the medium's potential for communication: "The notion of the middle ground and the myth of balanced journalism together neutralised the medium and transformed its potential for analysis and independence into a one-way street of communication. It was not modeled on a two way communications system but was rather a conduit for programming. Thus, the very definition of television as a 'communications' technology comes up against the fact that the viewer is a passive receiver unable to communicate, interact and fashion programming."²¹ This quote's criticism of television is similar to Brecht's criticisms of Radio in his essay *The radio as an Apparatus of Communication*²² when he said "...Radio is one-sided when it should be two-. It is purely an apparatus for distribution, for mere sharing out. So here is a positive suggestion: change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible

We suggest that the function performed by the television medium in its bardic role can be summarized as follows:

- 1 To *articulate* the main lines of the established cultural consensus about the nature of reality (and therefore the reality of nature).
- 2 To *implicate* the individual members of the culture into its dominant value-systems, by exchanging a status-enhancing message for the endorsement of that message's underlying ideology (as articulated in its mythology).
- 3 To *celebrate*, explain, interpret and justify the doings of the culture's individual representatives in the world out-there; using the mythology of individuality to claw back such individuals from any mere eccentricity to a position of socio-centrality.
- 4 To *assure* the culture at large of its practical adequacy in the world by affirming and confirming its ideologies/mythologies in active engagement with the practical and potentially unpredictable world.
- 5 To *expose*, conversely, any practical inadequacies in the culture's sense of itself which might result from changed conditions in the world out-there, or from pressure within the culture for a reorientation in favour of a new ideological stance.
- 6 To *convince* the audience that their status and identity as individuals is guaranteed by the culture as a whole.
- 7 To *transmit* by these means a sense of cultural membership (security and involvement).

To re-affirm the conventions which present only one viewpoint on reality.

Its ability to communicate an ideology which celebrates and maintains the status quo beneficial to the dominant class.

by offering them a cultural 'identity' which will fit one and all alike

primarily

only a passive, dependant involvement.

communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as to transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him."²³

Sadly, Brecht's criticisms of radio apply to the television service we receive today, with audience participation being relegated to such feeble gestures as reading some letters out on air as in *Mailbag* or, too occasionally, allowing 'phone-ins'. In general, it seems that television functions with "...On the one side...the broadcasters with their professional ideologies, occupational routines and self-protecting mythologies, who have been socialised into a profession within given socio-economic systems. These professionals select, process and present the message. On the other side, there are individuals who make up the non-participating audiences and who receive the messages in relative isolation. It is seen by many as an elitist, literary set-up where a small group of educated, articulate people who more or less share the same codes of the dominant culture - encode messages for consumption by others who have different codes...generally the receiver will not be in a position to recognise all the professional rules and practices."²⁴

The illustration opposite examines *The Bardic Functions of Television*, as described by Fiske and Hartley in their book *Reading Television*, and translates the careful language in which they have couched these functions into a phraseology that is more illustrative of the possibly propagandaist, certainly controlling, role that these functions have, for: "The Bardic mediator tends to articulate the negotiated central concerns of its culture, with only limited and often over-mediated references to the ideologies, beliefs, habits of thought and definitions of the situation which obtain in groups which are for one reason or

