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LESSONS OF JAPAN :

Assayings of Some Intercultural Stances



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ESSAY 5:

THE USE-VALUE OF DYING: MAGICAL VS. COGNITIVE UTOPIAN DESIRE IN THE "LEARNING PLAYS" OF PSEUDO-ZENCHIKU, WALEY, AND BRECHT

0. Introduction: How Are We To Be Saved?

tamaso mâ jyotir gamaya
mrityor mâ amritam gamaya
(...From darkness lead me to the light
From the state of death lead me to the undying)
Sanskrit prayer

0.1. Comparison has often been made between the Nô play *Tanikô* and Bertolt Brecht's pair of *Lehrstücke Der Jasager/ Der Neinsager* (the "plays for learning" *The Yea-Sayer* and *The Nay-Sayer* or *He Who Says Yes* and *He Who Says No*), derived from it by way of Arthur Waley's partial translation and Elisabeth Hauptmann's German translation of Waley (cf. Szondi 1966, Immoos 1968 and 1969, Wirth 1971-72, Hauptmann 1976, Tatlow 1977, Berg-Pan 1979, Lee 1983, Oba 1984, Hirakawa 1990). Thus, the main outlines of the philological situation in the spirit of older comparatism— who "took" what from whom, by means of what intermediaries, and how—are by now clear. Yet it seems to me that much remains unexplored as to the rather startling refunctioning (Brecht's *Umfunktionierung*) of a radically religious and magical Shinto-Buddhist-Folk-daoist horizon into the radically thisworldly Marxian-Gramscian horizon of a dialectical pragmatism. It might today be easy to say, following one strand of Brecht criticism (e.g. Frisch, Grimm or most popular through Esslin), that either Brecht's or any Marxism is itself a surrogate or at least metamorphosis of magic and religion, and thus explain his use of extreme horizons, of carrying out the premises adopted to their consistent end. But while this easy explanation may be a half-truth, as I suggest with my parallel between the radicalness of *Tanikô* and the *Yea/Nay-Sayers*, it also explains away too many essential, nay crucial, aspects: Brecht's rewriting of the *Yea-Sayer* from the first to the second version, his pairing even the second version with an (as he rightly insisted) complementary *Nay-Sayer*, and other central matters which might be provisionally summarized as the potency of his verbal text (dramatic language), the stringency of the semiotic "performance text" ("gestual" events), and their horizon of sly imaginative pragmatics. Mumbling Right-wing or shell-shocked ideologemes about Stalin equalling the Grand Inquisitor still leaves

us with the necessity of explaining (to continue with Dostoevsky's parable) the dialectics between Inquisitor and Christ.

Thus, for reasons both of the state of the art in this field and of a different vantage point in the 1990s, this would seem a good time to focus on the final horizons of *Tanikô*'s folk version of Shugendô, Brecht's mainly Luxemburgist Marxism, and the almost too pat mediation of Waley's Bloomsbury liberalism, as well as on how these horizons are formally established by similar devices. I propose to discuss first some dominants within *Tanikô* as a Nô play, then the great significance of Waley's radical reduction to thisworldly immanence, and what Brecht, stimulated by Hauptmann, could exfoliate from that. Finally, I shall attempt some wider conclusions as to the sense and meaning of the whole operation, suggested by my title and horizon of "the use-value of dying."

0.2. My thesis in this essay is that in a world which is felt (at least by an important, probably dominant, fraction of a nation) as a *catastrophe*—clearly prefigured or already fully present—, an overwhelming necessity will be felt for a way out, a *salvation*. It is, no doubt, quite possible to point out (in the Buddhist spirit) that any coming into this world is a personal catastrophe, as well as (in the Marxist spirit of, say, a Benjamin) that all class societies are ongoing catastrophes for many, very probably most people. Alas, looking back at the 20th Century provides rich arguments for such views; and the widespread Nô preoccupation, from Zeami on, with the salvation of the protagonist testifies to the long-duration permanence of their horizons. Nonetheless, it seems clear that periods of economic security and confident ideological hegemony have a quite different atmosphere than those of impending breakdown and incipient large-scale restructuring. These ages of tension, anxiety, and non-consenting have, I assume, always provided the stimulus for important religious, metaphysical, and political beliefs in search of a collective or exemplary agent of salvation. The chaotic breakdowns of both the Muromachi and of the Weimar times had such an affective and cognitive horizon, with which we are led to critically sympathize while fighting for breath in today's counterrevolutionary wave.

