

**A SEMIOTIC READING OF BERTOLT  
BRECHT'S PLAY MOTHER COURAGE**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for  
the award of the Degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**AMENLA SENLEM**

Centre for Linguistics and English  
School of Languages  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi - 110067.  
1996



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
**JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**  
NEW DELHI - 110067

CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH  
SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110067

### CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled 'A Semiotic Reading of Bertolt Brecht's Play Mother Courage', submitted by Amenla Senlem, Centre For Linguistics and English, School Of Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University, for the Award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy, is an Original Work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of any University. This may be placed before the Examiners for evaluation for the award of the Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY.

CANDIDATE  
AMENLA SENLEM

22/7/96  
CHAIRPERSON  
PROF. ANVITA ABBI

SUPERVISOR  
PROF. H.S. GILL

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**I** would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to my guide Prof. H.S. Gill, for his indispensable help and guidance without which this dissertation would not have been possible.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my dear parents and friends for their encouragement and unwavering support.

Amenla Senlem

Date : 21.7.96

# ***CONTENTS***

PARTICULARS	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1-14
CHAPTER I	15-74
CHAPTER II	
Section I	75-111
Section II	112-122
NOTES AND REFERENCES	123-124
SECLECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	125-126

## INTRODUCTION

Before attempting a semiotic reading of a given text, it is necessary to understand how a discourse is constituted.

The constitution of a discourse is a three fold activity, semiotic, semiologic and mediatory. The order in which a discourse is unfolded or revealed is its semiotic order. It is linear and syntagmatic. This order of progression is significant, for this order is decided by the author. While the linguistic sentences have fixed rules as to their grammatical structure, no language prescribes rules for the presentation of a text. A given incident or experience can be described in innumerable ways, there can be all sorts of beginnings and a variety of progressions. However this progression of the text, the manifest articulation is controlled by the immanent conceptualization of the discourse. It is the conceptualization of the Universe of signification, its over all structure that determines how its different elements are going to be juxtaposed against each other. The manifest linear progression is both syntagmatic and paradigmatic. At each following step the author reflects and with the exercise of

free association of ideas images are created which are integrated in the syntactic chain but at the same time placed there for their correlative significance with the images which will appear later. The initial progression of a text can be compared with the weaving of a carpet where different strands are introduced to emerge as different but interrelated forms as the weaving progresses.

A discourse is a dynamic structure. Between the beginning and the end there is both a physical and psychic development. So whatever is to be developed must be introduced early. Obviously what becomes a formal conceptualized whole at the end must appear in some form in the beginning. For instance in the play which will be discussed in detail later the contradiction inherent in the principal character's life is introduced right at the beginning of the play.

Discourses can be of many kinds - discourses where one incident follows another, the progression is manifestly linear, others which are replete with criss cross correlative juxtapositions, and still others where there is no obvious movement, one just reflects upon past, present and future; in other words, extremely free association of ideas. But whatever may be the technique, the linguistic medium imposes a certain linearity and as the syntagmatic

chain of the text progresses, the preceding constitution leaves less and less room for manoeuvre. Furthermore, different media have their specific liberties and constraints. A narrative presented in linguistic medium can go into certain details, present surrealistic situations easily, introduce certain subtleties and suggestions probably not possible in the cinematographic medium. Whatever may be the medium, a semiotic reading of the discourse must first identify the ensembles of significance whose jigsaw puzzle configures a given text.

The theory of ensembles may be explained by the analogy of music. The disparate notes of music in isolation have no musical significance. It is only when they enter into an ensemble, a unit held together by a harmonious integration of a number of elements, that they acquire significance. Furthermore, smaller or micro ensembles are then integrated in larger macro ensembles whose syntagmatic and paradigmatic sequences lead the musical rhythms into the overall harmony of a given composition. It must also be emphasized that these notes derive their significance only from specific combinations. Outside these ensembles, they either do not have any significance or whatever significance they had earlier is dissolved in the dialectical integration of

the ensemble.

In this context one can make a methodological distinction between word sentence and text on the one hand and signifier proposition and discourse on the other.

The first set is conceptualised in the domain of experssion and the second in the domain of content. A word is a minimum linguistic unit that has a simple one to one correspondence with the object it refers to. The word, table corresponds to the object, table. These correspondences can be simple or complex. For example, the reference to the object, table, is simple, but to the object, beautiful, is not, for what constitutes a table can be more easily configurated than what constitutes a beautiful person. The complexity here is primarily in the conceptualisation of the object.

A signifier may or may not be a word. In one sense all words are also signifiers, but in our classification a signifier is generally an ensemble of elements integrated in a certain coherence to constitute a signification. In this case we go from content to expression, the point of departure is the unit of significance, ie., content, and the identity of the signifier is determined by this unit.

The same is true of the distinction between a sentence and a proposition. A sentence is defined as a grammatical



construct with a very approximate reference to its context. This is why in Chomskian framework we can have all kinds of non-sensical sentences. The Chomskian creativity lies in constituting grammatically correct sentences. The Abelardian creativity is based on the constitution of propositions. A proposition is a 'conceptual construct' in the domain of context whose primary aim is to generate signification. It is the signification within a field of ideology that determines the identity and validity of a proposition. and, here also a proposition may or may not correspond to a grammatical construct. With words and sentences a text is constituted but this constitution is conceptually controlled by the universe of signification that follows the theory of mental images of Abelard. The text and the elements of the text derive their being from the problematics of the discourse. Words, sentences and text present the manifest structure, signifies, propositions and discourse operate at immanent level. What matters here is the direction of the process of structuration. In word, sentence, text linguistics we proceed from 'expression to content' and in signifier proposition, discourse semiotics we proceed from 'content to expression'.

This is why when we identify ensembles of significance

in the syntagmatic semiotic reading of a text, we make cuts on the basis of the signified units. This identification requires an extremely close reading of the text where we identify a whole series of hierarchical diversions with their micro and sub ensembles. Similarly, we may have simple signifiers which are comprehensive and others which are 'partial', which play only complimentary role and do not have an independent status. Then there can be infixes which are syntagmatically integrated in the text but whose primary role is to establish a paradigmatic relation. Furthermore, at times, a whole chunk of the text may constitute one signifying ensemble, and at others just one sentence. The identity of the unit is always determined by its corresponding significance.

The Play which is to be discussed in this dissertation is Bertolt Brecht's 'Mother Courage and her children'. The play was written during Brecht's exile in Sweden, in Stockholm between 21<sup>st</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> November 1939, when his diary goes blank. Brecht was highly agitated about the turn of events in Europe, and at that early phase of the war some form of peace seem still possible. Responding to the urgent need of the day, Brecht quickly wrote a play denouncing war which was meant to serve as a warning but turned out to be a prophecy. Brecht had in his youth

experienced something of the brutality of the first world war, but for this play he projected his vision farther back in history to the 'Thirty Years war' (1618-48) which for Germans remained the most destructive and futile war until Hitler's. Mother Courage and her children is primarily an anti-war play which had a topical urgency in its time and has acquired universal human appeal. Within the broad perspective of a war, the focus of the play is on the fortunes of a family; on Mother Courage and her three children, who have each been begotten in different theatres of the war, suggest both the sweeping dimensions of conflict in time and space, and their symbolic value as representatives of humanity in general. In keeping with his ideology Brecht also connects war and business by making his protagonist a canteen woman who sells provisions to the armies. For Mother Courage and her family the wagon is both their home and means of livelihood. The action of the play is based on an overreaching contradiction which is ultimately tragic. In intending to preserve her family and bring them through the war, Mother Courage actually destroys her family and learns nothing. The Play consists of twelve (12) scenes. In the style of the Baroque novel but without its ingenuousness, each scene of the play is preceded by short,

harmless sounding "table of content's". Which are at the same time confirmed and contradicted in a grim and surprising manner by the events as they are presented.

The dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter presents the syntagmatic analysis of the scenes of the play. Each of the twelve (12). Scenes of the play is divided into as many parts as is necessary to comprehend the basic units of the significance. The first scene is divided into fourteen (14) signifying units. The war setting is provided, the dialectic between the myth and reality of war is introduced, the protagonists are introduced and their character's outlined, the basic contradiction inherent in the main character's situation is pinpointed and the tragic curve of the action is clearly indicated as war takes one of Mother Courage's children in the first scene itself. The second scene is divided into eight (8) signifying Units. Mother Courage profits from the war while others starved. The inverted values of the military is exposed by the Commander's high praise for Eilif for his act of butchery. The hollowness of a war of religion is exposed by the contemptuous treatment meted out to the Chaplain. The opposition between the myth and reality, of a soldier's life is introduced in the 'Fish wife song' sung by Eilif and continued by Courage. The third scene which is the

longest scene in the play is divided into twenty three (23) signifying Units. Mother Courage's underhand deal in ammunition links up the matter-of-fact corruption of both war and business. A camp idyll, with Mother Courage admonishing her children, advising the prostitute Yvette, entertaining friends and talking politics, is suddenly shattered by a surprise attack. In the ensuing disorder the focus is on Mother Courage's energy and competence with which she copes familiar war situations, taking care of her children and every item and promptly switching over to the enemy's camp. The Chaplain's religious volte-face further exposes the meaninglessness of a war of religion. At the beginning of the scene, Mother Courage had expressed her fear about Swiss Cheese hiding the cash box. Her fears proved correct. In her absence on a business spree Swiss Cheese is arrested. This general emotional crisis in the play reveals the contradiction between her love for her son and anxiety about her means of survival. She haggles over the bribe, realizing too late the case is lost. Swiss Cheese loses his life, as it were, by the margin of difference of a few gliders and mis-calculated timing. Though Mother Courage seems guilty, we are also made to realize her excruciating dilemma; how could she and her daughter survive

without their wagon? But the tragedy is redoubled because Mother Courage has to deny her son's dead body if she and her daughter is to survive. The fourth scene is gestic. It depersonalizes Mother Courage travails. The scene is divided into five (5) signifying units. It demonstrates how quickly the little people capitulate to authority and how easily their rebellion born of 'a short anger' peters out. Mother Courage teaches capitulation to the young soldier and learns to surrender in her turn. But the 'short anger' also poses the alternative possibility of a 'long rage', leading to revolt and social intervention which we are expected to understand. The sympathy which Mother Courage had generated in the previous scene is withdrawn by the alienation technique of this 'social problem' scene. The fifth scene is divided into four (4) signifying units. Each character in this scene adopts a different gestus to the human disaster. Mother Courage callously refuses to help the injured peasants while the Chaplain and Kattrin tries their very best to rescue them. The archetypal image of motherhood is projected when Kattrin croons a lullaby to a peasant's baby she had rescued from the burning peasant's cottage. By holding together in antithetical tension several conflicting attitudes, the scene offers a Kaleidoscopic view of war's harrowing reality. The sixth scene is divided into eleven

(11) signifying units. The focus is on the life and reactions of ordinary people, who seem to care little for heroes. Sharply contrasted views of war and peace are deliberately juxtaposed. The scene closes with a sharp indictment of war as Katrin enters with an injury over her eye. And for once Mother Courage curses the war, recognizing it as the miserable source of income. The seventh scene is also gestic. The scene comprises one composite part. It demonstrates Mother Courage's contradictory attitude to war. It shows how quickly and blatantly, she has forgotten her lessons having prospered in business. Eight scene shows temporary peace the scene is divided into nine (9) signifying units. In this scene also different responses to peace are mounted together, as in a montage. In the recurrent pattern of the play Mother Courage loses another son when she is away on a business trip. In this case, however she remains unaware of Eilif's death nourishing her illusions till the end. Ninth scene depicts Mother Courage and Cook reduced to beggary. The scene is divided into six (6) signifying units. Mother Courage rejects the Cooks offer of a home in Utrecht because of her love and responsibility towards her dumb daughter. Or is it really her attachment to the wagon, as she assures Katrin. Probably both. Tenth

Scene forms an antithesis to the earlier seventh scene. The scene comprises of one signifying unit. Only a voice is heard singing about the security that a home provides. Compared to the voice. Mother Courage and her daughter represent destitutes wandering homelessly like 'damned souls', like a tableau the song projects the wedge that divides the haves and have nots. The climax of the play is reached in this penultimate scene, Scene 11. The scene is divided into eight (8) signifying units. Earlier it was Courage and war, now it is Kattrin who takes centrestage and with this the problematic of the dramatic discourse acquires a new dimension. Kattrin finds a voice through the 'drum' to express her hatred for war. Her alertness and her spontaneous action to save the town of Halle is contrasted with the apathy and inaction of the peasants. Kattrin is shot by the enemy soldiers for her brave act. In a recurrent pattern of the play Mother Courage loses her only surviving child to the war while away on a business trip. The last scene, twelveth (12) scene is divided into five (5) signifying units. Mother Courage is seen in the archetypal image of the mother, bending over and singing a lullaby to her child. She refuses to accept the fact that her daughter is dead. But sentimentality is warded off by the selfish content of her song. Finally she harnesses herself to the



almost empty wagon to follow the army once more and start up again in business'. Her illusion that one son is alive is matched by her blindness regarding the unprofitable and destructive nature of war. She has learned nothing.

The second Chapter consists of two sections. The first section deals with the thematic configurations emerging from the syntagmatic analysis of the scenes. This gives us an overall view of the unity of the discourse, and also demonstrates, how the various interlinked strands were perceived in the context of the discourse as a single comprehensive unit of significance. Two Conceptual themes emerges, first is the dehumanizing aspect of war that dehumanizes man, man-woman relations and the family. The second is the Interaction between the individual and society. The second section of this chapter deals with the distinct nature of Bertolt Brecht's dramaturgy and its mediatory significance in the context of the discourse. It is both a summing up of the importance of the work, taking into consideration the important view points, and an attempt to see how a semiotic reading differs and throws new light into a text which has been universally held as one of the best plays of Brecht.

It is hoped that the dissertation has fulfilled the

criteria that a semiotic reading of a text lays down and has remained within the parameters of the chosen realms of analysis.

# CHAPTER I

## CHAPTER 1

### SYNTAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY

Scene I :-

Confirming to the episodic structure of the epic theatre, the opening scene forms a complete episode almost resembling a one act play with its introduction conflict, climax switch in action and anti climatic end. The scene is set on a highway outside a town and the table of contents preceding the scene suggests that the long drawn out war is making a fresh start and that new developments are about to begin in the war scenario. The scene can be divided into the following units.

1. The play opens with a conversation between a sergeant and a recruiting officer about the relative merits of peace and war. Their conversation is distinguished mainly by its frank inversion of what we suppose to be traditional values. Their sentiments are couched in a language that is terse to an extreme but at the same time, vivid coarse apt. Beneath the surface of the complaints and banter of the

soldiers are layers of meaning that amply reward intense formal analysis. The Recruiter complains that after he has talked a man into signing up and had even bought him a drink the man more likely than not will be lacking in "loyalty and faith" and will escape at the first opportunity. The recruiter says specifically: "Away he's gone like a louse from a scratch" [SCI P3]. Man, in the image of the metaphor, is a louse. No wonder, says the recruiter, "I'm losing my confidence in mankind". [SCI Pg3]. This "non herioc" vision of "God's creature" man and his relation to the "lower orders" is then reinforced when the sergeant says "How many horses have they got in this town? How many young men? Nobody Knows! They haven't bothered to count em!" [SCI Pg 3]. It becomes clear that for these men, as for Courage herself a little later in the play, the feeders of the war machine only distinguish between men and cattle, sacks of corns and bundles of shoes as an organizational device. It is easier to supply the machine, and the machine will use its fodder more efficiently, if a proper filing system is kept.

2. Against this backdrop, Mother Courage arrives accompanied by her daughter on the Canteen wagon drawn by her two sons. Mother Courage brightens at the sight of two potential customers; the soldiers glow at the sight of two

husky lads drawing the wagon. It is clear that each group eyes the other not as human beings but as instruments of barter and sale.