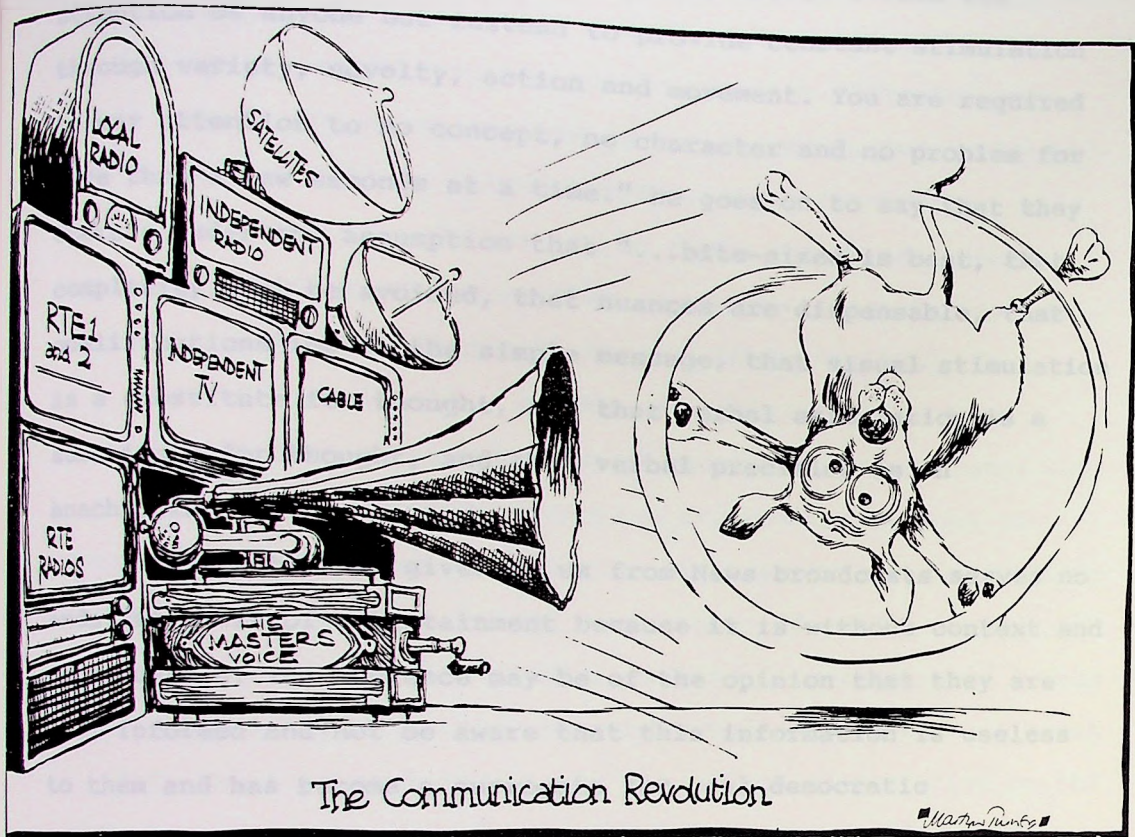
another peripheral. Since one of the characteristics of western culture is that the societies concerned are class-divided, television responds with a predominance of messages which propagate and represent the dominant class ideology."²⁵

The understanding of the biased picture of the world that television is presenting, is kept out of the grasp of the audience by the veneer of professionalism that lends the medium authority and authenticity. Professionalism is part of the mediating process of television that alters the view of the world it presents. The professional ordering and control of content effects its form and consequently its meaning also. It was noted earlier how only a select few are granted the privilege of addressing the audience directly. The authority of these elites is increased by this privilege. This advantage means that when other people appear on television their input is mediated by the privileged professionals. In interviews, guests to the medium are controlled through the questions they are asked, or not asked, and in discussions a chairperson effectively mediates guests' input. The effect of direct address is not apparent to the audience, but if, for example, it was shown that a newscaster is in actuality reading an auto-cue placed over the camera, the authority and trust the news is usually imbued with would be shaken, as through this insight it would be more apparent that the news has been collected, selected and scripted and that this is the cast it has been given by the news-cast-er.

Due to the authority of news bulletins they are particularly needful of attention from anyone interested in redressing the inequalities of information control in television.

News bulletins are given importance on television as can be seen from their regular and frequent prime-time airing. They start and end in the same manner as all other programmes however, with their own signature tune and 'selling' graphics, like that of the RTE news for example, which features the globe zooming into view, reduced for us to screen size and attractively coloured, like the picture of it we are about to receive.

News bulletins are interrupted by commercial breaks, their importance does not excuse them this, and viewers are offered the latest news on consumer fashion alongside that of world affairs. In a long bulletin we are offered 'trailers' of what is to be covered after the break, to entice us to continue watching. The News often ends with a light-hearted, good-news, sport or novelty item which acts as an enticement at the end of the 'heavier' news features, this also serves to 'round off' the bulletin, the sweet reward that follows the medicine. The length of News items varies from six seconds to three minutes, is this sufficient time to provide adequate information on an issue of importance, or must we conclude that in the news "...we are presented ...with fragmented news...news without context, without consequences, without value, and therefore without essential seriousness, that is to say, news as pure entertainment."²⁶ ? In this way the news becomes "...fact processed into a marketable commodity."²⁷ and it seems that even information is being 'sold' to us, so that we can be 'sold' to the advertisers. Perhaps, then, the only difference between the news and other programming is that the news bases its fictions on fact. "Items in a news broadcast (are) orchestrated for mood and variety like a series of revue sketches, complete with tantalising trailers before the commercial break...Is it soap opera or is it life..." ?²⁸. Robert Mac Neil, the editor of *The Mac Neil - Lehrer News Hour* a News programme which tried to address world news in a manner more appropriate to its