In the monotheistic tradition, a full explanation of the salvational situation requires also an "anti-subject" or antagonist—the exemplary person, group or power responsible for the existential (social but usually also metaphysical) catastrophe. However, the *Tanikô* constellation does not do so, and the reasons as well as significance of such a proceeding will have to be considered. At any rate, the common denominator of the plays' and performance horizons discussed here—of all versions of *Tanikô*, Waley's "counter-translation," and Brecht's *Yea/Nay-Sayer* set—may be formulated as: *Through what power may (the absolutely necessary) salvation come about, in quo signo vinces?*

1. "Tanikô": The Medieval Cluster of Versions

1. An outline of the plot of *Tanikô* will be recalled: A Boy living with his ailing Mother in the capital persuades his religious Master to let him participate in a rigorous pilgrimage into the mountains so as to pray for her. During the ascent, he is struck by sickness which represents pollution (*tsumi*, the greatest offence against the gods) and jeopardizes the pilgrimage. The participants follow the ancient Great Law of the gods and, with his consent, hurl him into the valley. But his Master is then himself struck by such grief he cannot go on, so that the whole stage universe is threatened. In that impasse, the pilgrims pray to the sect's founder, En no gyôja, who appears and with help of his servant, a Daimon of dance, resuscitates the buried child. The daimon's triumphant final dance indicates the healing of the stage world.

However, some words of caution about the supposed original *Tanikô* are necessary here. As is well known in Japanology but not necessarily outside it, most Nô plays exist in more or less divergent versions, mainly dating from the Edo period, 17th to 19th Century, and handed down by several of the five Nô schools (*ryû*) and indeed some of their sub-schools. But the situation with this play seems more complex than usual. The Komparu-school version of *Tanikô* is the oldest (first performance in 1546), and in it the shite (main player) was, apparently, in the first part the Mother and in the second part originally En no gyôja. For a long time, Komparu was the only school that performed this play, though very rarely. The Kanze school modified the text of *Tanikô* in mid-Edo period, and allotted the main dance (i.e. the shite role) to En no gyôja's helper, the *gigaku* daimon or godhead. Since then, several versions of the Kanze text have been circulating—in one of which En no gyôja does not appear at all—, without clear indication who modified it when (including one by the Umewaka sub-school). The other Nô school kindred to Kanze (*kamigakari*), Hôshô, also changed their version; as a result, they found the Mother too different from the role which the shite played in the second part, and degraded the Mother—who anyway had no dance—to *tsure* (accompanying player) by 1799 when their first text was published. Today, all five schools have *Tanikô* officially in their repertory, though it is very rarely played, less than half a dozen times after the Second World War (cf. Toida 48); of those instances, interestingly enough, the Kanze and Komparu ones in 1990 were due to European interest generated through Brecht! Only three variants, one each from the Komparu, Kanze, and Hôshô schools, are accessible in European languages, so that a full analysis of the historical modifications of both text and performance by a Japanologist remains an urgent *desideratum* and necessity. What seems to have been the main Kanze school version is used in Waley's partial English translation (leading to Brecht) and in Sembritzki's full German translation; that of the Hôshô school in Tyler's English translation; and that of the Komparu school in Settekorn's and Iwabuchi's German translation of 1990. The larger than usual differences between

them confirm that, as Keene remarks, "Obviously, the text has been much mutilated" ("Introduction" 317).

The authorship of *Tanikô* is unclear. The Komparu school in a 1721 text claimed it was written by their ancestor Zenchiku (see Omote); this is the main basis for the attribution to him by the majority of Nô scholars up to the middle of our century. The present dominant opinion is that it is not at all certain he wrote this play. Attributions in the Nô field are always insecure, and at the moment there is a vogue of "de-attribution" (for what it is worth, let me add that my following analysis leads me—pace Bohner—to doubt Zenchiku's authorship on religious grounds). More significantly, as suggested by the history in the preceding paragraph, the identification of the shite-role, quite central for a Nô play, is here remarkably unclear. While it is quite usual for this main player to play two dramaturgic agents in two-part Nôs, they are usually revealed to be the phenomenal and the noumenal appearance of the same agent. It might be argued that the Mother and the "motherly" resuscitator En no gyôja represented an interesting variant of such underlying identity, yoked together by the seme of "motherly care" for the boy. This procedure may have been slightly heterodox but it had precedents in the practice of Zeami—e.g. in *Fujito*, where the shite plays in Part 1 the murdered fisherman's mother and in Part 2 his ghost—and it was anyway in line with the rather fluid conception of personality in traditional Japanese thought (cf. Loy, esp. 203ff., and Essay 1 in this book). It might have allowed for significant comparisons to similar shite-degrading practices at the time, e.g. in *Funa-Benkei*'s use of shite for two roles (that of Yoshitsune's paramour and the ghost of his enemy) united only by the waki's (Benkei's) opposition to both. However, since En no gyôja is no longer the shite of the second part, I cannot see a good defence for the shite-role(s) in the texts as presently played and translated.