3. Immediately upon being stopped by the soldiers, Mother Courage sings the moving song that formally opens, links and closes the play. The song apart from breaking the linear movement of the sub-narrative also acts as a comment on the deep structural meanings of the situations. It is like a Shakespearean aside, through which the audience awareness is aroused. It does have a parallel in the Greek Chorus as a structural element. In this discourse, the one who sings is involved in the action but does not perceive the significance of the song. Mother Courage's song comments on the nature of the war in a pessimistic though prophetic note but she sings it without perceiving its significance. As the song says, it is Courage herself who brings the sausages without which the men would not be prepared to die. It is she who, in the imagery of her own song, is the hand maiden of war and of death itself. In this song also lice, men, dray animals and beasts for slaughter are heaped indiscriminately together. Death lowers over the wagon; death dominates the song. And as Mother Courage sings ; "Christians awake; The winter's gone :/ The snow's depart,

the dead sleep on / And though you may long survive / Get out of bed and look alive", she remains only half aware of its futuristic implications. Only at the end of the play when she is too broken to sing her self and this last stanza is taken up by the soldiers does the horror of never ending warfare strike a note of bleak despair. Though Courage's song has a prophetic note, she is incapable of perceiving it, because it is simply not available to her. To desert the war, to attempt to survive as a peasant seems no better solution. Courage is presented with a special development which demands action of her and shows her how to act but a 'state' which she seems to have no hope of changing. Because the 'State' which is, 'war' is the only choice available to her for the survival of she and her family.

4. When asked by the soldiers from where she acquired her name, she answers; "They called me Mother Courage cause I was afraid I'd be ruined. So I drove through the bombardment of Riga like a mad woman with fifty loaves of bread in my cart. They were going mouldy, I couldn't please myself". This statement of her's suggests that her almost legendary Courage to which she owes her name has nothing to do with idealistic, moral drives or even with particularly daring personality but that she was impelled to act this daring move out of sheer necessity. It was her profit

motive, her fear of being ruined which impelled her to risk the bombardment. Mother Courage cannot keep herself out of the war that is destroying her, because having chosen the business of war as a means of survival, if she and her family is to survive she has to joined the war and risk her life and also expose her family to the dangers of war. Here the conceptual opposition is between safety : Survival.

5. Next Mother Courage is asked to produce her papers while Mother Courage theatrically produces her papers the recruiter is busy eyeing her boys. Courage produces a piece of parchment that "proves" that the horse that she does not have, does not have foot and mouth disease. Again man and beast have been confused, as her own sons have now replaced the horse.

6. Next she introduces her children. As an experienced woman of the world involved in a protracted war, her children are of mixed paternity. Eilif her eldest son is the son of a Frenchman though he is later called the Finnish devil. Swiss Cheese her second son is from a Swiss man but he has allegedly inherited the qualities of a Hungarian after whom he is named Feyos. The daughter Kattrin Haupt is claimed to be half - German, but we are not told what this implies so far as her father is concerned because presumably



Mother Courage is herself German. The mixed paternity of her children suggests the sweeping dimension of the conflict in time and space and her children in a way stands as a symbol representing humanity in general. In addition it could be an oblique thrust at Hitler's theory of racial purity.

7. When asked by the sergeant; " ... what are such specimens doing out of the war", Mother Courage replies, "A soldiers life is not for son's of mine". This assertion of hers introduces the Contradiction inherent in her situation. The Contradiction between her social role as business woman and her personal role as a mother. In order to keep her business going, she is willing to participate in it and moreover wants to keep it going. But at the same time as a mother she wants to protect her children from the war and is unwilling to enlist her sons as soldiers; while the soldiers on the other hand wants her sons as soldiers, to keep the war going. Mother Courage seems blinded by an illusion which makes her unable to see that she is treading on dangerous ground. The conceptual opposition here is sons : soldiers, illusion : reality. Take part and keep aloof seems to mother Courage's contradictory slogan. And this allows her at least to delay the inevitable disaster and her own survival. But her children on whom she is dependent,

unable to emulate her, expose themselves to the war by their 'virtues' and became war's victim one by one.

8. The animal/man confusion which we have seen at the beginning of the scene is further deepened by the actions of the recruiter. First he says with barely concealed admiration; "... These lad's of yours are straight as birch trees, strong limbs, massive chests ... what are such fine specimens doing out of the army?" He then addressed the boys contemptuously, trying to shame them into abandoning their "animal" condition and joining the "human" race of soldiers. After asking them for their names the recruiter says: "And you two oxen pull the cart. Jacob Ox and Essau Ox! D'you ever get out of harness?" The recruiter is literally and figuratively correct. The young men will live and meet their violent end with no more ability to avoid their fate than the brute Ox and horse with which they have been justly compared.

9. The dialectic of myth : illusion is introduced in the recruiting officer's enticing words to Eilif: "First thing you know, you'll have a lovely camp and high boots, how about it?" Eilif blinded by the myth of a soldier's life falls for the bait and is willing to enlist unaware of the actual dangers which a soldier at war faces.

DISS  
0,113,2, M98, 5:8 (P;4)  
N6 21



TH-6271

10. The scuffle between Courage and the sergeant over Eilif's recruitment signifies her illusions more than her fighting spirit. Her spurious aggressiveness is, evidently, a part of her illusions because she reconciles to the turn of events as quickly as she protests. If one of her sons go it will disturb the equilibrium of the wagon. But, then, Courage herself is unwittingly chasing such a situation. Courage, from now on, would be a pawn, moving pathetically and Criss cross, from one state of mind to another, keeping one illusion and another, and yet having the guts to get along whatever the odds. Courage is a little person who cannot comprehend reality in its totality primarily because she is too powerless to face it squarely.

11. As a clever manoevere to prevent her sons from enlisting, she tries fortune telling and this introduces the futuristic implications. She turns demonstratively to her children, in full view of the soldiers, and tears up a parchment. She announces as she does this : "Eilif, Swiss Cheese and Kattrin, so shall we all be torn in two if we let ourselves get too deep into this war!" The demonstration turns out to have the significance of Oedipus announcing the terrible fate that will befall the murderer of Laius if and when he is found. Having torn the parchment, Mother Courage makes crosses on all the pieces and drops them into a helmet

provided by the recruiting officer. She then has the soldiers and all three of our children draw a fatal cross and asks them to draw. Mother Courage's game of fortune telling, use as a resort to frighten her children into staying with her and not risk their lives in the fortunes of war, turns out to be prophetic. As she sees the lots which her children had fished out from the helmet, she says, with her eldest son Eilif, she is afraid of his bravery but counts on his cleverness. With her second son Swiss Cheese, she is afraid of his stupidity but counts on his honesty. With her daughter Kattrin, she is afraid of her pity but counts on her dumbness. Only her fears prove to be justified. As the play proceeds each of her children dies due to the very virtues of which their mother was afraid of. Mother Courage expresses her fears for her own children yet ironically she fails to heed her own warnings.

12. In spite of all her clever tricks, Mother Courage is finally outwitted by the war-mongers who locate her vulnerable point, the profit motive of a businesswoman. Eilif is enlisted into the army while she is engaged over the sale of a belt. And as she bites the half glider and says "I've been badly burned,.....But the money's good" implies that she has already compromise over Eilif's

recruitment. Ironically it is only Kattrin who lets out harsh cries when Eilif is taken away by the agents of war. This brings in the opposition between Mother and daughter. Courage standing for business and compromise and Kattrin for protest and resistance.

13. Courage's response to Kattrin's harsh cries is matter of fact- "Coming, Kattrin," suggestive of her compromising attitude to any situation. And when she says - 'And now we'll be going'-her decision bodes ill, where is she going? Towards war and death where Eilif has gone.

14. Against Mother Courage's placidity, the Sergeant's ending remarks to which this scene ends sounds more brutal and as a futuristic implication because as the play proceeds, we will see the war swallowing Mother Courage's children one by one.

## Scene II

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggests, second scene happens between the years 1625 and 1626 . This scene is set inside the kitchen of the Swedish Commander's Camp. The Scene can be divided into the following units.

1. The raging war results in utter scarcity and as the scene opens, Mother is busy bargaining with the cook over a

capon. Here she demonstrates her business acumen and shows how quick profit can be made in times of war by seizing the right moment to inflate prices.

2. As a ploy to make the cook buy the capon, Courage cites the all round starvation and the misery created by war. But this is also a Brechtian device to impart information about a situation and demonstrate its impact on the people. The war is related to another conceptual opposition : brutality : starvation. Either you have to be corrupt, brutal, ruthless in your dealings or face starvation. Mothers Courage, here cites the all round starvation but she does not display any human compassion for it. Instead she uses this situation to further her business she seems heartless and avaricious. But her cunning gut and ruthlessness will not rescue her from the downward slide to utter ruin.

3. In the backdrop of utter misery, Eilif gleefully narrates his deadly exploits and deceit. It demonstrates the brutalization of those involved in the war which has turned one of the sons into a butcher, a far cry from Courage's desire to keep him away from a soldier's life. Eilif's act of bravery which is nothing short of murder points out the inverted qualities of the commander and his establishment.

4. The Commander's praise of Eilif is a part of the myth of the war. What happens to Eilif later, when he commits a similar crime speaks of the bitter end that such myths lead to. It also exposes the exploitation of the brave for risky military expeditions.

5. The contemptuous treatment meted out to the chaplain exposes the hollowness of the war of religion. When he says "Now a days things are different" he seems to have grown Cynical about religion and feels the Bible no longer applies in time of war. Though ironically this war unlike other wars is a war of religion.

6. Mother Courage's cynical response to the Commander's praise for Eilif exposes the relativity of values in a corrupted world. Courage says, "Whenever there are great virtues, it is sure sign something is wrong ..... In a good country virtues won't be necessary". By turning topsy-turvy a commonly held notion Mother Courage here, challenges traditional morality. She then goes on to explicate how values depend upon situations and in a falstaffian vein extols the ordinary middling and cowardly. Conventional attitudes are comically subverted and then re-oriented so that the audience is compelled to think and re-think.

7. The 'Fishwife song' sung by Eilif and continued by Mother Courage signifies the opposition between the myth and

reality of a soliers life. The song tells us about the short life of the soldier stretched between fame and death. Ironically this song is sung when Eilif is at the height of his glory. Eilif is ironically unaware of the bitter contents of the song. The song gives signals about war being an alien reality for common folk. It allures young men like Eilif through subterfuge and myth. Courage picking up of the rest of the song juxtaposes the underlying pathos with ironic connotations. Here myth and reality are in opposition to each other- Eilif is living in the myth of heroism while the song speaks of the reality such heroism leads to. The singer is neither aware nor bothered about the contents of the song which is in fact the song of his own life. The situation is a powerful comment on his relations to the war. Mother Courage's daring son sings of his own end which comes so quickly. He passes away like "smoke", his deeds nourishing no one.

8. As the song ends, Mother and son embraces each other, after which Courage reprimands her son. A sharp contrast to the Commander's accolade. But Mother Courage scolds her son not for his thuggery but for risking his life. She seems oblivious to Eilif's brutal deeds.



### Scene III

As the table of contents preceding the scene shows, three years have passed and that in this scene, Mother Courage with parts of a Finnish Regiment is taken prisoner, her daughter is saved, her wagon like wise, but her honest son dies. As the scene opens we are shown a camp idyll. The placing of the wagon is symbolic - Mother Courage's clothes line is tied to the wagon at one end, to a cannon at the other. With this the wagon stands as a symbol of Mother Courage's destiny and destruction. This scene is one of the longest scenes in the whole play and the first crisis in Mother Courage's life happens here. The scene can be divided into following signifying units.

1. As the scene opens we see Mother Courage's underhand deal in ammunition with the ordinance officer. At first she refuses, 'They are army stuff'. But when she says, "I won't take army stuff not at that price", and see her taking the bag of bullets, moral values hardly matter to her, but what matters is the price, the profit motive. Against the backdrop of the conceptual opposition of honest corruption : corruption Courage pretends honesty and accepts corruption as a necessity. It also links up the matter of fact corruption of both war and business.

2. Next we see Mother Courage in her role as a Mother.

She tells Swiss Cheese to take care of himself and specially the cash box. And as she says 'autumn may come at any time;' this statement of her's and in particular the word 'Autumn' has an underlying significance, because Swiss Cheese, shortly after this will be arrested and executed for the cash box by the enemy soldiers.

3. Yvette's presence reveals another dimension of human relationship and to the concept of war. Yvette's life as a whore exposes the all round moral degeneration created by the war, through ironically the war is in fact a war of religion. Her 'Fraternization song' which is neatly dovetailed into the action of the play, is a typical song of betrayal of young unprotected girls in the, 'Thirty years war.' Yvette's life stands as a warning for Katrin, so that she does not get involved with the soldiers, the only men available to her.

4. Next enters the Cook and Chaplain with news from Eilif needing money. Here also Mother Courage's role as a mother is demonstrated. At first she refuses but takes out some money from her purse saying 'give him this. It's a sin He's speculating in mother's love, he ought to be ashamed of himself'.

5. Mother Courage, offers them brandy and all three, the

chaplain the cook and Mother Courage sit together and talk about the current developments of the war and give their own view points which ironically is opposing viewpoints. The chaplain, representing institutionalized religion, voices the establishment attitude He propagates the myth of war being, 'a religious one, and therefore pleasing unto God. The Cook who belongs to a lower rank of society immediately demolishes it with sarcasm. He points out, though the war is a war of religion; it is all the same with any other wars, because there's is fleecing, plundering and not to mention a little raping.' Then he sings a verse of Luther's hymn, which is surprising because in actual terms it should be the Chaplain singing the hymn. Then follows it up with an ironically delinking version of the Swedish king's supposed war of liberation '... First it was just Poland he tried to protect from both men, specially the Kaiser, then his appetite grew with eating, and he ended up protecting Germany too', then he says, "For he had one thing in his favour anyway, God's Holy word, which all to the good, because other wise they could have said he did it for himself or for profit. That's how he kept his conscience clear. He always put conscience first'. The cook by referring to the king's 'appetite' and 'conscience' in the same breath deflates the idealistic view of the war of

religion. Mother Courage's view is anti heroic. She openly imputes the profit-motive of the war mongers, while recognizing a similar impulse in little people like herself as Mother Courage's view is Brecht's clear statement that war is big business for capitalism . By this juxtaposing of opposite view points the spectator is made to constantly shift and refocus his response.

6. Meanwhile in the background. Kathrin begins to 'strut about with Yvette's hat and copying Yvette's sexy walk'. Kattrin's imitation of Yvette's sexy walk, donning her hat and red boots, suggest the sexual frustration of the dumb grown up girl, apparently over protected by her mother. In wartime her only possible career would be prostitution.

7. Suddenly there is a surprise attack by the catholics and in the ensuing disorder the focus is on the energy and competence with which Mother Courage copes with such familiar war situations. She puts ashes on Kattrin's face, shouts at Swiss Cheese to throw his cash box, yells at the Chaplain - off with your pastor's coat and then switches on over to the enemy camp by buying the Catholic flag. Mother Courage is shrewd and her shrewdness allows her atleast to delay the inevitable disaster. Her attempt of which she is determined to achieve, is to survive in a society which is

the war while her methods ensure her own survival, her children on whom she is dependent unable to emulate her shrewdness, expose themselves to the storm by their 'virtues'.

Three days have passed after the attack, as the stage direction shows and all the inmates of the wagon sit anxiously eating.