12. Cartoon by Mervyn Turner.

importance, criticises regular news programmes, saying that in them they: "...keep everything brief, not to strain the attention of anyone but instead to provide constant stimulation through variety, novelty, action and movement. You are required to pay attention to no concept, no character and no problem for more than a few seconds at a time." he goes on to say that they operate under the assumption that "...bite-sized is best, that complexity must be avoided, that nuances are dispensable, that qualifications impede the simple message, that visual stimulation is a substitute for thought, and that verbal stimulation is a substitute for thought, and that verbal precision is an anachronism."²⁹

Information as given to us from News broadcasts serves no ends but those of entertainment because it is without context and consequences. The audience may be of the opinion that they are well informed and not be aware that this information is useless to them and has become a surrogate for real democratic involvement in world affairs. "...this gap, between the availability of information and the acknowledged opportunity to act on that information...is responsible for the way in which television acts as a refracting window rather than a reflecting window on the world..."³⁰

The sheer mass of information which television presents us with, also makes it largely useless to us, as excesses of information tend to have the same effect as no information, you are left helpless and unable to act. " 'what is noted...is by definition notable.' (Barthes) The media therefore, carry out what is perhaps there most important ideological role through a process which is generally regarded as being ideologically innocent, the process of reporting 'the facts'."³¹ This quote points out the power the media has to 'make news', as what they show, is news. The news broadcasts 'make' the news in other ways

too, ways the audience should be made aware of, for not only does news coverage endow an event with importance by its coverage of it, but through the coverage it defines and can therefore bias the view of the event that the public receives: "Broadcasters report 'news', the enemy engages in 'propaganda'. Our 'soldiers' and allies must kill to defend freedom, their 'terrorists' kill for criminal reasons...Unions are to blame for strikes, never management. Murders are newsworthy, corporate price-fixing too 'abstract'...It's our 'leaders' against their 'rulers'."³²

As for the visuals, 'seeing is believing' should not always be the case on news bulletins because visual evidence can be very ambiguous. Editing, selection and being shown out of context, can often lead to its being misinterpreted, particularly if it's accompanied by a biased commentary. If events are set up by a 'good story' hounding journalist this is not apparent to the viewer. The effect of a television crew and reporters on an event is, also, never acknowledged as is the effect of narrative on the information, neglected. A 'good story' is usually made up of dramatic elements, with the consequence that "...a 'story' is unlikely to make a news programme unless it carries evidence of violence, conflict or disaster."³³

As an illustration to all of this, and an example of someone on television inciting the audience to be more critical of news broadcasts, here is an extract from the script of *Outlook*, a programme by Fr. O' Herlihy for RTE, as quoted by the *Irish Press*, August 1964. "All news coverage plays an important role in forming public opinion. It's important to remember that there's another point of view in presenting the same facts...By making speeches telling of their concern for civil rights and by taking to the streets, the civil rights movement causes automatic breakdown of law and order. To their opponents, the protest march becomes a mob. Words can change pictures.

"Television news coverage is limited by certain things. You must have action. So if we have a protest march, in which there is one incident of trouble, you can be sure the cameramen will get there if it's at all possible...

"Another way I feel that news is limited is because it just describes what has happened. It can load the dice. If there is a strike in a factory tomorrow morning, you hear that so many workers went on strike. And this always makes it appear as if the worker is always the aggressor. That's because the news is purely descriptive.

"News coverage can sometimes be shallow and superficial. We should be aware of this in watching news coverage. I think that's why it's important to have current affairs programmes - programmes which don't just tell you what happened, but tell you why it happened... Sometimes television news can't get behind the facts because it is limited.

"Then it's up to you in your viewing to try to get those facts, to realise the limitations of television so that you can get behind the facts - the fact, too, of the limitations of news by activity, and the limitations, too, of who we get our news from, because we can't always go where we like."³⁴

This programme's broadcast was cancelled under feeble pretences which could not disguise that the real reason for its cancellation must have been the station's reluctance to be critical of itself and to encourage its audience to be likewise. Its script was somehow smuggled out so at least it reached some of its intended audience in the *Irish Press*'s publication of it.

THE EFFECT OF TELEVISION CONVENTIONS SUCH AS REALISM AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

The order and control that is created and maintained by the television professionals who appear on the set, is also the aim of the 'behind the scenes' professionals who write, direct and produce the programmes. Pressures of time mean that programmes tend to rely on formulas and conventions that allow an ordered transmission to be created "The media create and relay images of order. Yet the social reality is enormously complex, fluid and self contradictory, even in its own terms."³⁵ This recalls Brecht's criticisms of Traditional Aristotelian theatre as it similarly simplified and enclosed reality. His criticisms are still applicable, for television employs the same aristotelian narrative format in all its programming, as seen in the 'stories' of the news and current affairs programmes, and the structures through which they're told; and in the 'realism' and 'naturalism' of drama, including soap operas, television plays and most films made for television.