The disparateness of the shite-roles in the two parts of *Tanikô* is troubling enough. Perhaps more important, however, is that in Nô, even when the shite is playing two quite different agents, these are almost always both clearly identified and scenically important, i.e. participating both in verbal poetry and in the culminating dances. True, in later Muromachi-period plays there are other examples of the shite-roles in two-part Nô growing further apart—e.g. in Zenchiku's *Kamo*, unified by the miraculous atmosphere. In particular, the waki—who was in Zeami's heyday really what the designation means, i.e. a "side-player," *Nebenspieler* or introductory agent—was becoming more important at the expense of the shite (e.g. in the very popular *Funa-Benkei*). Still, the shite had a prominent role in both parts of such plays. Only in a few plays, including *Tanikô*, this is not the case (another example is *Rashômon*, not in the repertory of the Komparu school). As mentioned above, in the first part of *Tanikô* the performances of and translations from the Kanze and Komparu schools allot to the shite the role of the Mother, but that agent has no dance; the Hôshô school

therefore has no first-part role for the shite at all! The second-part role, the *nochi-jite*, is in all three schools allotted to the *gigaku*-dance godhead, who has a satisfying final dance but does not speak a single word. This has led most commentators to assign the play to the fifth or "demon" Nô category. Since the basic unit of a Nô performance has not been a single play but a sequence that from the Edo period on consists of (ideally) five plays arranged in a normative order of the *goban* categories, such categorization is important: it determines not only a play's performance position but also what we might call its *Stellenwert*, a "positional value" strongly determining, e.g., its mood and tempo. This categorization, however, crystallized a couple of historical epochs after the Zeami-to-Zenchiku heyday of Nô creation from the 14th-15th centuries, and it is here—as in many other cases (see Essay 4)—shown to be quite formalistic and fragile: *Tanikô* "is certainly not a typical demon play" (Keene, "Introduction" 316). It would probably make better sense to allot it, as some commentators do, to the catch-all or miscellaneous fourth category.¹

Most important, the "Kanze change" of shite to the *gigaku* godhead reduces the interest of the play. Its reasons are unclear, probably accidental—possibly similar to what a rumour has it about *Rashômon*, i.e. that the hereditary Kanze head at the time happened to be a child, so that the child role was expanded and the shite-role reduced accordingly (see Omote; also Goff 49). At any rate, all of this provides a first—no doubt correct but possibly not final—explanation why *Tanikô* is rarely performed: since the shite is also the main decider of what plays will be performed, and his role is so unclear and small, he rarely wishes to actualize it.²

In sum, though the situation calls for much more groundwork, the three available translations and the extant commentaries make it clear that we have to do here with a cluster of "performance texts" united by an orientation toward miraculous communal salvation. This is sufficient for a first, overview analysis of the structural invariants in the sign-system(s) of *Tanikô*, those that do not depend on the particular text-variant used for translation nor on the verbal pregnancy of the extant translations (the Waley one being discussed on its own merits).

1.1. This analysis has in my opinion to centre on the role of young Matsuwaka, whose auspicious punning name (derived from the evergreen pine as well as yearning or pining) forecasts both his centrality as a first approximation to protagonist and as the object of affective investment in the play, and also his vitality or evergreen-ness. All the other dramaturgic agents are positioned in direct relation to him: it might be said they are there so that his exemplary destiny may be fulfilled and shown in relation to the older generations. For, the other agents of the play are adults, and with two exceptions belong to the parental generation: they comprise the Mother, the Teacher-bishop³ who is bound to this fatherless boy with ties of deep fatherly affection, and the yamabushi (most notably

the **apparatchik** Deputy Leader) who hesitate between "stepfatherly" antagonism—in shortsighted obedience to the letter rather than spirit of the Strict Custom or Great Law (**taihô**)—and support of the Bishop's spiritual fatherliness. But the exceptions are highly significant, indeed decisive: they are En no gyôja, the benevolent grandfatherly apparition (the verse description insists on his hoary age) who functions as time-spanning divine ancestor, and his helper or Satellite (cf. Suvin "Can People?"), the fearsome and elemental **gigaku** dance and music daimon. The parental generation is in charge—the mother in the city home and the quasi-father in the mountains—but it proves singularly ineffective: sick with longing, also physically (the Mother) or symbolically (the Bishop) ill, it can only lament and pray. Institutionalized alternatives (the yamabushi rules of pilgrimage—discussed at length in Suvin, "Yamabushi") are rigid and deadly. The salvation for the young generation, metonymically standing for the future, can only come by a return to the magically vivifying sources, forgotten or discounted by the institutionally fossilized Majestic Rule. The only named agents, young Matsuwaka and old En no gyôja, reach hands to effect salvation for the Mother and the Son across the ineffective or indeed aberrant male adult generation running this world's affairs.