8. Swiss Cheese is troubled by his inability to hand over the cash box to the sergeant. Swiss Cheese is certainly honest and loyal, but he is also presented as extremely simple indeed. He believes for instance, that the sergeant who has entrusted the box to him must have the money it contains in order to pay the soldiers who are in flight from the enemy - if they don't get their pay they don't have to run away. They don't have to move a foot.' And he has a child's dream of the fatherly sergeant patting him on the back when he does turn up with the cash. 'Wont the Sergeant be surprised? You have given me a pleasant disappointment, Swiss Cheese he'll say, I give you the cash box to look after, and you bring it back again'. This simple mindedness of Swiss Cheese worries Mother Courage and she cautions Swiss Cheese, 'your sense of duty worries me. I brought you up to be honest because, you're not very bright, but don't go too far!' As pointed earlier. Mother Courage is shrewd

and her shrewdness ensures her survival but her children unable to emulate her shrewdness expose themselves to the storm by their virtues. Shortly after this, in this same scene, Swiss these dies because his sense of duty prompted him to return the cash box to his regiment, while his stupidity prevented him from seeing the danger he was running into.

9. On the other hand the chaplain expresses his uneasiness. The Chaplain's religion volte-face further exposes the meaninglessness of a war of religion.

10. Mother reaction is altogether different which signifies her adaptability to any situation, she categorically declares, that the defeats and victories of people in high positions do not necessarily concern with those of ordinary people like herself. She supports her argument by citing instances of having profited from a defeat. This is also an example of Mother Courage's class consciousness. Further she also dismisses with Falstaffian nonchalance the notion of 'honour'. And when she says, "A good thing they let me stay in business. In business you ask what price, not what religion. And protestant trousers keep you just as warm," here Mother Courage expresses the irrelevance of religion to business and particularly to

wartime needs in down to earth manner.

11. Next we see Swiss Cheese and his sister Kattrin seating outside the Wagon. Mother Courage has gone with the Chaplain to buy meat. As Swiss Cheese sits sunning himself on the steps of his mother's wagon he tells to his sister, "Not many days more when you can sit in the sun in your shirtsleeves." The dramatic irony in the words soon became apparent, for within a few moments for within a few moments, Swiss Cheese will he hauled off to execution by an enemy patrol.

12. In the recurrent pattern of the play it is only Kattrin only who is present when Swiss Cheese is arrested by the enemy soldiers and in a flashback reminds us of the first scene. In the first scene, Eilif is enlisted into the army while Mother Courage is busy engaged over the sale of belt and it is only Kattrin who sees it and utter harsh cries. In this scene also, Swiss Cheese is arrested while Mother Courage has gone out with the Chaplain to buy meat and it is only Kattrin who runs up and down emitting little sounds and rushes to her mother as she returns with the Chaplain.

13. Next we see Swiss Cheese being brought as a prisoner to his mother's Wagon by the enemy soldiers. Mother Courage denys knowing Swiss Cheese and as she says "I can't know all

of them can I ? I don't ask, what's your name and are you a heathen? If they pay up. They're not heathens to me. Are you a heathen", she wants Swiss Cheese to declare himself a catholic so as to appease the Catholic army man. And when she says, "He's not that stupid, speak little stupid, the sergeant's going you a Chance !", though apprehensive of his simple mindedness, Mother Courage banks on his honesty to see him through the crisis. And this reminds us of the incident in SC 1, where Mother drew lots and predicted the fate of her children, with Swiss Cheese she was afraid of his stupidity but banked on his honesty. But now it seems that the conjunction of honesty and stupidity is going to be his death. His sense of duty prompted him to return the cash box to his regiment, while his stupidity prevented him from seeing the danger he was running into. As Swiss Cheese is taken away by the soldiers, Mother Courage shouts, 'He'd tell you! He's not that stupid' here she is indirectly urging Swiss Cheese to confess and try to save himself, but as pointed earlier, Mother Courage's Children are unable to emulate her Shrewdness, Swiss Cheese is incapable of taking the hint.

14. The Chaplain sings the 'The song of Hours', this song is Brecht's adaptation of a Seventeenth Century hymn by



Michael Weisse. The song is about how Jesus Christ was tortured and crucified. Though the Chaplain's comparison of Swiss Cheese with Christ may seem audacious, yet both are innocent victims of human aggression in their respective evil societies. Goodness can be seen as stupidity under such conditions. The Chaplain shows genuine compassion for a contemporary 'simple son of man', and Swiss Cheese's death is almost fore told through this song. The song is also an example of Brecht's alienation effect.

15. The situation now, become highly charged with tension as Mother Courage enter's 'excited', and say's, "It's life and death .... It's only a matter of money, but where can we get money?" Here Mother Courage implies that Swiss Cheese will be save if they bribe the Sergeant, but the question of money poses a problem. It also subtly suggests that Mother Courage is banking on the Cash box, only subsequent events prove otherwise and Mother Courage will be face with the real dilemma.

16. Next enters Yvette with her recently hooked Colonel. The first element of retardation appears in the haggling conversation about the wagon. Yvette, pompously discussing the matter with her recently hooked Colonel , wants to buy; Mother Courage wants to lease it. The wagon is finally pawned to Yvette for 200 gliders.

17. When they have come to an agreement a further hindrance emerges, creating a second element of retardation. The novice business woman Yvette, instead of hurrying to save Swiss Cheese, falls greedily upon, her wagon. Mother Courage has difficulty pushing her away.

18. As Yvette leaves, Mother Courage at this moment banks on human corruption to rescue Swiss Cheese. She says, "God is merciful, and men are bribable, that's how his will is done on earth as it is in Heaven. Corruption is our only hope. As long as there's Corruption, there'll be merciful judges and even the innocent may get off." The pervasive corruption in the army, whether protestant or catholic, has been indicated by the ammunition deal which opens this scene. Mother Courage's inversion of the traditional concept of justice, by making a virtue of corruption, emphasizes her experience of an unjust society. Brecht uses this alienation technique to suggest that administration of justice is class-based, so that the poor find little redress.

19. Mean while there is a tortuous wait. Yvette returns 'Panting'. Her news that Swiss Cheese have thrown the cash box into the river, creates a third retarding element. Mother Courage is confronted with a genuine dilemma. Realizing that the cash box is lost, she see's little

possibility of her retrieving the wagon pawned to Yvette. She has had the wagon for seventeen years, and it is all she has moreover there is also her unemployable dumb daughter, she say to consider her fate also. It is a question of sheer survival, and Mother Courage haggles over the bribe of Swiss Cheese. It is a genuine tragic dilemma and even as Mother Courage haggles she is prepared to part with the entire sum only she arrives at the decision too late.

20. Yvette is send away again this time to bargain about the bribe. For those waiting, the minutes stretch to an eternity. The suspense is almost concentrated almost to the point of physical pain. Mother Courage tells Kattrin that Swiss Cheese will be back and says that with the remaining money (ie. 80 gliders- 120 gliders being given as bribe) they could began again. Till this moment Courage does not give to despair and never does she betray her emotions.

21. Finally Yvette returns and reports the failure of her mission and the impatience of the constabulary. A third time she is sent away. Mother Courage now is willing to pay the whole amount only she arrives at the decision too late. She `sits', `silent' and says, "I believe - I've haggled too long". This is the moment of tragic realisation by Mother Courage that it is already to late : She has sacrificed her son to the wagon. Shocked by grief Mother Courage sits

immobile through the night.

22. Into the silence of those waiting comes the drum roll of the court martial. Mother Courage receives the reproaches of the prostitute, who has just been scolded for her own greed in stony silence.

23. But the tension is tightened up anew at one last point. Mother Courage must deny the body of her dead son if she and her daughter is to survive. Mother Courage's silent gesture of denying her son's body reveals her extreme self control in suffering. It is a supreme test of her own iron will; it lends her tragic stature and even engages our sympathy. In some sense it is comparable to Peter's denial of Christ in the Gospels - as a human betrayal under the pressure of circumstances. The difference is that what is condemnable as weakness in Peter is admirable as strength in Mother Courage. Morality is determined by a particular situation. If in the earlier scene the conceptual opposition was between safety/survival here the conceptual opposition is son/survival.

#### Scene IV

After the knife-edged situation of Scene III this scene depersonalizes Mother Courage's travails. The scene can be divided into the following signifying units.

1. Mother Courage's wagon has been badly damaged by the catholic soldiers and she intends to file a complaint. But at the end of the scene when the Captain finally arrives and the scrivener tells her to file her complaint, she replies, "I've thought better of it I'm not complaining". For Courage knows that in her situation it would be futile to protest and sticking out her neck would prove too dangerous as she tells to the young raging soldier who like her, intends to file a complaint, "we don't stick our necks out, do we, and why not? It wouldn't be good for business", The Conceptual opposition here is Revolt : Compromise.

2. The impotent rage of the young soldier is an illustration which gives the Revolt : Compromise opposition a larger context. The soldier has been robbed of his legitimate share of reward and intends to file a complaint. But can be afford to channelise his anger against injustice into action as Mother Courage asks him. `But how long? How long won't you stand for justice? One hour? Or two? And yet its the main thing'. And as she says "your rage has calmed down already. It was a short one and you'd need a long one", she points ont in realistic terms to the soldier his social position. To protest effectively against the injustice of the system his temporary outburst of anger would be pitifully inadequate. Only a sustained indignation would

generate the will to action for social intervention and social change. It brings out the distinction between useful and useless protest and is one of Brecht's interesting political statements in the play, and Brecht would obviously urge the 'long anger'.

3. Mother Courage's "Song of the Great Capitulation" functioning as advice to the young brawling soldier and connected in this way to external dramatic action, is a lyrical resume of the play : it points to the inner structure of the whole drama at the same time. The song full of maternal sympathy advises the young soldier to capitulate by recounting her own past experiences. In her youth she had considered herself special and aspired to become an uncompromising idealist. But soon her high hopes collapsed through sheer economic necessity and she learnt to submit to the powers that be. Bourgeois cliches like 'I am the master of my fate' and 'where there is a will, there's a way' turns out to be hollow. In the refrain of the song the individual is seen as marching in a military band, the picture of the music band, in which one winds up marching, "keeping in step, now fast, now slow/ And piping out our little spiel", underlies the gray opportunism, the wretched accomodation to people to which the human being is reduced

by the process of existence. Then the well known saying (man proposes god disposes) is turned into its opposite by a slight twist a mere change of punctuation (Man proposes : God disposes) which recurs from stanza to stanza, suggests that if God is not in control, it must be the officer commanding the band, that is a human being whose orders may be fallible and can be opposed. Of course there is no point in anyone acting on his own, but if the whole band decided to disobey, the officer in charge would be without power to enforce his command. Within the overall conceptual opposition of revolt : compromise, the importance of the collective and collective action is brought out strongly in this song. Through this song we also discover that Mother Courage is not a happy Machevillian boasting of her realism. She is deeply ashamed. As she sings the song we see how close she came to being a truly wise woman. Despite the confident tone of her cynical lingo, Courage is not sure of herself and her little philosophy. She teaches the soldier that it is futile to protest, but she apparently does not know this herself until she reminds herself of it, for she has come here to protest. Here we learn to recognize in Courage not only contradiction but conflict too. She knows what she has thought. She is not sure what to think. This scene is one of the scene in which Brecht himself also felt

Mother Courage's utmost depravity.

4. As a protagonist, Courage's desposition for quick compromise and her strategy of non-resistance are antithetical to the idea of tragedy. What is significant is the process of her constitution as human subject; that is realism par excellence. The emphasis is on the mode of an individual's being in praxis. Nobility of character and piety of action are transcendental traits which are normally served from the material situation of a protagonist. Despite her compromises she is ruined and badly mauled. In this lies the tragic irony. a series of reversals overtake her. But the tragic elements are neutralised as she takes her mauling in its stride and does not complain against any force working against her destiny. She is just there, like her wagon bearing the brunt of any eventuality.

5. The Brechtian dramaturgy does not superimpose change on the individual against his/ her materiality. But the idealist notion gives precedence to sudden change of heart. In the Brechtean perspective, the process of an individuals constitution becomes more important than the individual. An abrupt change would be unscientific, irrational and transcendental. Moreover it is not the individual but the system that matters. The complaining soldier, too is in the



business of war. His anger is momentary; his is not a revolt of the mind.

#### Scene V

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggest, two years have passed and the war covers wider and wider territory. The scene opens to the faint music of a victory march, which sounds like mockery, as the soldiers are out for drink and loot. This scene set in a war ruined village presents a chaotic panorama of human motives. The scene is divided into the following signifying units.

1. As the scene opens we see Mother Courage refusing to sell brandy on credit. She adopts the hard commercial line by refusing her shirts to be used as bandages for the injured peasants. Mother Courage appears inordinately callous towards suffering humanity. "I have myself to think of" she says. All along, she has been thinking of nothing but herself and her children and has reached violent. Her's is a violence of sanity and human compassion. She even prevents Kattrin from entering the burning house, who finds the temptation of goodness' irresistible and is shocked by her mother's inhumanity. Heartless Pragmatism and callousness are the signs of a brutalized mind and that is what Mother Courage is. At the end of the scene, when she

snatches a fur coat from a soldier who was trying to make off with her wine bottles; she truly acts like a hyena of the battle field. Mother Courage here has become so hardened, having sacrificed her son to the wagon, she has become a distorted human creature and adapts to the dehumanised setting without any compunction.

2. Kattrin's action stands in direct opposition to Mother Courage's. Kattrin's dumbness symbol of the oppressed, tormented creature, brings a loud accusation against the inhuman condition of the world. She spontaneously risks her life to rescue the peasant's baby from the burning cottage. As she rocks the baby, humming a lullaby to it, the archetypal image of motherhood is projected on stage. This sets up a series of oppositions between the two mother figures, almost in the mode of dialectical thesis and antithesis : the real mother versus the ideal mother, the destroyer of children the preserver of children, the false mother versus the true mother. Mother Courage is the biological mother of her own children; Kattrin deprived of physical mother-hood, becomes the emotional and spiritual mother of other people's children. Mother Courage loses her children to the war without realizing its devastating nature; Kattrin in a sense,

acquires children from the war, being fully aware of its destructive potential. Mother Courage manages to preserve her own life but inadvertently sacrifices her children leading to a sterile future. Katrin consciously risks her own life in order to preserve other people's children who constitute the future generation. Katrin's action also stood out against the greed, malice and uncharitableness of the situation.

3. The Chaplain, who uptill now had been living a parasitic life, hiding his religion retrieve some of his professional dignity by his helpful gesture of rescuing the peasants from the ruined farm house. This aspect of his character shows the positive qualities of the clergyman and also his common humanity as one of the oppressed.

4. Each character in this scene adopts a different gestus to the human disaster, so that the spectator is made to constantly shift and re focus his responses. Holding together in antithetical tension several conflicting attitudes, the scene offers a kaliedoscopic view of war's harrowing reality, and encourages complex seeing.

Scene VI:

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggests, TILLY'S victory (Sc 5) is ironically followed by his funeral. The scene is set before the city of Ingolstadt in

Bavaria. Against the backdrop of the Commander's funeral the focus is on the life and reaction of ordinary people, who seem to care little for war heroes. The scene can be divided into the following units.

1. As the scene opens we are shown the inside of a canteen tent. The Chaplain and the regimental Scrivener are playing draughts. Mother Courage and his daughter are taking an inventory. In the distance, drums and funeral music are heard, but the music sounds hollow as the soldiers get drunk on their pay instead of paying their last respects to their commander. Meanwhile the funeral procession starts and as the Chaplain says, 'the funeral procession is just starting out', Mother Courage remarks in a kind of black humour, "Pity about the chief-twenty pairs of socks-getting killed that way. They say it was an accident there was a fog over the fields that morning and the fog was to blame". Though actually it was king Gustavus who died in the thick mist at the battle of Lutzen, and his body was found on the enemy's side of a contested ditch. Brecht transferred the circumstances to Tilly's death to provide an opportunity for Mother Courage's unflattering commentary on the commander's military career. And again as she says, "but it came out that the churches had been shot up by his orders, or the

poor commander wont be hearing any bells when they lower him in his grave." Here Mother Courage's contempt is loud with sympathy and it exposes the inverted values of the commander and his establishment.