The regular television viewer is not aware of how structured television content is, or of how this structuring effects the content: "...the world of representation is made natural by the devices of realism. Those devices assume the status of second nature by means of the thoroughly familiar conventions in which they are cast."³⁶ So, we see here a question that Brecht's Alienation Effects can address and it is, in effect, the same question they challenged in theatre. In their book *Reading Television*, Fiske and Hartley examine how artists' challenging of realism liberated the audience from the role of passive consumers that it was responsible for: "...critics argue that realism produces in fact a 'consumerist, non-critical' attitude in the audience, whose individual member is confirmed as

a mere subject, unable to influence his role. He is, in short, mystified...this argument goes on to suggest that the significance of certain artists, such as Brecht, Joyce, Sterne and Kafka, comes from their capacity to contradict the 'naturalistic fiction' of realism. They do not devote their energies to the 'production of sense' in their various messages; rather they hesitate, hold back, from the production of sense and thereby shatter, re-form and re-produce the established real-seeming. Their hesitancy de-familiarises the conventions of their genre, putting into crisis the way in which sense passes into the realm of the natural-seeming. The effect of defamiliarisation, it is suggested, is to produce in the audience or reader an awareness of the radical inadequacies of the established norms (particularly as these have established an apparent monopoly in ways of seeing) and therefore encourage a new critical attitude. The audience is thus rescued from its 'subjectified' consumer role, and placed within a framework that is overtly ideological and not, as in the case with realism, a framework whose ideology is hidden and self-effacing."³⁷

This is not, therefore, just a formalistic consideration, a trying out of innovative methods for their own sake, but an acknowledgement of the fact that realism creates a viewing point that effects what can be seen in the representation. Contrary to what its name suggests it is not a reproduction of the real, and it is not the natural and therefore, only, way to represent reality, as its other name, 'naturalism', implies. The fact that these forms have a monopoly on representation means that the way they represent is never questioned. Brecht felt it was important to question it because it presents reality from the viewpoint of the dominaters with the result that "Realism could be said to act as a kind of silent weapon in the extension of what amounts to bourgeois ideology over all other sections in society."³⁸

Television Drama employs the same illusory 'realism' as the traditional theatre drama that Brecht argued against, and with similar results. The pressure of filling the time-slots of what is almost a twenty-four hour a day, seven days a week, service, have resulted in television's even greater dependency on formula, with perhaps even less consideration as to its nature.

Although Brecht, wasn't, of course, referring to television in the following comments, it is startling to see how applicable they are: "Hollywood's and Broadway's methods of manufacturing certain excitements and emotions may possibly be artistic, but their only use is to offset the fearful boredom induced in any audience by the endless repetition of falsehoods and stupidities. This technique was developed and is used in order to stimulate interest in things and ideas that are not in the interest of the audience." and he goes on to say, "The theatre of our parasitic bourgeoisie... 'conjures up' the illusion that it is reflecting real-life incidents with a view to achieving more or less primitive shock effects of hazily defined sentimental moods which in fact are to be consumed as substitutes for the missing spiritual experiences of a crippled and cataleptic audience. One has only to take a brief look to see that every one of these results can also be achieved by utterly distorted reflections of real life."³⁹

Helena Sheehan, in her book *Irish Television Drama, a society and its stories* professes the opinion that most television productions "...systematically obscure class forces and social structures through their myopic and sentimental view of character and storyline in which they not only foreground individuals but de-contextualise them."⁴⁰ This was one of the

complaints Brecht had against traditional theatre which he had aimed to redress in his Epic Theatre.