The spacetime and syntagmatic articulation of *Tanikô* are also teleologically directed toward the miraculous reprieve. It can best be divided into four parts: 1/ the Bishop's visit to his pupil's home in Kyôto; 2/ the **ai-kyôgen** actor's intercalary tale informing the audience of the "tani-kô" custom; 3/ the yamabushi ascent of the mountain, with the boy's sickness and his being hurled into the abyss; 4/ the prayer to and apparition of En no gyôja, who resuscitates Matsuwaka with help of the dance daimon.⁴ This is the canonical structure for performing discussion and resolution of social dead-ends, well-known to anthropologists (cf. Turner 38ff.). Unfortunately, the **ai-kyôgen**'s prose interlude is traditionally considered as unworthy of recording in the Nô-chant booklets and it is therefore as a rule not reproduced when these are printed (a bad habit which one devoutly hopes Nô translations will soon stop copying); I am therefore unable to consider Part 2 here, though it obviously adds considerably not only to the audience's information but also to the foreshadowing of the deadly danger, a clever mixture of Brecht's incompatible categories of tension centred on the development and centred on the result (**Spannung auf den Gang** vs. **auf den Ausgang**—Brecht preferred the former). I shall therefore attempt here an abbreviated running commentary on the three remaining parts.

Part 1 is opposed to the other two parts as the space of City and Home to the space of the Mountain open to the heavens and to the dead, which bears heightened danger in Part 3 and rescue in Part 4. It is also the space of the warm and close love between mother and son, richer and more complex than the filial piety to which the Bishop in Part 1 and En no gyôja at the end reduce it. To put it into an initial formula, space 1 relates to space 3 as **Geborgenheit** to **Geworfenheit** (a poor

translation: safety vs. jeopardy). Yet this initial impression of family closeness or safeness, probably designed to strike the audience as a remnant or echo from older and better days, is already hollowed out in several important ways. First, by the absence of the Father. This is never explained, just a given precondition with strong associations to both metaphysical orphaning and the concomitant overanxious protection by the Mother:

But since your father died
 You, my only child, have been my life.
 Even though we live together,
 The moment you are out of my sight
 I think of you and nothing else. (Tyler tr., 321)⁵

Second—a tell-tale sign—this space is also invaded by the Mother's protracted sickness, which will first be the Son's reason for the mountain pilgrimage in order to pray for her healing, and then be echoed by his eventual sickness. This City is, let us not forget, Kyôto, the capital of the whole national community; and though the play did not find it necessary to socially typify the Mother and Son, we know from the imaginary "cultural encyclopedia" of the time that they can only be aristocrats, so that Matsuwaka is both a pupil and (as the ranking male of the family) a patron of the Bishop's yamabushi hermitage. It is significant that his teacher lives in the "Wondrous Nagi-tree" hermitage attached to the famous Ima-guma-no shrine of Kannon (cf. Sembritzki, *Wurf* 84): this contributes to his exemplarity (Aristotle would say dignity), while the wondrous nagi-tree is the first hint at numinous horizons. But the lack of father and the lack of health indicate a seriously endangered space at the heart of the nation—or of the aristocratic class of the nation's capital, which in the monarchist Nô genre can be usually taken as a double synecdoche (societally vertical and topographically concentric) for the Japanese nation.

Part 3 and Part 4 conclude the typical narrative trajectory of a miracle story (or, in a laicized version, of a fairy tale): endangered everyday spacetime, exit to numinous spacetime, encounter with danger—here radicalized to actual physical death of the story's single hero or protagonist—, and rescue out of the jaws or indeed the belly of death (as in, say, Little Red Riding Hood). The Mountain is a highly numinous spacetime, entering which (the *mine-iri*) required full purification of all pilgrims. We can leave aside learned disputes about whether the death segment of this narrative takes its cue from reminiscences of actual human sacrifice (as propounded by Waley, "Note," and defended by Zobel) or from storytelling—here dramaturgic—equivalents of a boys' initiation ritual in the mountains (as finally propounded by Immoos [*Ritual* and "Gibt"] and Toida—cf. Suvin, "Yamabushi"). What matters is that these two parts are built around the two

necessary and sufficient movements of any Miracle-play gambit. In the first movement and place, motherly and fatherly love ("I am assailed by sorrow/ No different from a father's love:/ The tormenting ties of the Three Worlds," says the Bishop) is opposed by the weight of the tradition, which despite bitter personal sorrow brooks no rational gainsaying:

DEPUTY: ...I hesitate to mention it, but our Rule has prevailed since ancient times. All of us are agreed that the Valley Rite [i.e. casting the boy into the abyss] must be performed.

[BISHOP]: I am well aware of our Rule, but I felt so sorry for the boy that I chose to overlook it. But there is no helping it....