2. As the stage direction shows the funeral march starts and all look towards the rear. The Chaplin says, ' Now they're filing past the body.' Meanwhile Mother Courage gives her own parodic funeral oration. In her ironically subversive funeral oration she views history from the underside pointing out various social contradictions and says military operations cannot be executed without the help of common soldiers. She says, "The finest plans have always been spoiled by the littleness of them that should carry them out. Even emperors can't do it all by themselves, they count on support from their solders and the people around about. Am I right ?" This words of Mother Courage by implication conveys the social message that by refusing to participate in the war, the soldiers and the common riff-raff as a class might prevent or stop war instead of being exploited by Commanders and Generals. Here we learn to recognize in Mother courage a wisdom which demands action of her and shows her how to act. Here she see more deeply her condition and comprehends that by refusing to participate in the war , she would have prevented herself from being

exploited by the war mongers. But the question here does she really have a choice? With bankruptcy and the destruction of her existence constantly before her eyes, she is determined to bring herself and her children through the war by means of her canteen business and the war being her main customer if she refuses to participate in the war it would mean the end of her and her family. This is one of the main contradictions underlying Mother Courage's condition.

3. The chaplain having latched on to Mother Courage and her wagon for his subsistence he eloquently holds forth on the inevitable continuity of war so long as there are emperors, kings and popes. He is aware that the end of the war might mean ruin for both Mother Courage and himself and so finds it convenient to believe in war and justify it. While the audience is expected to notice its subversive implications. By holding on forth the view that so long as there are Popes and Emperors the war will always continue, by implication the Emperor and Pope that is the people in power, are charged with unleashing and sustaining wars for their own benefit.

4. Suddenly the scrivener interrupts and asks about 'peace' and says. 'In the long run you can't live without peace!' the Chaplain replies in a cynical vein, "I'd say

there is peace even in war, war has its islands of peace. For war satisfies all needs, even those of peace, yes, they're provided for, or the war couldn't keep going." The meanings of war and peace are enmeshed together. Next he says that what one cannot do in wartime one also cannot do that in peace time also and what one can do in peace time one can do that also in wartime. Thus by implication the Chaplain's words would mean as long as one gets his means for survival peace and war hardly matters. But if we look at it from another way it would also mean, peace and war hardly makes any difference for the oppressed class because they will always remain exploited. Within the overall perspective of the play there is hardly any opposition to the war which is accepted, more or less without complaint, as a way of life. It is only Mother Courage who see's things more clearly whose descriptions of the war and society which produces it strike us with their aptness, and yet she is at the same time the "victim" of the society, unable to rise above it, unable to convert her insight into anything more than a stoic sceptism.

5. The Chaplains words about war and peace reassure Mother Courage and she decides to buy more supplies. But on the other hand, Kattrin is distressed. Kattrin longs for peace but on hearing the Chaplains words, she stops working

and stares at the Chaplain in distress.

6. Next Kattrin leaves with the scriviner to buy more supplies. On seeing this, the Chaplain asks, you don't mind her going with the scriviner, Mother Courage replies back, "she's not so pretty anyone would want to ruin her." But Mother Courage is wrong because as the scene closes and as Kattrin returns home with the supplies, she returns wounded.

7. When the Chaplain comments on Mother Courage's way of functioning her business and says, "I see how you got your name," Mother Courage replies, "The poor need courage. They're lost, that's why." This is one of the major expressions of social criticism conveyed in this play. By courage in this play does not mean the courage to revolt against the system but the courage to participate in the system. She says, That they can get up in the morning is something-in their plight. Or that they plough a field -in war time. Even there bringing children in to the world shows they have courage, for they have no prospects." Thus the poor need courage for their very existence, given their state of deprivation and wretchedness as a result of unnatural exploitation by the church and state. Mother Courage herself identifies herself with the have-nots and their courage born of despair. Though rooted in a historical



context, the statement of Mother Courage, "The poor need courage," poses a challenge to the audience to become class conscious and to change a class based society.

8. If in the earlier scenes the chaplain created the impression of being a somewhat phlegmatic cynical and compromising, here he discloses his human weakness in his proposal to Mother Courage. Added to this, his dependence on Mother Courage yet his reluctance to do physical labour is tantamount to parasitism, which Brecht attributes to the clergy in the social structure.

9. Mother Courage rejects the proposal and manages to put the Chaplain in his place. It shows another interesting trait of Mother Courage. As an experienced woman of the world she is well adept in dealing with personal relationships with men. Meanwhile Katrin enters breathless, with a wound across the eye and forehead, dragging all sorts of articles parcels, leather goods and a drum Katrin has been attacked on the way, Mother Courage says, 'I'll bet it was that soldier who got drunk on my liquor!.' It sounds ironic. Mother Courage cannot help but draw her children into her tragic orbit.

10. Mother Courage bandages Katrin's wound and offers Yvette's red boots (which she had earlier coveted in scene 3) as compensation. Katrin rejects them in a silent

gesture of reproach to her mother, since she no longer has any use for fine accessories to enhance her appeal. Kattrin now with a scar added to her dumbness all hopes of getting a husband and children are dashed away.

11. Meanwhile cannon shots are heard, the Chaplain says, "Now they're lowering the Commander into his grave; a historic moment;". To this Mother Courage says, 'Its a historic moment to me when they hit my daughter over the eye'. Mother Courage counters indignantly the heroic and monumental views of history expressed by the Chaplain, redefining history in personal terms of her daughter's victimisation. She further discloses that Kattrin's dumbness has resulted from the war. Her's is the veiw of the 'Common riff-raff', the underprivelaged. For the first time, Mother Courage comprehends that the maintenance of her life is also its destruction, and she gives vent to the terrible recognition in an outcry: "Curse the war", as the scenc ends. Mother Courage at this moment realizes that war is a sordid source of income.

#### Scene VII

Scene seven is gestic. It deliberately interrupts the action to demonstrate Mother Courages contradictory attitude to war. As the heading preceding the scene suggests Mother

Courage is at the height of her business career. The scene comprises of one composite part only.

1. Mother Courages words, 'I won't let you spoil my war for me. Destroys the weak, does it '. Well what does peace do for 'em huh', follows like a retraction after the condemnation in the earlier scene. The flash of understanding which she had in the earlier scene has disappeared. As she sings: 'War is a business proposition/not with cream-chesse but steel and lead; for her there is no difference between business (war) and ideology; the business is her ideology. The readers are shocked to see Mother Courages volte face, she seems bribed by war to sing its praise as a business proposition. We see here how Mother Courage has blatantly and quickly forgotten her bitter lessons having prospered in war. Brecht intended this scene to be seen as a deliberate shock of alienation.

#### Scene VIII

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggests the year is 1632, the same year Gustavus Adolphus was defeated in the battle of Lutzen. The peace threatens Mother Courage with ruin and her brave son Eilif preforms one of his heroic deeds and comes to a shameful end. Though no place is mentioned, this scene is located far enough from the battle feild for the news of peace to take three weeks

to reach. The scene can be divided into the following parts:

1. As the scene opens, its an early summer morning, an old woman and her son dragging a large bag of bedding approaches Mother Courages wagon. Mother Courage unwilling to met the early morning visitors shouts from inside the wagon, 'Must you come at crack of dawn?' Suddenly bells start ringing and voices from the rear shouts, 'Its peace'. The announcement of peace produces contrasting responses. It brings relief to the young man and his mother and the old lady faints in a daze. For Mother Courage it means ruin. She feels cheated since the supplies she has bought up are likely to remain unsold as she says- 'Don't tell me peace has broken out when I've just gone and bought all these supplies!' Mother Courage inspite of the impending ruin consoles herself with the fact that at least two of her children are still safe. For the Chaplain who has been disguising his religion under the cloak, which Mother Courage had lent him in scene 3, now with the onset of peace feels encouraged to put on his pastors coat again but Mother Courage still doubtful about the news of peace warns him to make sure before proclaiming his religion lest he might be caught as an unbeliever.

2. The Commander's Cook (Sc 3) arrives with the news of

Eilif's coming. With the arrival of the Cook the news of the peace is confirmed. Mother Courage calls out for Kattrin, to convey the news of Eilif's coming, but Kattrin still conscious of the wound which was inflicted on her in scene six refuses to come out. It is a pity that Kattrin who had been longing for peace, is indifferent to it now with the scar on her face, she feels disillusioned by all that is around her. Even the news of her only brother's coming fails to evoke any excitement on her.

3. Next Mother Courage tells the Cook about her ruined condition and blames it on the Chaplain. She tells the Cook, how on the Chaplain's advice, she has brought additional supplies, but with the peace all her goods will remain unsold and she is doomed. Meanwhile the Chaplain turns with his pastor's coat, the Cook immediately charges him for giving bad advice. On being charged the Chaplain suddenly loses tack and indignantly poses as a man of peace and denounces Mother Courage. The Chaplain's words, 'You're a hyena of the battle field. You live off war', rings false and pathetic. Because in contrast to the Clergyman who is not adopted but certainly compromised, who seeks to live of the business and at the same time to keep aloof from it, Mother Courage has recognised, if not the danger than at least the inevitability of business and the identity of

peace and war grounded on the mercantile sphere. But the Chaplain's warning at the end of the accusations rings true, 'But don't forget the proverb : he who sups with the devil must use a long spoon!'. Mother Courage had received a similar warning from the Sergeant at the close of scene 1. Though it is evident that Mother Courage has recognised the contradiction inherent in her condition yet she has still not learnt her lesson. Through the use of a popular proverb the Chaplain's caution takes on the nature of a universal truth, also applicable to the audience. This was Brecht's own warning to Europe about the impending world war in 1939.

4. If in scene six, the Chaplain has exposed one of his human weaknesses. Here he exposes another weakness by his unseemly cock fight with the Cook. With the arrival of the Cook the Chaplain senses that now he has a rival. And it becomes plain to him when Mother Courage refuses to be browbeated and return his insults, that he has been ousted in favour of the Cook. The Chaplain in distress is allowed an authentic moment of self recognition. which Brecht labels, 'the dignity of misery'. Shedding his former arrogance, he humbly begs the Cook not to drive him away, admitting the life of a tramp had made him a better man and that he cannot preach anymore. This change in attitude marks

his growth in social consciousness and moral integrity.

5. In the next episode Yvette Pottier ( the camp prostitute of Sc.3) enters all decked in black with a servant in tow. Of all the three (Mother Courage, Chaplain, Cook) Yvette seems to be in a better condition, having hooked a Colonel but who is dead now. With the arrival of Yvette, the tables are now turn on the Cook. As it happens, the Cook is the same Peter which Yvette talks of in scene 3, the one who duped and ruined her life. Yvette lets out a volley of accusations and denounces the Cook as a 'miserable cur'. But all this accusations heaped on the Cook has no effect on Mother Courage who is more occupied on how to disposed off her goods as she tells Yvette, 'May be you can help me at army headquarters, you have contacts '. It is evident from this that for Mother Courage her business comes first, the conduct of an individual makes no difference for her.

6. As Mother courage leaves with Yvette, now it is the Chaplain's turn to gloat over the Cook's humiliation at Yvette's hands. As a former clergyman he mistakenly assumes that this is the end of Mother Courage's relationship with the Cook, without recokening with Mother Courage's amoral pragmatism. The Cook expresses his fear that now with the arrival of Yvette his relationship with Mother Courage stands shaky.

7. As the Chaplain and the Cook recalls nostalgically those days at the war camp, it is quite apparent that peace makes them desperate for peace spells the doom of their careers.

8. In a recurrent pattern of the play, Eilif is executed for a crime while Mother Courage is again away on a business errand. In the next episode, Eilif arrives with two soldiers, his hands are fettered. Eilif is accused of a crime which in war time would have brought him honours. Now instead of the accolades he is being sentenced for execution. To Eilif it is absurd that he must now be executed for a deed similar to what had earned him honour (Scene 2) as, he says, "Its no different It's what I did before." The tragic irony of Eilif's situation demonstrates the relativity of morals. Eilif became a victim of the brief peace because of his war training. Eilif's situation also underlines the degeneration in human behaviour that war perpetrates. As the soldiers take him away, the Chaplain follows them advising the Cook to conceal the fact from Mother Courage. The chaplain now seems to have found the right job both as a priest and as a fellow human being.

9. The tragic irony is doubled when Mother Courage returns joyfully announcing, 'the wars on again'. Unaware of the current developments, she tells the Cook, 'I didn't get rid



of this stuff after all, thank god!' The cook still shaken with Eilif's execution is unable to react fast. On seeing this, Mother Courage asks him, 'what's on your mind? Something the matter,' the cook then tells Mother Courage about Eilif's arrival but Mother Courage still excited with the war starting again, listens half-heartedly only and says, 'I'll be with our side this time,' with the hope of meeting Eilif, ironically unaware of Eilif's fate. As she says 'And the war couldn't get him,' this underscores the situational irony. Mother Courage still relies on her son's cleverness to see him through the war. The cook however has already remarked that Eilif's cleverness amounts to stupidity if it costs him his life. The relativity of values is again emphasized. The scene closes with a song of Mother Courage's Echoing a slogan carried in Lord Kitchner's famous recruiting poster of world war-I. Ironically she does not realize the true significance of her own words that the war is demanding her children. This is what the sergeant had warned as early as scene one. The earlier oppositions of war and peace persist and intensify the contradictions.

#### Scene IX

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggests the war has lasted sixteen (16) years. The account given here of death disease and famine, barren countryside and

ruined cities, prowling wolves and human degradation draws attention to the destructiveness and futility of such a war of religion. The chronicle play takes a leap in time to depict Mother Courage and the Cook reduced to beggary. This scene can be divided into the following parts.

1. As the scene opens, Mother Courage and the Cook are in front of a half ruined personage begging. It is quite apparent that both are tired of their vagabond lives and want something stable as Mother Courage says "Lamb. I'am tried of wandering, too I feel like a butchers dog taking meat to my customers and getting none myself." Mother Courage even has apocalyptic visions of selling suitable goods in heaven or hell. As she cites the all round degradation; 'Villagers, have been caught eating their younger children and nuns have been caught committing robbery;' the all round desolation created by the war is conveyed to the audience.

2. Next the Cook tells Mother Courage about the offer of opening an Inn in Utrecht and suggests to her that they could open the inn together. Mother Courage thinks over it and decides to tell Kattrin. While telling Kattrin about the Cook's offer, the Cook overhears it and interrupts, he calls Mother Courage aside and tells her that the offer included

only her and not Kattrin. Meanwhile unaware by both of them Kattrin is listening to their conversation quietly. Mother Courage is now torn between the two prospects, the offer of a home in Utrecht and the thought of leaving Kattrin alone with the wagon. As Mother Courage ponders over it the Cooks breaks into a song, 'the song of the wise and good.'