Wesley Burrowes, scriptwriter for *The Riordans*, *Bracken* and *Glenroe* on RTE, is similarly critical of the lack of social context, and immersion in trivial detail, in Thames Television's *Coronation Street*: "There is hardly any crime in Weatherfield [where *Coronation Street* is situated], no vandalism, no drug problem, not even any real drunkenness, no wife-beating. There is no unemployment, or if there is, it is not mentioned. No one feels the pinch and, if they do, there is always a pint of ale and a bacon butty to ease the pain. It seems to me that there is something contradictory in a policy of seeking to convey images of reality without ever touching on these real issues. It is surely unreal, for instance, that the sporting affiliations of the lads never surface in the *Rovers*. Even more unreal that a bitter year-long miners' strike, in which the Lancashire pits played a prominent part, never merited a mention..."⁴¹

Despite his criticisms Burrowes has not done very much better with his input to *Glenroe*. "When the series was initially being promoted he stated that he had 'no social motivation' in writing it, that he didn't feel a small community could be a microcosm of the social problems of the nation. He has since said that *Glenroe* was '...not about issues, but about people and their relationships and that the primary motivation behind it was to entertain.'"⁴²

Glenroe is less melodramatic than its predecessor *Bracken* which seemed almost an Irish answer to *Dallas*, but it is still unequal to the example of the first series in the triad, *The Riordans* which was started with the clear didactic function of providing farming information, and later, when this need was relieved by the more direct farming information provided by *Telefis Feirme*, the series turned the same didactic approach onto

social issues. Its attempt to throw light on many taboo areas of Irish culture, to 'kill some sacred cows' to quote Lelia Doolan⁴³, one of the first producers of the programme, resulted in much controversy, but it had a healthy effect on Irish opinion, helping it to adjust to the changes of modern life.

In contrast, *Glenroe* is content to merely entertain. However, it does, at least, do so with skill and wit, unlike many of the imported police, detective and Doctor series, made for television plays and films, soaps, westerns and all the melodramatic television genres that employ stereotyped formulas which expound "...the conventional wisdom, the lies and fantasies, and the muddled ambivalent values of our bourgeois industrial culture."⁴⁴

Within these "...glossily packaged imitation life kits"⁴⁵ which are carefully manufactured for easy consumption by the maximum audience: "The dimension of true tragedy is replaced by pathos. Humour becomes wit, brittle and edgy but basically comfortable. The unmanageable incongruities of the really human are replaced by the contrast played for laughs or tension. Every wrinkle is ironed out, every end tied up...The whole smooth acceptance of the status quo as fundamentally likeable and healthy, deprives the viewer of any real experience. The action of life lived on this level takes place on a huge carpet; its 'problems' are briefly faced and swept beneath it, 'solved'.

"Some of the material is very good indeed. Where it is so, it fulfils the profoundly human need for a distraction which is really a re-creation. Some of it is very bad...A night's diet of it, as Shelah Richards once said, leaves one with the feeling of irritable and leaden discomfort of having eaten a box of chocolate sweets. One has enjoyed each one and one is very sick indeed."⁴⁶

This is the effect of a night's diet of it, but what of a life's

diet of it, or, of greater importance, the effect on a culture fed by it ?

Subjected to a 'diet' like this is it any wonder that in front of television sets all over the world "We see somewhat motionless figures in a peculiar condition...They scarcely communicate with each other; their relations are those of a lot of sleepers...True, their eyes are open, but they stare rather than see, just as they listen rather than hear...these people seem relieved of activity and like men to whom something is being done."⁴⁷ This description is, in fact, Brecht's and refers to the theatre audiences of his day, but it is easily applicable to television audiences. His methods of awakening the audience from this hypnotic state have been applied to television audiences in the series of programmes called *Paper Tiger Television*.

PAPER TIGER TELEVISION

Paper Tiger Television was broadcast weekly on a public access cable channel in Manhattan. Public access channels in America are a result of town municipalities' negotiations with cable corporations, who agree to allow for public access channel space in exchange for the right to run cables through city streets and sewers. If there is a lot of competition between different cable corporations, and if there is a high level of local support and demand for access, the result is often very well stocked public access studios with a channel of their own.

Consequently the channel on which *Paper Tiger Television* was aired, is not your usual commercial television station. This is advantageous, the programme would probably not have been possible on any other station, but it has its disadvantages also in that the station is confined to local broadcasting only, and because it is, within that area, a 'fringe', alternative station.



13. Herb Schiller reads "The New York Times"

The photograph captures a candid moment on a subway train. Two men are seated, each engrossed in reading a newspaper. The man on the left, identified as Herb Schiller, is wearing glasses and a dark sweater. The man on the right is wearing a dark hat and a light-colored jacket. The background is filled with subway signs, including "FAR ROCKAWAY", "MUEBB SIDE FOREVER", "LOCAL", "HOWARD", and "2 EXPRESS". A sign with the word "Please" is also visible. The image has a high-contrast, grainy aesthetic.

As it isn't commercial, it isn't listed in any of the television guides, which is also a disadvantage.