— — — — —

PILGRIMS: ...And the gods watching from their realms Will not permit us to transgress,
We must hurl him into the valley.

Yet the consequences of such transcendental obedience to the official purity vs. pollution split turn out to be disastrous. Even the invocation of the Diamond Wisdom Sutra on the evanescence of this world and of the strongest Buddhist Parable about the necessity of cutting ties to it, that of the Burning House (of which more in Section 3), does not help. The Valley Hurling leads not only to the physical death of Matsuwaka but also to such complete psychic breakdown of the Bishop that he, logically and loyally, declares himself to be polluted and demands the same fate. At this point a double bind has taken hold of the whole adult world of agents. The Mother has nobody left to intercede for her in prayer; the yamabushi are threatened with loss of their leader, which would entail collapse of the pilgrimage; none of this can be permitted if this Possible World is to continue; yet all of it came about by strict obedience to the Great Law, the "inflexible rule... observed from ancient times."

In this impasse, only a miracle can help, and it constitutes the second place and movement of the salvational gambit. Or perhaps better, the whole impasse and double bind has been set up in order to screw the psychic energies of the audience to a very high pitch of anxiety for the boy and for the whole Possible World of the stage. The stage rehearses in estranged fashion an underlying intractable problem in the audience's empirical world, for whose present and future the Boy is, parabolically, an *exemplum*. The built-up anxiety is then released into the relief of En no gyôja's miraculous apparition and his salvation of Matsuwaka in response to the yamabushi prayer's and to filial piety:

I pray you all, hearken to my words!
 The child displayed a nature
 Of peerless filial devotion,
 And for that reason I forthwith
 Will restore the boy to life!
 ONE AND ALL, THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR! (my caps)

The capitalized message is, I believe, addressed as much to the audience as to the yamabushi. If confirmation were necessary, En no gyôja's love for the child is explicitly identified by the Chorus to Buddha's mercy for people which is like the love of a parent for its young. Where the motherly love could not hold the son and the fatherly love could not protect him, where the normal institutional codification of ritual brought death, the divine ancestor can magically resuscitate and save him.⁶ En no gyôja appears on the well-known and climbable yet no less numinous mandala-peak in the Katsuragi mountain range, where legends dating back to the 8th Century place this mysterious magician. In hilly Japan, where life depended on the water coming from mountains to paddies, an extraordinary number of myths, rituals, and folk beliefs were included under the term *sangaku shinkô* (mountain creed). The Buddhist and Folk-daoist tradition strengthened the shamanic nature-worship beliefs and added hermit meditation in mountains and grottoes. The yamabushi twist on this was to take the Shinto group-activity and the Chinese-derived upward orientation and recombine it into pilgrim groups going actively up the dangerous mountain-mandala, often seen as a realm of death (Grapard 200 and passim) in order to imbue members with the magical powers obtainable in this way. It is significant that in *Tanikô* the saviour is no orthodox transcendentalist preaching disdain for this world, "not a Buddhist exemplar, but En-no-gyôja, a magician" (Blacker 105)—a much more ancient and rugged figure, shown in the play with attributes of a Daoist immortal. Further, his helper is a dancing *daimon* of music, traditionally the privileged way for metaphorically enacting social rites of passage (cf. Hanna 112). Thus, En the yamabushi founder and the child's saviour is a kind of counter-ruler from such an Other World (cf. Suvin, "Yamabushi," and Blacker 98), who makes for a kinder and better possible world—on the stage, and in the hopes of the audience.

1.2. Within the canon of performed Nô plays, *Tanikô* is unorthodox, indeed somewhat deviant. Somewhat like Euripides's *Bacchae* towards the end of Attic tragedy, it picks up again, towards the end of the great Nô surge, a story of magical miracle such as was usually treated in the proto-theatrical plays preceding Nô. There are some indications which speak for the assumption that *Tanikô* descends at least partly from such plays: first, as in those plays, En no gyôja used earlier to be played in clogs rather than in the usual Nô *tabi* socks (see Masuda); second, this subject-matter was certainly associated with the pre-Nô plays, so that we even have a preserved example of a *kagura*

dance-play where a yamabushi threatened by masked mountain demons is saved by the sword-dancing En no gyôja (Immoos, *Tanzritual* 5). Obversely, this ancient aura entails that *Tanikô*'s unfolding does not obey any proper mundane or even doctrinal logic. As Toida remarks, if the yamabushi had the powers to call up salvation for the boy, they should have prayed that he be cured of illness before he was hurled into the valley. It seems to me also that any genuine yamabushi would have been torn between embarrassment at having their Great Rule shown as a murderous practice and pride at having their founder En no gyôja shown as magical saviour of a pious boy. True, Japanese religious syncretism has historically thrived on logical incompatibilities yoked together on the basis of expressive emotionality, and *Tanikô* is so full of sentiment that Broadway might have called it a three-handkerchief play. More importantly—following the Nô plays' exemplary bent (which is in that sense didactic, though not primarily in verbal ways nor by way of monolinear causality)—the emotional logic is put into the service of dramaturgic effect upon the audience. Toida rightly remarks that the illogicality is explainable by the fact that the boy's movement through death to revival is the point of the play.