3. The main theme of the Cook's song is the futility of virtue in this world, the charm of this song in the drama at hand lies in the natural interaction of the lyric and dramatic planes. From stanza to stanza , the text of the song is more advanced than interrupted by the home-baked reflections of the Cook- a chanting, logically inarticulate sing-song in prose. These reflections have a semi-public character, they are asides as it were, and sanctioned. by a "public" verse form, combine expressively into an emotional whole with the message of the song. The popular ballad form expands into an unspeakable melancholy, subtly humorous litany of the despoiled creature and of the senselessness of human effort. It is a song as though sung from a distance and still of direct, elementary expressive power. The Cook must apply his song about the person of great virtue to his own particular case. In this process comical "leaps" occur, which reflect the absurdity of all attempts to bring sense into the senseless and chaotic course of the world. Right at

the beginning after the 'great men' are named "who were brought low" the cook proceeds: "So you can see we're law abiding folk too, and have a hard time getting by." The 'too' attempts among other things, to force the two separate ideas together conceptually. But, as we all know the cook does not belong among those for whom the 'virtues' listed in the song have become dangerous - that is 'daring', 'honesty', 'wisdom' 'unselfishness', it is by no means "too bad for this world" (to quote the three penny opera.) and the word 'decent' with which he describes himself is in fact a decorative epithet. In the fourth stanza of the song, he sings about Saint Martin and the poor man, how both of them froze as a result of excessive altruism of the former - 'Better for you if you have none' there the cook unconcernedly intones further: "Thats how it is with us. We're law abiding folk, we keep to ourselves...." and so as the song says, "we sink lower and lower." This lamenting lyrical, reflective style, which makes the inexactitude of popular reasoning fruitful for artistic purposes, usually serves Brecht as a means of social criticism. The song is also concerned with making language totally relative. It is "alienated" to the chatter that is not only the jargon of a Cook but represents the speech of even the most intelligent

man when he becomes conscious of the extent of the catastrophe of life. The concepts of virtue in the song moreover are not exempted from the process of alienation. The song uses them as formulas emptied of meaning as moral 'Topoi' connected with semilegendary, semihistorical personages (the wise Solomon, the daring Caesar). Like the song of the 'great capitulation' (Sc,4) the song also emphasizes the speed of decay : "But ere night came and day did go/ The fact was clear to every one : It was his wisdom that had brought him low". The moralizing scheme suited to the popular ballad style reveals a deeper metaphysical meaning. Behind the rational pragmatic appeal to morality and the argument of morality, the natural sound of existence is hidden : lament for the transitoriness of what exists and the insignificance of human works, the good as well as bad.

4. As the song ends Mother Courage has already made her decision. She rejects the Cooks offer and decides to stay with Kattrin as she says, 'There's nothing to think over. I'm not leaving her here.' Mother Courage confirming the dignity of her mother hood sacrifices her man for her daughter.

5. Meanwhile Kattrin who had overheard the conversation between her mother and the cook decides to leave and clambers out of the wagon with a bundle in her hand. Kattrin

though mute is not foolish, she understands that she is a liability to her mother and decides to leave quietly unnoticed rather than stand in the way of her mother's happiness.

6. Mean while Mother Courage unaware that Kattrin has overheard the conversation between the Cook and herself and of the decision Kattrin has made, calls out for Kattrin with a plate of soup. When Mother Courage see's Kattrin with the bundle she hastens to assure her that she has rejected the Cook's proposal. But as Mother Courage tells Kattrin, it is doubtful whether her decision was clinched by her daughter as she says, "you didn't come into it, it was the wagon". May be both. Perhaps Mother Courage is more right than she knows. As the scene close both Mother and daughter harness themselves to the wagon. It is a tragic sight now, the family of four has been reduced to only two.

#### Scene X

As the table of contents preceding the play suggests, during the whole of 1635 Mother Courage and Kattrin pulls the wagon along the roads of Germany. The scene is set on a high way outside a prosperous farm house. This scene like the earlier scene 7 to which it forms an antithesis also

offers a social gestus. This scene marks a pause in the action to indicate the utter desolation of the camp followers. This scene forms one composite part only.

1. In this scene only a voice from inside is heard singing a folk song while Mother Courage and Kattrin stops for a moment to listen to it from outside. The song celebrates the garden's beauty and the shelter and security that a home provides. Like a tableau the scene offers a marked contrast between the haves and the havenots. The wagon which had seen better days now stands as ragged dilapidated cart and when place against the prosperous farmhouse the opposition is apparent : a war ravaged wagon versus a secure prosperous farmhouse. Projected by this ensemble of appalling human condition is the wedge that divides the haves and the have nots. Two women alone, insecure wearied and the humming sound of a contented voice. In the context of the total misery the rhythms of linguistic signs which are the common heritage of mankind have become the possession of the rarest and most privileged. The song as such is humanly beautiful but set against the ruin faced by Mother Courage and Kattrin it evokes questioning response. It signifies that the culture of a people is determined by their material condition. One of the most burning question which this song evokes is who are this people living such a contented life

when the other half is struggling for an existence.

#### Scene XI

As the table of contents preceding the play suggests, the year is 1636. Catholic troops threaten the Protestant town of Halle. The 'stone' begins to speak. Mother Courage loses her daughter and journeys on alone. The war is not yet near its end. The climax of the play is reached in this penultimate scene. In this scene it is Kattrin who takes the centre stage and, with this the problematics of the dramatic discourse acquires new dimension. Earlier it was Courage and war, now it is Kattrin who breaks her stony silence by finding a voice through the drum and express her hatred for war. The drum here is the same drum, she had earlier dragged in when assaulted by the soldiers. The scene can be divided into the following units.

1. As the scene opens, Mother Courage's wagon now with a straw roof, stands near a farmhouse. The town of Halle is threatened with an ambush. Kattrin is alone in the tattered wagon while Mother Courage is once again away in town on a business errand.
2. When the soldiers break in at night, the peasants of



the farmhouse habituated to such war time contingencies, react in routine gestures of self defense, promptly capitulate and resort to ritual prayer. When threatened by the soldiers that their cattle will be slaughtered unless they show the way to the town of Halle, the peasant woman's tearful plea "spare the cattle", underlies the importance of food and the means of livelihood. The attitude of the soldiers to the civil population is shown as callous and brutal. Here, the soldiers threaten to Kill the cattle first, knowing that the peasants cannot afford to risk their means of livelihood. Their problem is one of economic necessity, rather like Mother Courage's when she bargains over the bribe of Swiss Cheese's life. Just as it would be impossible for Mother Courage to survive without her wagon, so too the, peasants could not live without their cattle. They surrender instantly to the soldiers when their cattle is spared and thank the soldiers ritually for saving them from starvation

3. Against the apathy of the peasants, Katrin's alertness attracts attention. She is aroused to act when she hears the peasant woman's prayers for the safety of her grand children. Brecht writes; "The whole point is missed if her love of children is despreciated as mindless animal instinct. Her saving of the city of Halle is an intelligent

act. Unlike her mother she sticks out her neck for a purpose. The significance of the situation emerges through the opposition of prayers : praxis. Prayers and inaction are conceptually linked. Kattrin's action demonstrates that neither inaction nor passive prayers changes situations.

4. In the musical pattern of the play, Kattrin discards the harmonica for the drum, the same drum which she had been clutching when she was injured (sc. 6). The drum now serves as her instrument for warning the town of Halle. Kattrin climbs up on the peasants roof and sacrificing her life for stranger's children awakens the sleeping town of Halle with her drum beats. Neither the promise of sparing her Mother nor the battering at the wagon can stop her from drumming. The wagon has no significance for her she acts without it severing herself from its perennial presence. She takes the threat to her own life as a final challenge. Streaming with tears, she rises above her mother's pragmatic teachings by refusing to capitulate. Kattrin's action here is not an act of "courage" not an action which qualifies one for business and maintaining one's life, but the exact opposite of all this: spontaneous, unplanned, so to speak biological humanity which transpires beyond all cliches of heroism like a birth: with groans and contortions, according to the stage

direction.

5. In the dialectical pattern of the play the mute creature triumphs in the noise contest, the most helpless renders help. Resembling a miracle 'the stone speaks,' and the prayers of the peasants are unexpectedly, if ironically answered despite their own inaction and hostility to Kattrin. Kattrin performs the life saving human miracle at the cost of her life. This is the most intensely dramatic scene of the play. Tormented by a double anxiety for her life and for the children of Halle, Kattrin giving out "noises of distress," drums herself to death weeping: an innocent sacrifice of her friendliness. As she is struck by the soldiers bullets, her last feeble drumbeats is echoed by the cannon of the awakening defenders. If anywhere it is here that Brecht's theory of alienation is itself alienated, here the critical distance of the smoking audience is destroyed. Kattrin's action elicits our sympathy with her every move and gesture, till sympathy becomes complete identification or empathy. In the recurrent pattern of the play, Mother Courage loses her only surviving child while she is away on a business errand.

6. Kattrin's action is in direct opposition to that of the peasants. Kattrin driven by her sympathetic nature, sacrifices herself, the peasants clear headedly consider the

fatal results for them of any action and escape into prayer, saving their own skins. "There is nothing we can do." A rational will to self preservation and the wish to that some kind of help might come from somewhere alternate in the prayer pathetically and mechanically. When suddenly help "comes," the pious resignation turns abruptly into a fearfully wild, instinctively egocentric attack upon the mute girl. The instantly ready habit of prayer of these "poor" people is similar to the vital, courageous conformity which Mother Courage embraces in order to remain in undisturbed enjoyment of her business. Hard-boiled courage in the face of reality and ideological flight out of reality correspond to one another : both are forms of capitulation.

7. The young peasant who has made feeble efforts to rebel unlike the elderly peasants realizes the value of Kattrin's heroic action and attempts to give her moral support as he screams out to Kattrin- 'Don't stop now'. Brecht here seems to have posited his hopes of social amelioration in the younger generation.

8. The Soldiers 'She did it' underlies the heroic action of Kattrin and her triumph over the soldiers. As the dying beats of the drum are answered by the cannon and alarm bells from the town, the soldiers are forced to admit Kattrin's

triumph.

## Scene XII

As the table of contents preceding the scene suggests. The scene happens towards morning the drums and pipes of the troops on March receding. In front of the wagon Mother Courage sits by Kattrin's body while the peasants of the previous scene stand nearby. This scene can be divided into the following signifying units.

1. Mother Courage is so stunned that she refuses to believe Kattrin is dead and tries to delude herself that her daughter is asleep. As she bends over her dead child she is seen in the archetypal image of the mother bending over and singing a lullaby to her child. But this image rings false when compared to the image projected by Kattrin in Scene 5. Kattrin (in sc 5) croons a lullaby to a live baby she has saved and tosses it for sheer joy. Mother Courage sings a lullaby to her dead child whose body she then covers sorrowfully. The self regarding content of Mother Courage's lullaby wipes the sentimentality of the situation. Her lullaby is a selfish song: in the midst of poverty her child must have plenty, other peoples children must be deprived to provide her child with luxuries as she sings, "they're starving you have a cake."

2. Mother Courage when forced to recognize Kattrin's death

reacts in a dazed and mechanical manner. When asked by the peasant if she has anyone to accompany her, Mother Courage replies- 'there's one My Eilif'. Mother Courage's belief that Eilif is still alive deepens the tragic irony of the situation. The conceptual opposition of Reality/ Illusion surfaces her. Blinded by the illusion that Eilif is still alive she fails to see the reality of the situation that she is all alone with her tattered wagon, having sacrificed all her children to the war.

3. As Mother Courage harnesses herself to the wagon her words, 'I hope I can pull the wagon, I'll manage, there is not much in it now I must start up again in business'- intends to alienate Mother Courage by hammering home the point that she learns nothing from her new experiences and carries on mechanically. It is tragic, that Mother Courage who has just now lost her only surviving child and reduced to beggary, still has hopes of starting afresh her business. The conceptual opposition of Illusion/ Reality surfaces here. Her illusion that if she starts again in business she will survive makes her blind to the unprofitable and destructive nature of war.

4. As Mother Courage starts to pull the tattered wagon, a variation of the song which she sings at the beginning of

the play is taken up by the soldiers. Mother Courage is now too broken to sing herself and this horror of the never ending war fare strikes a note of bleak despair. Though the soldiers version of Mother Courage song sounds deeply pessimistic, but as they sing, 'Only a miracle can save us, it underlines the fact that though religious miracles might be over, but the possibility of human miracles remains open to the people. A human miracle has actually been witnessed in the 'speaking stone' (scene 11). Thus religious miracles might be over, but the possibility of human miracles remains open to the audience.

5. The final stage image of Mother Courage's exit, pulling her wagon an obvious contrast to her jaunty entry with her children in Sc1 acquires a profound ambivalence. On the one hand she looks bowed and battered like an old cart horse dragging her dilapidated wagon - the emblem of her sordid business; on the other hand she becomes a symbol of human endurance. through her heroic determination to somehow, almost anyhow, keep on pulling the wagon. Her wagon may thus signify the life of 'little people' doggedly rolling on despite hardship and catastrophe. Ultimately the two seemingly coalesce, since Mother Courage is actually both. Till the end she remains a great living contradiction making a disturbing impact on the audience.

## **CHAPTER II**



## CHAPTER - 2

### Section I

#### THEMATIC CONFIGURATION OF THE PLAY

Following the syntagmatic analysis of the scenes, it is seen clearly, that the play acquires an essential unity through the character of Mother Courage, who with her wagon the constant emblem of her trade and destiny dominating the stage from the beginning till the end. Mother Courage is a complex figure - intelligent yet blind, indomitable yet cowardly, self regarding yet unselfish, realistic yet unsuccessful, indeed she achieves a consistency through her contradictions.<sup>1</sup> But Mother Courage is no psychological mystery; she is rather the human embodiment of a complex social phenomenon. Her main contradiction is to be located between her individual and personal role as mother and her social and public function as a tradeswoman. In her social situation she may also be seen as both exploiter and exploited. As a businesswoman she wants to get her cut out of the war; to that extent she acts a small tradeswoman she is the victim of the establishment, the people in power who have unleashed war for their own profit. Thus she is both

constituted by society and exploited by it. As a representative of the common people Mother Courage shares the vitality as well as the desperate courage of the poor. Her joining the war as a business enterprise, knowing and fearing its hazards, constitutes this act of courage.

For Courage the war is her 'destiny' because as an individual she is presented with no possible alternative to her course of action. To desert the war, to attempt to survive as a peasant, seems no better a solution for her, as the play itself demonstrates clearly enough. With bankruptcy and the destruction of her existence constantly before her eyes, she is determined to bring herself and her three children through the war by means of her trade. Take part and keep aloof; this is the contradictory slogan of Mother Courage, born out of senselessness of the situation. While her methods ensure her survival, her children on whom she is dependent, unable to emulate her shrewdness expose themselves to the war by their 'virtues'. There is an overwhelming sense of wasted potential because each of her children represents a virtue - bravery, honesty, kindness - and this became destructive in an evil and hostile world as 'The song of the wise and good' laments in the play.

But Mother Courage is no mere victim of fate. War is not a natural catastrophe, it is man-made. This is made amply

clear at the beginning and repeated through out the play. Mother Courage is keen to join the war for profit making and, moreover wants it to continue. She has a partial awareness of its danger but operates under the illusion that with the right kind of adaptability and resilience she will bring her children through. The play reveals the exact degree of tragic balance between individual responsibility and necessity. Till the end Mother Courage learns nothing from her war experience. In the last scene, forlorn and spiritually bruised, savagely alone and an emotional wreck she pulls her now rickety wagon in the direction of the soldiers, marching towards death and destruction. The heart of the viewer is unwillingly seized when he sees how hopelessly the wagon has aged, how run down it is and into what a frightful ruin a formerly energetic active woman and level headed woman has been changed, who in spite of her frightful condition still does not understand its cause. The final impression created as she exits drawing her wagon is a terrifying symbol of the tragic fate of an entire people afflicted by an inhuman, destructive war. 'In Mother Courage and her children', Brecht depicts life without the mask of decency. He offers no thesis or recipes for avoiding catastrophes. But he warns men by presenting the catastrophe

itself.<sup>2</sup> Brecht correctly resisted anyone presenting Mother Courage primarily as a mother who, "like Niobe", is unable "to protect her children from the vicissitudes of war". He wanted the protagonist to be revealed as "a hyena of the battlefield" and the war to be shown as the polluted and deforming source of Mother Courage's livelihood. Through the fate of Mother Courage, Brecht exposes the futility and hopelessness of a war and of a society built on a system that allows war. It is Mother Courage's business which dominates all her actions, it is her business which links her with the war that is making her adapt to the demands of the war without realising that it is destroying her. Blinded by the illusion that the war will ensure her survival. She moves like a pawn moving pathetically keeping one illusion and another, shifting her opinions of war. Till the end she remains a "great living contradiction". And her contradictory behaviour is related to the shifting reality and is a reflection of the horrendous repercussion of the war on human beings.<sup>3</sup> The first conceptual theme of the dramatic discourse emerges here. War as a dehumanizing agent that dehumanizes man, man - woman relations and the family. But war is not a natural Catastrophe, it is man-made. This is made amply clear in the play. War is exposed as man-made and perpetuated by people in power[sc.6]. And Mother Courage

is no mere victim of fate. Mother Courage is keen to join the war for profit making and moreover wants it to continue. She has a partial awareness of its dangers but operates under the illusion that with the right kind of adaptability and resilience she will bring her family through. Thus she by her own will has placed herself and her family under the laws of war. But she is bound to fail, in spite of all her efforts, because she cannot expect to escape in the long run from whatever misfortune will befall the collective to which she now belongs. This collective is the army. The second conceptual theme of the play emerges here - the Interaction between the individual and society.