The series was collectively made on a voluntary basis. There was a 'core' group⁴⁸ who invited along 'guests' to take particular programmes. Due to the fact that everyone was involved on a voluntary basis and therefore had other commitments, and to limited studio time and space available to them, the programmes had to be put together very quickly, and were broadcast live.

The programme was concerned with the communications Industry, focusing on printed media, but doing so in such a way that light was cast, and a critical awareness was generated on all communications media especially the one through which it was speaking - Television. Each programme entailed a critical reading of a serialised publication. Dee Dee Halleck, a member of the group tells us what these readings entailed: " In addition to looking at the language and content of specific articles, the programs include basic information on the economic structure of the corporation that produces the publication. Many programs also look at the demographics: who the readers are, what products they consume... and how much a full-page color ad costs. Sometimes we examine the board of directors or the background of the editors and reporters."⁴⁹ The idea behind all this was that: "By going over a publication in detail, by examining how it is enmeshed in the transnational corporate work and by pointing out exactly how and why certain information appears, a good critical reading can *invert* the media so that they work against themselves. The next time a viewer reads a publication that was covered on *Paper Tiger*, each ad and each article becomes a reinforcement of the critical reading."⁵⁰

The series started with several programmes dealing with *The New York Times* read by Herbert Schiller. More detail on these serves as a more specific example of Paper Tiger's content. Dee

Dee Halleck tells us "Schiller began with an explanation of how *The Times* serves as the 'steering mechanism of the ruling class' and went on for five other programs to cover the Washington talk page, the foreign correspondents in the consumer capitals of the world, the annual search for the 100 neediest cases, the conflict of interest in the way they cover communications issues, and how their Sunday Book Review section serves as a gatekeeper for Western ideas."⁵¹

In his programme on *Foreign Correspondents in consumer capitals* he was of the opinion: "Information about the world as we glean it from our daily and Sunday "New York Times" is minimal, trivial and diverting. It is loaded with the viewpoints of the ruling cliques with whom the foreign correspondents have their daily contact. It would be nice if we could say we had a window on the world. In reality what we have is a window on a very special portion of a very special privileged group. All the news that's fit to print, indeed."⁵²

The programme dealt with many different publications, among them *Vogue* read by Martha Rosler, who made the telling comment, reflective of the series' attention to advertising as an integral part of a publication's content, that on flicking through the magazine you find that the adds and the feature articles are largely indistinguishable⁵³; *The National Enquirer* by Joan Braderman; and *Time* by Mary Feaster, who was of the opinion that " *Time* makes time disappear. Everything is the same. There is no history...The essence of *Time* is that it destroys the present, the past and the future. Just like the hands of a clock keep turning around and around and give you no message, no perspective, no co-ordinates, no sense of direction. What *Time* does is relax you in time."⁵⁴



14. The cartoon-like set of Alex Cockburn's reading of "The Washington Post".

In another program, on the TV Guide, throughout the dissertation, a young woman was seen in the corner of the frame, sitting in an armchair watching a television, which was tuned into programs actually on air at the time. In the programs proceeded, speaking of how little real choice there is on television, the woman switched from channel to channel and pored over the TV Guide. By the end of the program she had fallen

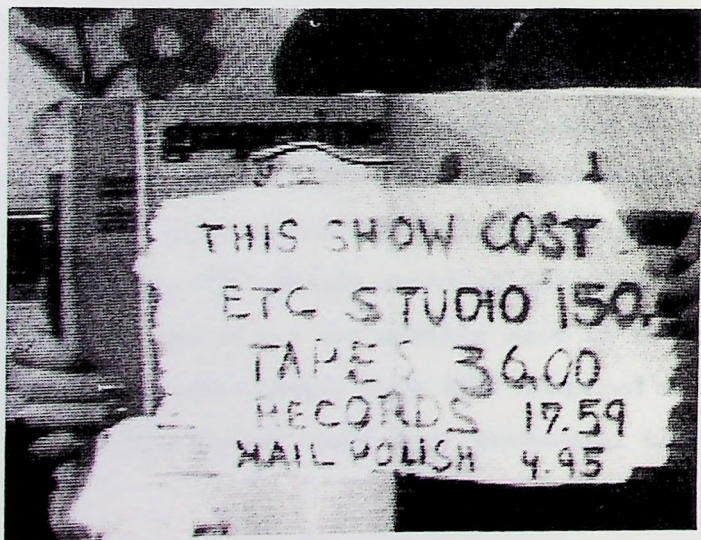
The programmes started with the set phrase: "It's 8.30. Do you know where your brains are?"⁵⁵ This aimed to intrigue viewers and thereby encourage them to continue watching, to implant the time-slot in their minds, which was necessary due to their lack of a listing in a television guide, and, despite the phrase's rather jovial tone, it had the serious role of encouraging a critical consciousness in the viewer, the idea being that it provoke their attention.