Historically, the basic appeal of the yamabushi was to people who needed immediate efficacious reprieve—pregnant women, children, the sick. In this light, the invocation of Fudô (rather than, say, Jizô, the protector of children and travellers, or Yakushi, the healer from sickness, or Kannon, the goddess of mercy, to whom the Ima-guma-no Shrine was devoted) is a significant pointer to the exasperated nature of that situation, to the imminent huge danger it represents or encapsulates for the whole world of the play. Fudô the "Wondrous King" (*myôô*), the principal Shugendô deity, is the pugnacious and conquering aspect of the compassionate force of illumination, a wrathful deity or bodhisattva who quells the evil forces with his sword of Esoteric Intellect cutting delusions off at the root and his rope binding the evil Passions. He appears as a blue-black figure amid a sea of purifying flames, fighting passion with passion. He is the most folksy yamabushi godhead, popularly called Fudô-sama, the saviour from imminent danger. The resuscitation by En no gyôja, drawing upon Fudô the fierce Knowledge or Light, yet assisted by the daimon of dance-harmony, makes for a new, true **Geborgenheit** (security). It is opposed to the crumbling safeness in the isolated family fraction as the magical Mountain to the etiolated City, as the powers of En no gyôja—who taps the whole array of esoteric forces—to the weak and widowed Mother, as the ancestors to the degenerate present. The newly instituted merciful contract of salvation is also opposed to the inefficient, merely personal motherhood and quasi-fatherhood as well as to the rigorously sanitized male institution of brotherhood. En's act thus stands for a maieutics of rebirth that is, first, beyond the dichotomy of personalized vs. institutionalized, and second (if the term be permitted) "ungendered": above and beyond gender with En the immortal elder, beneath or beside gender with the sexless *gigaku*

godhead who harrows the grave. En the founder-ancestor of the yamabushi fuses thus fatherhood and motherhood as the boy Matsuwaka's second, androgynous life-giver and safeguard.

It would also be possible to speculate on the strictly sociopolitical implications of the sick City. Metonymically, this represents the ruling classes (the aristocracy and/or the shogunal bureaucracy) as well as the people as a whole which need a rejuvenation in contact with the dangerous but potentially revivifying, ancestral Nature. I believe this parabolic implication would have been clear enough to the original audience, but it is also true that it is not at all foregrounded or developed into a class differentiation, much less class conflict. The great strengths of the Nô form, one of the most splendid in all of world theatre, consisted in making a supreme virtue out of its very narrow limits. Potential conflicts are, typically, backgrounded and resolved by revelation (see Essay 4).

2. Waley and Hauptmann: The Vulnerable Individual and Schoolboy

2.1. Arthur Waley's rewrite, *Tanikô (The Valley Hurling)*, ends with the Boy's death and burial as related by the Chorus, which might serve as a good sample of his writing:

Then the pilgrims sighing
For the sad ways of the world
And the bitter ordinances of it,
Make ready for the hurling.
Foot to foot
They stood together
Heaving blindly
None guiltier than his neighbour.
And clods of earth
And flat stones they flung.

True, Waley scrupulously appends here a footnote indicating that the Boy is returned to the pilgrims through En no gyôja's and Fudô's intervention—including an interesting parallel to En no gyôja's structural opposition to valleys, in the founding legend of the Invisible Pathway or Bridge of Crags which he had had constructed between the mountain peaks (it is found in all three play versions). Yet even in this verse passage, Waley expands the simple togetherness of the Nô pilgrims into the whole six-line sentence beginning "Foot to foot," which is powerful original poetry that Brecht did not disdain to take over as it stood (in Hauptmann's German). Furthermore, Waley adds the quite post-Christian motif "none guiltier than his neighbour." Finally, he cut the Buddhist reference to

jaken, the ignorance of true causality (cf. Sembritzki, "Anmerkungen" 101), and rephrased the Nô's earlier Buddhist references to the world's evanescence into the stoic sadness of his first three lines. **Toute proportion gardée**, suitably scaled down, Morris's judgment on Waley's prose masterpiece, the "translation" of *The Tale of Genji*, comes to mind:

Indeed, the word "re-creation" would be more appropriate; for he has brought Murasaki's novel to life as a great work of English literature in its own right. As Waley himself has said, so much is inevitably lost in translating from classical Oriental literature that the translator must give a great deal in return. (*World* 293)