#### Dehumanization of Man

One experiences 'Mother Courage' as a representation of man's inhumanity to man. The play introduces us to a world where, man distinguished from other beasts at all distinguishes, himself by the ingenuity of his cruelty. The brutal; world of Brecht where the shark is preferred to man appears again with all its usual ferocity in Mother Courage. The play's first scene opens with a conversation between a sergeant and a Recruiting office about the relative merits

of peace and war. Their conversation is distinguished mainly by its frank inversion of what we suppose to be traditional values. In the same conversation, the recruiter complains that after he has talked a man into signing up and has even bought him a drink the man more likely than not will be lacking loyalty and faith and will escape at the first opportunity. The recruiter says specifically, "he runs like a louse from a scratch". Man, in the image of the metaphor, is a louse. No wonder, says the recruiter, "I'm losing my confidence in mankind". This non-heroic vision of "God's creature" man and his relation to lower orders is then reinforced when the sergeant observes: "In peace man lets the cabbages run to seed, people mess around with men and cattle as though they were nothing". The deliberate confusion of man and other animals is given greater specificity when the sergeant says, "How many horses have they got in this town? How many young men? nobody knows! They haven't bothered to count'em". It becomes clear that for these men, as for Courage herself a little later in the play, the feeders of the war machine only distinguish between men and cattle, sacks of corn and bundles of shoes, as an organizational device.

After the opening inter change, Mother Courage appears on the scene with her three children. Mother Courage brightens

at the sight of two potential customers; the soldiers glow at the sight of the two husky lads drawing the wagon. It is clear that each group eyes the other not as human beings but as instruments of barter and sale. Immediately upon being stopped by the soldiers Mother Courage sings the moving song the formely open links and closes the play. The song comments on the nature of war in a pessimistic but prophetic way, yet Courage sings it without percieving its true meaning. As the song says, it is Mother Courage who brings the sausages without which the men would not be prepared to die. It is she who, in the imagery of the song is the hand maiden of war and of death itself. Again lice, men dray animals and beast for slaughter are heaped indiscriminately together. Death lowers over the wagon; death dominates the song. In the same scene, when Courage is asked to produce her papers, she produces a piece of parchment that "proves" that the horse that she does not have does not have foot and mouth disease. Again man and beast have been confused., as her own sons have now replaced the horse. This same confusion is then deepeened by the actions of the Recruiter as he says, "These lads of yours are straight as birch trees, strong limbs, massive chests...what are such fine specimens doing out of the army". He then addresses the boys

contemptuously, trying to shame them into abandoning their animal condition and joining the human race of soldiers. After asking them for their names the recruiter says: "And you two oxen pull the cart. Jacob ox and Essau ox". He then asks with fake resignation, "D'you ever get out of harness?". The recruiter is literally and figuratively correct. The young men will live and meet their violent end with no more ability to avoid their fate than the brute ox with which they have been justly compared.

This interpretation of the surface and sub-surface of Brecht's treatment of Swiss Cheese and Eilif can be carried over to the other characters in the play. All the characters in the play will draw the wagon of war, will confuse in their own persons, men made in "God's image" and the hyenas of the war. All, even when they show a "human" trait, such as Eilif's smartness and daring, Swiss Cheese's honesty, and Kattrin's love of children, will be shot down like dogs precisely because of these human traits. As beast or as man all will die. If in scene one the animal/man confusion sounds the depth of man's misery, the next scene shows another facet of the dehumanised condition of man. Courage insists on getting higher price for her capon and cites all-round starvation and misery as the reason. For Courage, the all-round starvation is a business incentive, as it



gives her the opportunity to inflate her prices. Against the backdrop of starvation and misery she gains profits. Courage rarely displays human compassion instead, she is avaricious and heartless. But her cunning, grit and ruthlessness do not rescue her from the downward slide to utter ruin. In the same scene, against the backdrop of utter misery, Eilif gleefully narrates his deadly exploits. It demonstrates the brutalisation of those involved in the war which has turned one of the sons into a butcher a far cry from Courage's desire to keep him away from a soldier's life. Significantly, she too degenerates fast. Her anxiety over Eilif's exploits has nothing to do with his brutal deeds. She scolds him for having risked his life. The high praise accorded to Eilif for his heroic deed, which is nothing but thuggery sanctified by war, exposes the inverted values of the establishment. It conceals the ulterior motive of exploiting the brave for risky military adventures. The hollowness of a war of religion becomes apparent from the contemptuous treatment meted out to the Chaplain. And when the Chaplain says, ' Now a days things are different" he seems to have grown cynical about religion and feels the Bible no longer applies in time of war, though ironically this war unlike other wars is a war of religion.

In the next scene we see Mother Courage's underhand deal in ammunition with the ordinance officer. This episode has a double significance apart from showing the callousness of the top army brass, it signifies Courage's spontaneous ideology nurtured on pragmatism. Her contradictory behaviour is related to the shifting reality and is a reflection of the horrendous repercussion of the war of human beings. Courage is tossed over by the objective reality. Her own concerns and statements matter little. She is deeply concerned with all around misery but nowhere does she display a behaviour different from those who perpetrate misery over others. Like everyone else she is at the receiving end and adapts to the dehumanised setting without compunction. Courage herself unscrupulous in business dealings, Courage instructs Swiss Chesse to remain honest to ward off danger. Is he really safe in spite of his honesty? Or is he protected in his capacity as a paymaster? Ironically, he is trapped by war much before his brother. Meanwhile there is a surprise attack by the Catholic forces and it is here Courage sees the terrible face of war. In the context of Courage's preference for war, the enemy attack comes as a bitter reality. She always falls short of the demands of war when she makes desperate efforts to save Swiss Chess, she is both prepared and unprepared to meet the

demands of corruption. As Yvette runs for the release of Swiss Chess, she says (Courage), "Thanks to be god they're corruptible they're no wolves, they're human and after money....." [Sc.3, pag 38]. She even fails to meet the demands of the humans who are after money. This highly dramatic scene in which Mother Courage loses her honest son Swiss Chesse presents the human conflict intensified as a business conflict.<sup>4</sup> At first glance the scene has a brutal and inhuman effect. Swisscheese dies literally from the margin of difference about which they were haggling. Mother Courage begins to haggle in the moment when she hears that the box with the pay is lost. It is positively terrifying news; it means Mother Courage cannot buy back the wagon which is to be leased to the camp prostitute Yvette. Still Courage does not haggle for the sake of haggling. Brecht has constructed the situation as a true dilemma. Mother Courage is "desperate" as the stage direction notes. She reacts entirely as the "merchant mother" that is not as a sentimental abstraction, but as a sociologically concrete being when, stifling her humane impulse, she considers the consequences: the fate of the helpless, mute kattrin, a life without the wagon, a life without the possibility of living. It is not as though she had thought in the beginning that

the life of her son would be risked in the terrible transaction: when the corruptibility of the constabulary turns out to be incorruptible, Mother Courage is ready to pay the whole sum. It is a single moment of reflection which deprives her of her son, just exactly that precautionary, prudent `virtue' that "courage", which is the only thing which up to now has kept her and her children alive through the inhuman war. Courage's denial of her sons's body reveals her extreme self control in suffering, a supreme test of her own iron will It also reveals her helplessness against the forces of war. Courage, from now on, would be a pawn, moving pathetically and criss-cross, from one state of mind to another, keeping one illusion and another, and yet having the guts to get along whatever the odds she has learned to live through any moment, dangerously and uncertainly, for she can afford to do nothing else. Mother Courage's `song of the great capitulation' in the fourth scene is semantically focused on the human condition. In this song. Mother courage full of maternal sympathy for the little capitulation of the soldier, describes the course of life as inevitable disillisionment of all individual impulse to "higher things" as the inevitable erosion of all personal desvires for happiness. The song also underlies the gray opportunism, the wretched accomodation to people"

to which the human being is reduced by the process of existence. The song summons up a picture of a world in which small, human plans collapse because the whole lacks planning and guidance. In the end Mother Courage is persuaded that this is the invariable lot of the underprivileged, and complaint or protest to authority is futile. Courage knows that sticking out her neck is dangerous and this is aptly demonstrated in her denial of her son's body. The human being in his struggle for survival forgets the real meaning of survival, to survive as a rational being. War becomes a vicious circle, man became both victim and accomplice of war. Because his struggle for existence, prevents him to go against the dictates of war. Heartless pragmatism and callousness are the signs of a brutalized mind. Fifth scene reveals Courage in opposition to Kattirn. While refusing to give linen for the wounded family, she says: " I have myself to think of " (p.46) All along, she has been thinking of nothing but herself and her family and has reached violent. Hers is a violence of sanity and human compassion. Kattrin on the contrary, signifies the possibility of an alternative in a dismal present. She rocks the baby and hums a lullaby after saving it from the debris of a house. The message is that hope

lies only in human solidarity and one has to see beyond oneself for such solidarity. Courage's self-protectiveness has degenerated into avarice and weird behaviour. But Mother Courage as such is not fully guilty of her selfish actions. She is what war has made her. With bankruptcy and the destruction of her existence constantly before her eyes, she is determined to bring herself and her children through the war by means of her trade. This explains why she has become so hardened.

In sixth scene, Mother Courage while delivering her parodic funeral oration conveys a social message - that by refusing to participate in the war, the soldiers and the common people as a class might prevent or stop war instead of being exploited by the war-mongers. Here she sees more deeply her condition and comprehends that by refusing to participate in the war, she would have prevented herself from being exploited. But, does she really have a choice? Her canteen business is her family's sole means of survival and war is her main customer. If she refuses to participate in the war it would mean the end of her. She has no option left. If her family is to survive, she has to participate in it and become embroiled in the dehumanised setting of the war. It represents one of the human dilemmas of people caught in an endless web of war. The degradation and brutalization of

the soldiers is represented by the rape of Kattrin at the end of the scene. Kattrin enters, loaded with goods, with an injury over her eye. She is now permanently disfigured and her hopes of marriage lost. She silently blames her mother for it by refusing the red boots she once desired. For once Mother Courage curses the war, recognizing it as the mesirable source of income which it is. Because the soldiers who had done the heinous act on her daughter are the ones who had got drunk on her brandy.

In the next scene, Mother Courage's quick volte face from her condemnation of war demonstrates her contradictory attitude to war. It shows how quickly and blatantly Mother Courage has forgotten her bitter lessons, having prospered in business. Courage's instinct to take things in their stride has a chink which displays the inability of a person hamstrung by powerful objective forces, to act in an intergrated manner. Driven by instant ideology circumscribed by devious pragmatism and instinct for survival, Courage goes through the locale of action towards business, survival and death.

Scene eight shows temporary peace. When peace is declared these little persons get desperate. Courage faces ruin. The Chaplain feels that his talents would go waste. The Cook is

nostalgic of the moments when he roasted capon for the commander. Eilif, ironically faces death. All are Caught in the web of their relations with war. They know what it has done to them, yet are compulsively scared of peace, simply because they feel absolutely insecure.<sup>5</sup>

The fate of Eilif underlies the relativity of morals in society as well as the degeneration in human behaviour. Eilif is accused of a crime which had earned him applause in wartime (SC2) now ironically leads him to his death. Eilif's death stands out as a bloody sacrifice to the double morality of this world. Eilif passes away like 'smoke', his deeds nourishing no one. Yvette is debilitated but has a future if the war with its sex - starved soldiery, continues. It is only Katrin who is eloquent, though dumb in her opposition to war. In the case of Eilif's death, Mother Courage remains unaware of his death nourishing her illusions about him till the end. The tragic irony is doubled when she returns joyfully to announce that war has already broken out and promptly moves to her own side. For Courage, the fresh outbreak of war means her business is not ruined, and it is this business of hers which makes her blind to the dangers of war and how it is dehumanising her. In every sentence and in every gesture Mother Courage reflects her "business" which serves in the play as a fixed



formula for the social and economic existence of men abandoned to the irresistible current of historical perverted world.<sup>6</sup>

The next scene shows Mother Courage and the cook reduced to beggary. The scene gives us an account of the devastation wrecked by the war. The account given here of death, disease and famine, barren countryside and ruined cities prowling wolves and human degradation suggests the devastation. The 'Song of the wise and good' sung by the Cook expresses the futility of virtues in a corrupt world. Solomon's wisdom, Caesar's bravery, Socrates honesty and St. Martin's charity are cited as reasons for their downfall. Within the scheme of the play Eilif stands for Caesar, Swiss Cheese for Socrates, and Katrin for St Martin. Ironically, the Cook identifies himself and Mother Courage with Solomon, attributing their present plight to their wisdom and godliness. The implication is that something must be wrong with a world where virtues are dangerous. But in the song under discussion it seems to be concerned to make language itself relative. It is "alienated" to the chatter that is not only the jargon of a Cook but represents the speech of even the most intelligent man when he becomes conscious of the extent of the catastrophe of life. The song also

emphasizes the speed of decay. Behind the rational, pragmatic appeal to morality and the argument of morality, the natural sound of existence is hidden: lament for the transitoriness of what exists and the insignificance of human works, the good as well as the bad.

In the next scene we see Mother Courage's tattered wagon placed against a prosperous farmhouse. The opposition is apparent: a war ravaged wagon versus a sleepy farmhouse. Projected by this ensemble of appalling human condition is the wedge that divides the haves and have nots of the world. Two women alone, insecure and wearied as against the humming sound of a contented voice celebrating the security that a home provides. In the context of total misery, the rhythms of linguistic signs which are the common heritage of mankind, have become the possession of the rarest and the most privileged. The song is humanly beautiful but set against the ruin faced by Courage and Kattrin it evokes questioning response. It signifies that the culture of people is determined by their material conditions. Who are those people living in the farmhouse in a landscape of desolation, hunger and misery. Like a tableau, the song offers a naked contrast between the haves and have nots. Eleventh scene shows Kattrin at the centre stage. Earlier it was Courage and war. Now it is Kattrin, her hatred for war

and a situation which inspires her to act even at the cost of her life. Unlike her mother the 'wagon' has no significance for her she is aroused to act when she hears the peasant woman's prayers for the safety of her grandchildren. Kattrin breaks her stony silence by finding a voice through the drum. Kattrin's act is not an act of "courage" not an action which qualifies one for business and maintaining ones life but the exact opposite of all this: spontaenous unplanned, so to speak biological humanity which transpires beyond all cliches of heroism like a birth: with groans and contortions. Unlike her mother, she sticks her neck out for a cause. The significance of the situation emerges through the opposition of 'prayer; praxis' Prayers and inaction are conceptually linked. Kattrin's action demonstrates that neither inaction nor prayer changes a situation. In their search for security the dramatis personae, baring her, have internalized the principle of least resistance. They do not step out of the world of corruption and callousness and emerge as losers. The war has sapped their will will to act for a cause. Kattrins decision to sacrifice her life for the sake of others signals a break. Kattrin symbolically stands as a peace figure in the play and her dumbness as a symbol of the oppressed,

tormented creature which brings a loud accusation against the inhuman condition of the world.