Rather than present these readings as dry monologues, which wouldn't attract or maintain an audience, *Paper Tiger TV* employed charts and graphics; music (often to an ironic effect); interviews; contradiction; ironic humour; and visual commentary in the form of improvisations by actors, social *Tableaux Vivants*. For example, in the programme on *Psychology Today*, the psychoanalyst Joel Kovel, who was doing the reading, did so while, in the background, an actress, playing a patient, talked about her problems, sobbing and confessing all, as she lay on the psychoanalyst's couch. He ignored her monologue and spoke his points on the publication into the camera. At the end of the show, he turned, and said to her "Time's up!", and she wrote him a cheque for \$75, and thanked him for his time.⁵⁶ This 'skit' illustrated the exploitative nature of current psychology, and simultaneously provided an entertaining format for the programme, making it a perfect example of didactic entertainment.

In another programme, on the *TV Guide*, throughout the dissertation, a young woman was seen in the corner of the frame, sitting in an armchair watching a television, which was tuned into programmes actually on air at the time. As the programme proceeded, speaking of how little real choice there is on television, the woman switched from channel to channel and pored over the *TV Guide*. By the end of the programme she had fallen



15. The 'Hand-cranker' wound at the end of the show.



16. The Show's budget .

asleep.⁵⁷ These 'skits' were not recorded separately and edited into the programme, as is usual television practice, but were performed interactively with the readings. This is significant as it is part of the group's overall rejection of technology, and the smooth, seamless, professional results that it can achieve, which can result in a mystification of the viewers, presenting them with a closed, finished product that they can only consume, never question or touch.

The sets also contributed to 'lightening' the weight of the subject matter and were also designed to attract channel-grazing viewers. They were hand-painted "...flat, cartoon-like cloth backdrops"⁵⁸ with "...no pompous 'director' chairs, no stuffed couches, no glittery curtains. It looks homey, but very colorful, like the funny papers on Sunday."⁵⁹ This creates a handmade feeling: "...a comfortable, nontechnocratic look that says *friendly* and low budget."⁶⁰ The charts and graphics they employed were hand-painted or pasted "...and were held in place, in front of the camera so that the fingers could be seen. At the end of the programme the 'credits', which included the programme's budget, were displayed on a roll of paper moved by hand-cranked rollers. The budget detailed everything from the cost of the studio rental to the markers used in the signs. The average cost of the programmes were \$200 compared with \$150,000 that is spent on the typical half-hour commercial television programme."⁶¹

Often, during the programme, the use of overview wide-angle shots showed the viewers the people making the programme and the equipment they used. This showing of the seams of the programme, not hiding how it was made and even giving the cost of it all, was directed towards demystifying television production,

making it seem more accessible and showing that it isn't necessarily prohibitively expensive.

So it is seen that this serial, which in its content is dedicated to a critique of print-media, is in its form critical of the greater mass media of television. Martha Gever draws the parallels between this and Brecht's ideas in her essay *Meet the press: On Paper Tiger Television*, when she says: "Aside from...material concerns, the overt style of *Paper Tiger's* design reinforces its purpose - to reveal, not conceal, the working of media production. The flat sets, punkish graphics, and the cost breakdown at the close of each show implicitly expose invisible, finely-tuned methods of media seduction. This is Brecht's 'Alienation Effect' applied to television...In *Paper Tiger Tv* the object drawn to ones attention is mass media, it no longer is something you take for granted, something you're familiar with, you see it in a striking new light. It surprises you." She later concludes: "Consciously mixing almost primitive video techniques with sophisticated ideas, adding humorous touches to enliven serious questions *Paper Tiger Tv* can be described as a 1980's version of Brecht's didactic theatre. *Paper Tiger's* didactic television, like its antecedent, weds analytic processes to popular forms in order to reveal social relations and social inequities. And the purpose is not mere criticism "This criticism of the world," as Brecht said, "is active, practical, positive."⁶³⁶⁴ Whether Brecht was a direct influence here or not is irrelevant, the fact is that in this series the everyday was made strange, and therefore was seen in a new way that threw light on it. The people who are daily in contact with the mass media were offered the means to regard them with a new, critical consciousness that automatically reduced their trust in them, and, consequently, the media's power to manipulate them.