For such an approach to his source-text Waley was often rapped on his knuckles by literal-minded philologists. "We receive a fair impression of the dramatic quality and of aspects of the style of the original, but Waley's version, by removing the play from its own context necessarily places it into another one" is an unusually fair summary from the monotheist, source-oriented point of view that there is a God-given original and translations must approximate it as closely as they can (Tatlow 182).⁷ Yet this does not only miss Waley's creative intentions, encapsulated in his declaration at the end of the "Introduction" to his Nô book that his translations should be "in some sense works of art"—"literature" rather than "merely philology" (55; see Tatlow 183). It also follows an approach dubious within translating and theatre practice (as evidenced by the discussion in 1.0 of the multiple *Tanikô* versions and rewrites in Japan!) as well as in modern translation theory, all oriented primarily toward the "target audiences" (cf. Essay 2). Thus, I find it is more useful to consider Waley's work rather as a rewrite, say like Chaucer's use of Boccaccio in *Troilus and Criseyde* (see Cohen), or like Edward Bond's *Lear* or Ionesco's *Macbett* in comparison to Shakespeare.

The parallel to modern rewrites of classics is not irrelevant: to the contrary from *Tanikô*'s (very Japanese) exploration of what might constitute a valid—i.e. life-furthering—community consensus, Waley demands to be written about in *individualist* terms. His epoch-marking step—epoch-registering in its relation to macro-processes in historical reality, epoch-making in the history of these texts' filiation—was to have understood the position of the Boy as that of a nut in its shell, and then to have with courageous logic and creative treason reconceived the (religious but also communal) shell as an axiologically superfluous, empirically constricting, and finally malevolent obstacle. Instead of a communal decision about proper dying, Waley clearly saw only the deep fakery of the supposed consent by the slaughtered (the *locus classicus* of this English upper-class usurpation is Ben Jonson's poem "To Penhurst": "The painted partrich lyes in every field,/ And, for thy messe, is willing to be kill'd"). This is why he coupled in his book *Tanikô* with the Nô-play *Ikeniye*, meaning both "Pool Sacrifice" in particular and "'Living Sacrifice,' i.e. human sacrifice" in general (Waley, "Note"): what

mattered to him in both plays was that they were ruled by the "Great Custom" of sacrificing the young, so that in both he cut out the divine resuscitation of the young victim, appending a dry footnote instead. This coupling has the robust strengths and final weakness of a thematic criticism, picking out motifs or aspects from the whole structure (cf. the contemporaneous survey of such elements in Gundert, e.g. on Shintoist divine punishment in 237). Finally, the individual is exposed in all his nakedness to an alien reality, which therefore, in proportion to its sway, cannot be but bitter and fatal. Waley's version shows, and protests by showing up, the socially enforced death of the young individual.

Waley's counter-play takes its anti-clerical negation of "the ruthless exactions of religion" (Waley, "Note") from the optimistic and combative heyday of 18th-Century Enlightenment, and its stoical look at inevitable defeat from the downward curve of liberalism in the early 20th Century. It thus condenses the whole trajectory of the liberal glance at individualism since the *Entzauberung* of the world by the bourgeoisie. The aporias of such a "disenchantment" (Weber's term—most apposite here—for the Rationalist demolition of "traditional," magically suffused order, cf. 103, 317, 472-73, and passim) open upon the horizon of what can fairly be called a *liberal tragedy*. The Boy is a kind of post-Ibsenian disturber of dogmatic consensus enforced by the Powers-That-Be, an "enemy of the people" in a nutshell. Yet, exotically, he is himself under the sway of the dogmatic consensus, still *verzaubert* or dogmatically bewitched—a nut consenting to be crushed by the constricting shell. This mute acceptance of Fate, as well as the spare language and the ready use of the abstract location, owe much also to the example of Maeterlinck, the great dramaturgic innovator at the turn of the century and one of Waley's favourites (cf. Morris ed. 124 and Hirakawa, "Waley's" 34-37). I would go so far as to suggest that Waley's *Nô* plays may be thought of as a native English Maeterlinckian dramaturgy, with a bias toward Imagism rather than Symbolism.