Courage in the last scene presents a very sorry picture. With all her children sacrificed to the war, she is left only with her wagon but still she fails to see the cause of her terrible situation. Forlorn and spiritually bruised she decides to get along with the war. Like the habit of a slave and the beast of burden, she pulls her rickety wagon in the direction of the soldiers marching towards death and destruction. The heart of the viewer is unwillingly seized when he sees how hopelessly the wagon has aged, how run down it is, and into what a frightful ruin a formerly energetic woman has been changed, but still fails to learn anything from her experiences. Courage's fate is the fate of a dehumanized man caught in the endless web of a dehumanizing war.

#### Man woman relationship

The sanctity of man-woman relationship legitimized by the institution of marriage is nowhere present in 'Mother Courage'. The dehumanized man-woman relationship is amply shown in the play through the life of three characters. Mother Courage, Yvette and Katrin.

Mother Courage with her children of different fathers and the confusing details she gives of her childrens

paternity exposes the complete breakdown of all marriage values. "I call him Eilif Noyocki he got the name from his father who told me has called koyocki or was it Moyocki?" This confusion of details signifies that it hardly matters to her who the father of her children is and also exposes the kind of relationships she had with those men who fathered her children. 'A nice family' said by the sergeant sounds like a parody. Because Culturally as well as by conventional standards a nice family should have a proper father, mother and their children. But Mother Courage's family is just the opposite. A family with a mother and their children of different fathers and moreover a mother who is confused about the paternity of her children. In a protracted war this is not an uncommon sight and it exposes how the war has degraded man's morality and dehumanized the basic man-woman relationship.

Later in the play, Mother Courage's relationship with the Cook is a relationship of convenience. It is shared destituteness that brought them together not mutual love. The relationship ends before the play ends when Mother Courage refuse the Cooks offer to open an Inn in Utretcht by opting to stay with her daughter Katrin.

Her relationship with the Chaplain is also just a

coincidence. Because the Chaplain had to be there when there was a surprise Catholic attack and Courage had to give him shelter to save him from being captured by the enemy. When in sixth scene the Chaplain proposes to Courage it rings hollow. The Chaplain at that time is without a job and the best solution available is to get married to Courage and live off her business. It exposes how lightly the institution of marriage is held in view by the people. In this case by a Chaplain who is considered to be the 'Pastor of Souls'.

Yvette's presence reveals another dimension of the man-woman relationship. Deserted by a lover, she has turned into a whore. Even Courage also dreads the possibility of Katrin becoming another Yvette. Yvette sells her body and rises to be a Colonel's wife. Brecht writes about Yvette's Colonel. "His only function is to show the price the whore must pay for her rise in life...."<sup>7</sup>

Her 'Fraternization Song', narrates the unhappy experience of her youth: a typical betrayal story of young, unprotected girls in the thirty Years war. It also shows us that the misery of her existence is suffered by innumerable girls whose love has led them into the same situation. As Mother Courage tells Yvette- 'Your numbers up,' it is true because her life is ruined, the prospect of a good marriage gone. All because she had exposed herself to the corruptible

forces of war and succumb to its dirty designs.

The fate of Kattrin is the most vulnerable because she is obsessed by an animal like drive for love and motherhood. She has only her mother's shameless art of living to thank that she exists at all in the middle of a war and has even become twenty-five years old. Even Courage dreads the possibility of Kattrin becoming another Yvette and tries her best to stand between her young daughter and the war which, however, is inching towards her. But the mother's protective wings are fragile because she herself cannot protect herself from the destructive war. In scene three, Kattrins imitation of Yvette's sexy walk, donning her hat and red boots, suggests the sexual frustration of the dumb, grown up girl, apparently over protected by her mother. In scene six when Kattrin enters loaded with goods with a wound in her face it signifies the end of all her hopes of love, of getting married and motherhood. As she rejects the 'red boots' which she so coveted before, it is a silent gesture of reproach to her mother. She no longer has any use for fine accessories to enhance her appeal. If Mother Courage and Yvette's fate exposes the degradation of man-woman relationship, Kattrin's fate exposes that there can never be a humane man-woman relationships in a war society.

### **Dehumanization of Mother & Children (Family)**

Mother Courage as a mother tries her best to preserve her children through the war, but the war, the polluted and deforming source of her livelihood and with which she hopes to ensure the survival of her family only jeopardizes her family's position. The first question that strikes our mind, when the family first appears on the stage in scene one, is what is this family doing on the highway which is the rightful place for soldiers engaged in killing and plundering. The wagon is their mobile home and a source of income. War means uprootedness but this family has the semblance of oneness but as the play progresses and as the family moves towards the realms of war the family will be torn apart. Right in the first scene Mother Courage seals the fate of her children unconsciously with her fortune telling trick. She announces, " Eilif, Swiss Chess, Kattrin! so shall we be torn in two if we let ourselves get too deep into this war"[p.9] as she takes a sheet of parchment and tears it in two. With her eldest she is afraid of his bravery, but counts on his cleverness. With the second she is afraid of his stupidity but counts on his honesty. With her daughter she is afraid of her pity but counts on her dumbness. Only her fears prove to be justified.<sup>8</sup>

Mother Courage is both mother and business woman, but in



situation after situation the two roles prove to be incompatible. It is her hope of business prospects which outstrips her fear of war. It is her business, with which she hopes to ensure her family's survival, makes her ignorant of the fact that she is only exposing her children to the war and making their survival risky. Her ignorance comes to the fore when she asserts that her sons are not meant to be soldiers. By first scene itself, Eilif her daring son is lured away by the agents of war, despite his Mother's best efforts to prevent it. But the scuffle between Courage and the sergeant over Eilif's recruitment signifies her illusion more than her protective instincts as a mother. Her spurious aggressiveness is evidently a part of her illusion because she reconciles to the turn of events as quickly as she protests. Courage is a little person who cannot comprehend reality in its totality primarily because she is too powerless to face it squarely. Her son is ultimately recruited to the army, while she is engaged on a business deal over the sale of a belt. Mother Courage is eventually outwitted by the men of war, who locate her vulnerable point, the profit motive of a tradeswoman. In the next scene, Mother Courage meets her son Eilif in a war camp. Eilif is now a soldier and is awarded a hero's

welcome for his military exploits. As he gleefully narrates his deadly exploits, the reaction of his mother is hardly the reponse of a true mother. She slaps him, not for his thuggery but for risking his life. The fish wife song sing by Eilif without precieving its true meaning underlies Eilif's fate. The song is about the short life of the warrior stretched between fame and death. Mother Courage's daring son sings of his own end which comes so quickly. Just as his mother is blinded by her business to the realities of war, the son also blinded by the myth of heroism remains unaware of the danger and shortness of a soldiers life.

Coming back to the first scene, when Eilif goes one prop of the wagon which is a metaphor for home also goes. But it seems Courage can bear the loss as she has Kattrin to replace Eilif in carrying the wagon. If Courage thought of keeping her family and wagon intact, it was an illusion only.

In scene eight, Mother Courage loses her brave son to war. In a moment of deceptive peace, Eilif is executed for a crime which in war time would have earned him military honour. Ironically Mother Courage remains unaware of Eilif's death till the end blindly holding on to the illusion that her son's cleverness will see him through the war. Mother Courage's grand hopes of bringing her family safely through

the war by means of her trade becomes a vain hope. Swiss Cheese is Mother Courage's honest son. Mother Courage is afraid of his stupidity but counts on his honesty. In scene three, Swiss Cheese is a paymaster. Herself unscrupulous in her dealings, she instructs her son to be honest to ward off danger. Is he really safe in spite of his honesty? Or is he protected in his capacity as a paymaster? Ironically he is trapped by war much before his brother. He dies, apparently because he is too honest and loyal to betray to his captors what he has done with the cash box. It is tragic that each child dies precisely because of the virtues upon which their mother has expressed her fears.

The incompatibility of Mother Courage's role as a mother and as a business woman is highly intensified in the highly dramatic scene (sc iii) where Swiss Cheese is captured and is to be executed. Despite the terrible knife-edge suspense of the situation, Mother Courage begins to haggle the moment she hears that the box with the pay is lost. It reveals the desperate cogitation of the merchant mother. At first glance the scene has a brutal and inhuman effect. Swiss Cheese literally dies from the margin of difference about which they have been haggling. Still Mother Courage does not haggle for the sake of haggling. Mother Courage is desperate

she reacts entirely as the merchant mother that is not a sentimental abstraction, but as a sociologically concrete being when, stifling her first humane impulse, she considers the consequences the fate of helpless, mute Kattrin, a life without the wagon, a life without the possibility of living. It is not as though she had thought in the beginning that the life of her son would be risked in the terrible transaction; when the corruptibility of the constabulary turns out to be incorruptible. Mother Courage is ready to pay the whole sum. But she arrives at the decision too late, Swiss Cheese is shot. Mother Courage has sacrificed her son to the wagon. But the knife edged situation is tightened up anew : Mother Courage must deny her dead son in order to save herself and her other children.

As for her daughter Kattrin, Courage is afraid of her pity but counts on her dumbness. Kattrin is the palpable victim of war her dumbness is caused by a soldier as later her disfigurement and death. Courage is highly protective of Kattrin. the presence of Yvette poses a threat for Courage because she dread the possibility of Kattrin becoming another Yvette. Courage wishes to stand between her young daughter and the war which, however in inching towards her. The mother's protective wings are fragile and her efforts look ironical. For instance her rubbing of ashes on her

daughter's face, and a feeling of ease after that. In the sixth scene when Kattrin enters with a wound on her face, only does her mother recognize that war is a miserable source of income and curses it openly.

The mute Kattrin is also swallowed up by the war just like her brothers. Kattrin's dumbness symbol of the oppressed, tormented creature brings a loud accusation against the inhuman condition of the world. The girl, who is obsessed by an animal-like drive for love and motherhood, who suffers from compassion, must never be played an idiot. Kattrin is completely normal. It is the world that is abnormal which has terribly deformed her. Because of her "friendliness" Kattrin what a symbol must be constantly watched. She has only her mother's shameless art of living to thank that she exists at all in the middle of war and business and has even become twenty-five years old. Kattrin is only human and absolutely "incompetent", consequently she exists in constant mortal danger. When Kattrin in one of the most dramatic scenes of the play climbs up on the peasant's roof and, sacrificing her life for stranger's children, awakens the sleeping town of Halle with a drum, it is not an act of "courage", not an action which qualifies one for business and maintaining one's life, but the exact opposite of all

this: spontaneous, unplanned so to speak biological humanity which transpires beyond all chiches of heroism like a birth with groans and contortions. Tormented by a double anxiety, for her life and for the town of Halle, Kattrin giving out "noises of distress", drums herself to death weeping: an innocent sacrifice of her friendliness. Mother Courage is stunned by her daughter's action since it in defiance of all her pragmatic teaching.

Mother Courage cannot keep herself out of the war that is destroying her family. Most of the time she is blind to the contradiction in her situation, she is adapted to it. she loses all her children to the war without realising the fact that it is the war the deforming and polluted source of her livelihood, which is destroying her children. All her children now belong to the useless waste the war has left behind. The final stage image of Mother Courage's exit, pulling her tattered wagon alone, an obvious contrast to her jauntly entry in scene one - acquires a profound ambivalence. On one hand, the wagon which was 'home' for the family now stands as a symbol of a family torn asunder and on the other hand, Mother Courage's bowed and battered stance dragging her wagon becomes a symbol of human endurance. The full wagon is empty. The family is reduced to one, but still the mother has not learnt anything. Such is

the fate of a family caught in an endless web of a dehumanized war.

Interaction Between Individual and Society.

As the play is set in "the thirty years war", the historical dimension is particularly obvious. Mother Courage herself is, it is true, a humble person and far removed from the greatness of a Gustavus Adolphus or a Wallenstein. But she nevertheless stands out as a memorable and impressive figure because of her intelligence, alertness and immense vitality. She is indefatigable, hard working, unflappable, and has the strength to carry on where others would have given up long ago. In short, she is the domineering figure in the play and the centre of her world. She is in many ways a likeable person, and her main concern to bring her children through the war unharmed certainly has our sympathy, so much so that some producers have found it easy to present her as a tragic figure who is noble and courageous but is destroyed by an anonymous and uncontrollable fate in the shape of war. But Mother Courage is no mere victim of fate. War is man-made and perpetuated by people in power [sc.6]. In the first instance, it was Mother Courage's decision to join the war in order to make a living, and she has therefore by her own will placed herself and her children under the laws of war.

And secondly, she is bound to fail, in spite of her personal efforts, because she cannot expect to escape in the long run from whatever misfortune will befall the collective to which she now belongs. This collective is the army. Of course, as she herself points out, what is a major setback for the army need not be the same to its individual members [sc 3] and she did benefit from a defeat because she acquired a horse to pull the cart; it was taken away from her again after order had been restored. Even when she falls into the hands of the enemy [sc 3] she can adapt in the new situation and continue business as usual. But the army is in the war to destroy or get destroyed, business is dangerous and leaves no room for pity, and Courage is not only the caring mother but also 'the hyena of the battlefield'.

The titles at the beginning of every scene reminds us of the wider political and military dimensions which reflect and determine the conditions under which the army including Courage and her children, have to live. If the destruction caused by warfare continues for a long time - the play shows twelve of the thirty years of war - there will be fewer material goods for everyone to share, the room for independent manœuvre on the part of the individual will diminish sooner or later everyone whose spoon is not long enough to keep a safe distance from the fighting will be



affected. The disintegration of order and discipline, for example may show itself in the rape of Courage's daughter; the general impoverishment of the collective must in turn adversely affect her business. The events on the stage show us what happens to Mother Courage and her family, to some particular individuals; the titles inform us what happens to the collective. As the messages of the titles get bleaker, so eventually do the lives of the individuals we see on stage. In the end it is the development of the collective which determines the circumstances in which its members will find themselves.

The titles and army are not the only references to a wider more general framework we receive in this play. We are also continually reminded of the fact that expectations, attitudes or misfortunes which are expressed by or affect the figures in the play are not only experienced by these few individuals. They are also shared by a large number of people who in this war find themselves in a similar situation. These more general experiences are expressed in the songs. When Mother Courage first enters the stage, she answers the question as to who she is by one word 'tradespeople' and then bursts into a song which illustrated the predicament not only of her own case but of all people

doing business in war. They are dealing with customers whose numbers decrease with every battle, and who must therefore be induced to spend all their money before the fighting begins. At the beginning of the new season in the year, in the war, and in the business the dead are of no use; trade must be done with the living, the last stanza of this song with which the play ends reinforces the point that, if Courage wants to remain in business, nothing has changed except that her own children now also belong to the useless waste the war has left behind. But this dehumanizing fact does not merely apply to her alone: behind her we must see all the others to whom the same 'fate' applies.