This series, and its popularity ⁶⁵ proves the validity of the application of alienation techniques to television production. The maxim "what entertains educates" must however be remembered in doing so, and, where possible, popular forms should be borrowed from, and employed in a good working relationship, alongside the distancing techniques, as popular appeal must always be the main objective. These considerations must be remembered if the alienation technique is not to alienate the regular television viewer, and therefore fail in its task.

It is appropriate that I should have the last word here. In speaking, in this work of his proposed 'change of view' for Radio, but his work is applicable to this application of his ideas.

This is not innovation, it is suggestion that some things are that I would admit to be things. When I say that the radio of the theatre "could" do so-and-so I am aware that these vast institutions cannot do all they 'could', and not even all they want.

That it is not at all our job to recreate ideological institutions on the basis of the existing social order by means of innovations. Instead our innovations must force their way to overcome that basis. In other words, against innovation!

CONCLUSION

Television is not fulfilling its true potential as a medium of communication, with a vital, challenging and creative role to play in society. The medium must be changed so that the popular may become both artistic and useful. Brecht's innovations for Theatre achieved this under similar conditions and are therefore an example that can be learnt from and aspired to. That such changes are difficult cannot be denied, but present conditions should no longer be tolerated.

It is appropriate that Brecht should have the last word here. He is speaking, in this quote of his proposed 'changed form' for Radio, but his opinion is applicable to this re-application of his ideas.

"This is an innovation, a suggestion that seems Utopian and that I myself admit to be Utopian. When I say that the radio or the theatre 'could' do so-and-so I am aware that these vast institutions cannot do all they 'could', and not even all they want.

"But it is not at all our job to renovate ideological institutions on the basis of the existing social order by means of innovations. Instead our innovations must force them to surrender that basis. So: For innovations, against renovation!"⁶⁶

1. *Channel 4 working notes*, Screen 24, no.6 1983, my source: television and Irish society p:141.0
2. Author of *Television and the People*.
3. *Television and the people* p:107.
4. *Sit Down and be Counted* p:285.
5. *Teaching the media* p:4.
6. *Television, the Medium and its Manners* p:87.
7. *Sit Down and be Counted* p:94.
8. Ibid p:96.
9. Ibid p:97.
10. Ibid p:98.
11. *Irish Television Drama, a society and its stories* p:46.
12. Raymond Williams at a public seminar in Dublin April 1969, my source, *Sit Down and be Counted* p:175.
13. Ibid p:225.
14. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.
15. *Television and the People* p:221.
16. *Transmission* p:5.
17. *Teaching the Media* p:13.
18. *Brecht on theatre* p:192, no.44.
19. *Teaching the Media* p:140.
20. *Television, Film and Media Education* p:9.
21. *Transmissions* p:58.
22. *Brecht on Theatre* p:51.
23. Ibid p:52.
24. *Television, Film and Media Education* p:9.

25. *Reading Television* p:89.
26. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* p:100.
27. *Irish Television Drama, a Society and its stories* p:135.
28. *Ibid* p:109.
29. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* p:105.
30. *Television and the people* p:125.
31. *Teaching the Media* p:129.
32. *Cultures in Contention* p:142.
33. *Television and Irish society* p:134.
34. *Sit Down and be Counted* p:200-2.
35. *Transmissions* p:71.
36. *Reading Television* p:161.
37. *Ibid* p:163.
38. *Ibid* p:165.
39. *Brecht on Theatre* p:160.
40. *Ibid* p:310.
41. *Irish Television Drama, a Society and its Stories* p:363.
42. *Ibid* p:362.
43. *During a telephone conversation.*
44. *Transmissions* p:52.
45. *Sit down and be counted* p:273.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Brecht on Theatre* p:187, no.26.

48. The core group: Dee Dee Halleck (who conceived of the series), Diana Agosta, Penee Bender, Skip Blumberg, Shulea Cheang, Esti Marpet, Caryn Rogoff, David Shulman, Martha Wallner, Alan Steinheimer. My source for this information: *Transmissions* p:217.

49. *Cultures in Contention* p:38.

50. Ibid p:39.

51. Ibid p:38.

52. Ibid p:37.

53. *Transmissions* p:220.

54. *Cultures in Contention* p:38.

55. Ibid.

56. *Transm.* p:223.

57. *Cultures in C.* p:39.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. *Transmissions* p:218.

62. Ibid.

63. *Brecht on Theatre* p:146.

64. *Transm.* p:225.

65. *Cultures in C.* p:38

66. *Brecht on Theatre* p:52-3.

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