In the same way the song sung in the second scene by Eilif and completed by Courage illustrates the general contrast of attitudes of the young adventurous, carefree soldiers and of the women who stayed behind. The point of view of the young, which determines the first two stanzas sung by Eilif gives way to that of the women who have the last word and whose fears are proved to be justified by the end of the song as well as the play. And just as Eilif and his mother allow their personal attitudes to be seen in a wider context, so Yvette, the camp prostitute, shows us in the Fraternizing song that the misery of her own existence is suffered by innumerable girls whose love has led them

into the same situation. The use of songs in this play reaches its climax in the fourth scene when Mother Courage sings the song of the great capitulation. This is the point where she, in Brecht's view, acts most despicably, because she not only persuades herself that inaction in the face of injustice from above is the best attitude, but in doing so also discourages the young soldier from lodging a justified complaint. Mother Courage first describes the attitude of the young who think they are special and then the resignation of later years when one's spirit has been broken. In the refrain, the individual is seen as marching in a military band and contributing his voice to the music of the collective. Then, merely by changing the punctuation, Brecht turns the well known saying, 'Man thinks but God directs', into almost its opposite a view which is then dismissed as without substance. It is left to the spectator to conclude that if god is not in control it must be the officer commanding the band, i.e. a human being whose orders may be fallible and can be opposed, of course there is no point in anyone acting on his own; but if the whole band decided to disobey, the officer in charge must be without power to enforce the command. The importance of the collective and of the collective action is brought out

particularly strongly in this song, and so is the conclusion that if we are treated unjustly it is not the strength of authority but the weakness of those receiving and obeying orders that is to blame. The real enemy therefore is in the minds of the oppressed who capitulate because they assume far too readily that they are helpless, and the criticism of the song is directed against all who, like Mother Courage, in similar situations persuade themselves and others that placid acceptance of orders from above is always the best option.

The play Mother Courage and her children therefore, while using one particularly strong and impressive individual and her family to illustrate the point, always carefully relates the events taking place on stage to a far larger and wider context, constantly indicating that behind the demonstrations on the stage there are larger numbers of people in the same or similar positions, with indetical or at least similar motivations, interests, reactions or attitudes. The real concern of the play therefore is obviously to show the interaction between individual and collective, and to indicate that of these two aspects the collective is by far the more important factor. Thus Brecht has built up a complex framework of personal, social, economic and political forces which eventually determine the

actions of individual figures. While underlining the importance of the collective and the collective action the play also emphasizes that real change can be brought only through human intervention and social progress.

## Section II

### Brecht's Dramaturgy And Its Mediatory Significance in "Mother Courage"

In *Mother Courage and her children*, Brecht demonstrates "what went on in history and society." But such a task requires a new textual strategy. Viewed from the modernist culture of nihilism and the ideology of the absurd. Brecht's quest for a new aesthetics in theatre becomes a counter culture of sorts, his theory of the alienation effect and epic theatre, which later develops into dialectical theatre, implies that all theatrical presentations are artifices and signifying practices. Roland Barthes in this connection says, "we realize, moreover, why this aspect of Brechtian thought is most antipathetic to bourgeois and Zhdanovian critaism: both are attached to an aesthetic of the "natural" expression of reality: art for them is false nature, a pseudo-physis. For Brecht, on the contrary, art today ie, at heart of at heart of a historical conflict whose stake in human disalienation art today must be an anti-physis."<sup>9</sup> What Barthes emphasizes is the semiotic quality of Brecht's aesthetics which enables the spectator to see the mode in which a social situation is structured, this aesthetics enumerates the threads which go into making the fabric of a

society. He explains further, "Brecht's formalism is a radical protest against the confusions of the bourgeois and 'petit bourgeois' false nature in a still alienated society, art must be critical, it must cut off illusions, even that of "nature" the sign must be partially arbitrary, otherwise we fall back on art of expression an art of essentialist illusion" <sup>10</sup>

Brecht was able to give arbitrariness to the sign and his career was committed to the dialectic of theory and practice in theatre. When applying dialectics to drama. Brecht wished above all to accentuate the 'contradictions' or 'tussle and the tension' of opposing forces in every sphere of life the individual, family and society - since he believed, out of this conflict new forces would be released and a new synthesis emerge. Hence a dialectical approach is the key to a proper understanding and appreciation of the ambiguities, ironies and paradoxes of his plays. The conception of 'Mother Courage and her children' is based on a main contradiction which dominates and determines the rest. The course of the discourse is set out carefully as a chain of contradictions. Every event and situation further displays the tug of opposing forces and pressures, so that conflicting attitudes are held together in tension by enhancing the awareness of opposites Brecht's dialectical

vision also encourages complex seeing on the part of the spectators.

Courage's contradictory and unenlightened course of action encourages the spectator for complex seeing Courage has not learned from her experiences but the spectator has received the message.<sup>11</sup> As a human signifier, Courage's individuality and her contradictions are signs which enable the spectator to enter into the very intellection of their interplay. He reads the implications of Courage's compulsions and inconsistent behaviour, relates them to total semantic complexity and understands how human suffering is caused and by whom. Such truths are communicated through the arbitrary dramatic sign which is the primary requirement of a dynamic discourse.

'Historicizing' was another Brechtian concept closely related to 'distancing'. Historical incidents are unique transitory incidents associated with particular periods,<sup>12</sup> Brecht declared adopting the marxist view of history. In this view social evolution is determined by the modes and relations of production, and social intervention. The historical relativity of events in the play therefore, has to be made comprehensible to the audience. This could be done by setting the dramatic incidents in the past, or by



constructing the play in the form of a story which has already happened. Historicizing was thus a means of making the present look strange and thereby suggesting the need for Social Change. In *Mother Courage* the thirty years war is used to induce the spectators to look at the present from a point of comparison located either in the past or in the future. Since history is regarded by Brecht as an evolutionary process, the play tries also to glimpse intermittently at a further Utopia. Thus three points of reference in time are implicitly brought together (i) thirty years war as a thing of past (ii) the second world war as both warning and prophecy in 1939 and the recent catastrophe in 1949 (when the play was produced by Brecht in post-war Germany, and revised) and (iii) a possible warless utopian future, if the audience is prepared to learn the lessons of the play and intervene in social change.

The popular tradition which Brecht picks up and the well known great names and historical settings in the play, enable him to work out the crying contradiction between monumental history forming its legends, expressed in the colorless monotony of the 'Chronicle' and human reality, expressed in the fate of *Mother Courage* and her children by contrasting one with the other.<sup>13</sup> Each scene of the play is preceded by a 'table of contents', which are at the same

time confirmed and contradicted in a grim and surprising manner by the events as they are presented. The prefix sentences thus do not only have the function of removing suspense and shifting the attention of the audience from the what of the event to the "how" but also the infinitely more important function of creating for the public a critical attitude towards historiography and its indifference to all individual human details.<sup>14</sup> For instance the sentence before the fifth scene with its comic point, "Tilly's victory at Leipzig costs Mother Courage four shirts," discriminate against the "monumental" history of the historiographers in favour of the real, "little" history of the little people who experience the whole burden of reality. Brecht's especially 'alienating' method appeals to the spectator to make critical comparisons, turns against the estrangement caused by a history dissociated from human beings, which present fate as their enemy.

Brecht's epic method achieves still another effect, at least equally decisive for this play. The play is constructed so that the action, piling up suspense from scene to scene and compressing time flies like an arrow to the target waiting in the future. The result is that the audience paradoxically does not notice how time goes by. The

table of contents before the Scenes informs the audience about the time interval between the scenes. The total action of Mother Courage, he learns, has a time span of twelve years as a background. This expanse of time is felt as doubly oppressive because no meaningful individual or social development justifies and overcomes the mighty stretch of time. Rather, one sees a crippling recurrence of the same thing, the hideous picture of a war constantly expanding and wantonly revolving within itself, from time to time threatening to sink to a deeper level, opening up the possibility of complete chaos. The long time expanse is destroyed simply by confronting it with its brutal reality.

There is no "great-dramatic arc" in Mother Courage. If in the classical drama all the parts are dovetailed into a dynamic, progressive whole, in Brecht's play there is an artfully static structure which carefully balances individual scenes against each other. Scenes full of tense action are followed by more harmonious ones in which reflective elements pre-dominate. Songs project out of the normal stream of action into a transindividual, transdramatic dimension and correspond to each other through the play, creating an "indirect" linguistic medium which is both lyrical and meditative refined and popular. By this means the meaning of the play is frequently broken and often

intentionally veiled.

Even in 'Mother Courage' there is dramatic tension in the traditional sense except that it is limited to the action within the individual scenes. Brecht's mastery in forming a dramatic event can be clearly recognised in the last part of the third scene. Swiss Cheese has been captured and is to die. Mother Courage enters "excited" It is a matter of life and death. The first element of retardation appears in the haggling conversation about the wagon. Yvette, pompously "discussing" the matter with her recently hooked Colonel, wants to buy; Mother Courage wants to lease it. When they have come to an agreement, a further hindrance emerges the novice business woman Yvette, instead of hurrying to save Swiss Cheese, falls greedily upon 'her' wagon. Mother Courage has difficulty pushing her away. There is a tortuous wait. Yvette returns "panting". Her news that Swiss Cheese has thrown the box into the river, creates a third retarding element as the high point of the "rising" action: the desperate cogitation of the merchant-mother. The suspense is concentrated almost to the point of physical pain. Yvette is sent away again, this time to bargain about the bribe. For those waiting the minutes stretch into an eternity. Finally Yvette returns and reports the failure of

her mission and the impatience of the constabulary. A third time she is sent away. Into the silence of those waiting comes the drum roll of the court martial. Mother Courage receives the reproaches of the prostitute who has just been scolded for her own greed, in stony silence. But the tension is tightened up anew at one last point: Mother Courage must deny her dead son in order to save herself and her dumb daughter Kattrin. The remarkable aspect of this incredibly compact scene is that every section is filled with social reality even to the intonation of the characters.

Though reason and emotion had been set up almost antithetically in his earlier chart, Brecht in his later years realized that in practice feelings would be released in the theatre only they must be of the right sort. Even empathy was allowed within limitations. An extract from the 'Courage Modell' (1949) comments on scene 11 that the audience may 'identify with dumb Kattrin' and get into her skin by empathy and enjoy feeling that they themselves have the same latent strength'.<sup>15</sup> In short, Brecht's theatre was prepared to accommodate methods associated with traditional theatre for its own purposes.

There are those who connect the concept of epic theatre with the idea of literary regression, namely from

the concentrated manner of presentation back to the rich abundance of naturalistic detail. The opposite is the case, even with respect to technical aspects. 'Mother Courage' shows very clearly that the popularly drastic style popularly intimate style of Brecht endeavours to create not so much reality as the 'idea' of natural speech along with its typically alogical structure. The whole drama is alienated in a popular tone. The particularly moving melody of the songs, which has a distant effect even when, as in the "Camp Follower's song", the age old theme of love betrayed is intoned, grows organically out of the atmosphere of the play. "In you theres a young Caesar. You should see the king," says the Commander to Eilif. Eilif : " I did from a distance. There's a glow about him I'd like to make him my model." Commander: " I bet your father was a soldier. Eilif: " A very great one. My mother has warned me about it. In a little song." Upon this apparently realistic dialogue which in fact has a stylized popular manner and operate with elegant abbreviations follows Eilif's song of " The Fishwife and the soldier". The prologue of the play, the conversation between the recruiter and the sergeant makes the artful non-naturalistic character of the linguistic meduim which Brecht has created especially

noticeable. The two slave traders in uniform speak, despite the coarse turn of phrase with which their dialogue is spiced, a topsy-turvy, inverted language of eerie comedy. With the countenances of gentleman and the vocabulary of standard morality the two are quite seriously indignant at the immorality of a population which is not willing to accomodate itself to military service and tribute. By a dissociation of form and content Brecht has brought to consciousness the absurd character of war and its idealogical, mendacious vocabulary. It is an example of elementary dramatic style, typical for epic theater, which mixes excitement and shock effects to the constant surprise of the audience.

Mother Courage and her children shows how Brecht put into practice his theoritical ideas on epic and dialectical theatre. His interrogative intent, like the Shavian drama, unfolds various strands of human reality through their very dialectic. Though the play presents a predominantly tragic vision, the open frame work and the interrogative method point beyond tragedy. Since the audience is expected to learn from Mother Courage's experiences, certain alternatives are suggested and rhetorical questions posed so that the audience might resolve for itself the tragic contradictions experimentally represented on stage. Mother

Courage talks about a 'long anger' as a possible alternative to capitulation [sc 4 p.44] and towards the end the Cook, explicating the 'song of the wise and the good', comments, 'For virtues bring no reward only vices. Such is the world ... [Sc9 p. 71] Brecht's aim was to show a particular state of society as historically limited as a condition of life which could eventually be changed and surpassed through human intervention and social progress when war would become unnecessary.



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Short Organum 53 Brecht on Theatre tr. & ed. John Willett
2. Franz Norbert Mennemeier : Mother Courage and her Children in Brecht A collection of critical essays ed. Peter Demetz
3. Gurbachan Singh : Historicizing Human Suffering : Mother Courage and Her Children as Tragedy in Structures of Signification -II ed. H.S. Gill.
4. Franz Norbert Mennemeier : Mother Courage and her children in 'Brecht, A collection of critical Essays' ed. Peter Demetz.
5. There is a fundamental insecurity from which these characters suffer because such characters, says Walter Weideli... Profane and Mutilate themselves because the system wants from them only the part (Not individual or private) that it can make use of, whoever remains true to himself exdcludes himself from the system. The alternative makes people into their own enemies; they must make themselves the accomplices of just what is oppressing them. Walter Weideli, 'The art of Bertolt Brecht;.
6. Franz Norbert Mennemeier : Mother Courage and her children in 'Brecht, A collection of Critical Essays' ed. Peter Demetz
7. Quoted by Jan Needle and Peter Thompson in 'Brecht'.
8. Brecht's own summary from Materialien zu Brecht's Mother Courage (Frankfurt : Suhrkamp 1967) P. 7  
Reproduced in Williett edn.
9. Roland Barthes; Critical Essays tr. Richard Howard.
10. Ibid.

11. In this context, A.P Foulkes points out : "Mother Courage was attacked by Friedrich Wolf on the grounds that it failed to present a moral and political transformation of Mother Courage herself, to which Brecht could only reply `even if Courage learns nothing at least the audience, in my view, learns something by observing her." John Fuegi, "The Essential Brecht".
12. Brecht on Theatre tr. & ed. Willett
13. Franz Norbert Mennermeier : Mother Courage and her children in Brecht, A collection of critical essays ed. Peter Demetz
14. Ibid
15. Brecht on Theatre ed. & Tr John Willett.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Source - Bertolt Brecht, 'Mother Courage and her Children' tr. & ed. Eric Bentley (1962).

### Books

- Graham Bartram and Anthony Waine : Brecht in Perspective (London : Longman. 1982)
- Walter Benjamin : Understanding Brecht, tr. Anna Bostock (London : New Left Books, 1973).
- Peter Demetz, ed : Brecht : A collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs : Prentice - Hall, 1962).
- John Fuegi : The Essential Brecht (Los Angeles : Hennessey & Ingalls, 1972).
- Ronald Hayman : Brecht (London : Weiden Field & Nicolson 1983).
- Jan Needle and Peter Thompson : Brecht (Oxford : Black Well, 1981).
- Raymond Williams : Drama From Ibsen to Brecht (Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1973).
- John Mil Full : From Baal to Keuner, the Second optimism of Bertolt Brecht (Herbert Lang Bern and Frankfurt 1974).
- Keith Andrew Dickson : Towards Utopia. A Study of Brecht (Oxford University Press 1978.)
- Walter Weideli : The Art of Bertolt Brecht. (London Merlin Press).

## Literary Theory

- H.S. Gill : Abelardian Semiotics and other Essays. (Bahari Publications, New Delhi 1989).
- H.S. Gill ed. Structures of Significations - II (Wiley Eastern Limited 1991).
- J.L. Styan : The Dark Comedy (Cambridge University Press 1962) -  
Modern Drama in Theory and Practice - 3 :  
Expressionism and Epic theatre (Cambridge  
University Press 1981).
- John Willett : The theatre of Bertolt Brecht (14<sup>th</sup> ed, London  
Eyre Methuen, 1977).
- Roland Barthes : Elements of Semiology (N.Y Hill and Wang 1967).
- Brecht on Theatre, tr. and ed. John Willett (London : Eyre  
Methuen; 1964).
- Roland Barthes : Critical Essays tr. Richard Howard (North  
Western University Press 1972).
- Keir Elam : The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama (Methuen, London &  
New York).