Since there are no ancestral forces represented here, this conflict is—as indicated even by the appellation of "Boy"—one typical for Waley's generation. Born in 1889, Waley studied at Cambridge from 1907 to 1910, and lived during the next decade (and later) in London where he frequented Imagist poets and young writers. Raymond Williams's analysis of "The Bloomsbury Fraction" fits Waley well, though additional refinements would have to be introduced for his one-person "junior, exotic branch" of it (D. Hawkes, in Morris ed. 45). His generation and brilliant social fraction of the young English intellectual elite was indelibly marked by two major occurrences. First, an aesthetic disaffection with the ugliness of bourgeois life and an ethical revolt against the Ibsenian "life-lie" of Victorian hegemony:

...saying "Bosh!" to that vast system of cant and hypocrisy which made lies a vested interest, the vested interest of the "establishment," of the monarchy, aristocracy, upper classes, suburban bourgeoisie, the Church, the Army, the stock exchange. (Woolf 164)

This translated into a striving for clear thought and accurate words, as shared by his friend Rupert Brooke, by J.M. Keynes or Bertrand Russell. Their favourite teachers, G. Lowes Dickinson and G.E. Moore, stressed that only aesthetic perceptions and personal affections could lend significance to the individual's life. Theirs was a staunch middle-of-the-road liberalism in face of what they perceived as the threat of irrational forces. Within this group, it seems that Waley early on had a particular stoic awareness of death and darkness (cf. Perlmutter 5-9). At the meetings of Imagist poets in the first half of the 1910s, which included Pound, Eliot, Ford, Aldington, and H.D., or subsequently (including the period when he was translating the Nô plays) on the fringes of the Cambridge-derived Bloomsbury group and its dedication to Moorean principles of ethics, to art and "high" culture, Waley imbibed their nostalgia for a more gracious and reasonable life—often in a fantasy China (and Japan). In hindsight it is painfully ironical that this group and Waley in particular were especially horrified at warfare as an epitome of the dark forces working against civilization. Soon, the brutal and senseless World War was to kill not only Brooke and Wilfred Owen but the great majority of Waley's generation (which was also that of Sassoon and Graves), becoming the second indelible event stamping its remnant. No wonder that he was impelled to read and rewrite *Tanikô*—in a book published in 1921, prepared probably 1918-20—as the killing of the young by the elders in power, the Massacre of the Innocent.

Waley's translation verse has been widely recognized as an *al pari* contribution to English Modernism. It learned very much from the Imagistic predilections for alliteration and assonance, natural word-order, simple sentences, and sparing use of descriptive adjectives. It participated in the generational revulsion, from Eliot to Edith Sitwell and Graves, against sentimentality—in Pound's desire for a poetry that is to be "austere, direct, free from emotional slither" (cited in Perlmutter 92), though Waley staunchly preferred his end-stopped to Pound's broken-up lines (see Morris ed. 144-45). Waley may be characterized by what he, revealingly, wrote about an admired translator-colleague, Lin Shu: his wit "is transmuted by a precise, economical style;...[he] makes [every point] quietly and efficiently" (in Morris ed. 161). Waley's verse has a mastery of polished yet colloquial tone, what Sitwell called "that exact fusion of meaning and language, the *clearness* of the language (...I was trying to say absence of shadow...)" (97). Brecht was to recognize this spare and "cool" yet powerful hidden melody by adopting much of its close German translation as his own. Waley's choice of unrhymed verse with a strong but flexible rhythm, eschewing regular metre, was a successful experiment, stimulated by the Imagists' admiration for both *vers libre* and the Japanese haiku and tanka (cf.

Perlmutter 89-90) and in turn clearly stimulating what Brecht called his unrhymed lyrics with irregular metre. In the Nô translations this means moving easily and delicately between two and six beats and using extra syllables between beats as necessary (this last as well as the current yet elevated diction, which we could call a *volgare illustre*, Waley sometimes attributed to his admiration for G.M. Hopkins, see Morris ed. 144 and 160).

But informing these significant technicalities, there was an ethical and ideological choice. This may perhaps be inferred from Waley's handling of the lyrical effusions in the *Tanikô* reworking. He only retained them when they concerned internalized personal feelings, e.g. the cited one of the Pilgrims about the Boy, but more often between Mother and Boy; in such cases he even added some at times flowery expressions of sadness (one transplanted from *Ikeniye*, cf. Hirakawa, "How" 578). But he ruthlessly cut the lyricalness of supra-personal passages from the Nô play, such as the *michiyuki* (the obligatory initial "travel-song" within a framework of magical geography), the religious allusions, and even the allusions to the traditional poetic images from Heian-period tankas. His outstanding economy and precision, the "limpid English" and "beauty of English sound" (Hirakawa, "Waley's" 23) so appreciated by people like Virginia Woolf and Edith Sitwell, can from this vantage point be read as a stylistically implicit commentary on a *totally* disenchanted and disenchanting world in which young men may be brainwashed into suicidal self-sacrifice. This world has been desemanticized and delocalized away from Japan, into a chronotope where one has to knock on the house door (Waley 230). The supremely valuable individual relationships or feelings and the supremely powerful society here face each other as irreconcilable givens: there is more than a whiff of the First World War trenches in Waley's valley for hurling.⁸ All of these are reasons why his text not only found a clear echo in Brecht, but became the presupposition without which Brecht's own rewrite would not have been possible in anything like its actual compressed and efficient form.

In sum, Waley's function was at least threefold: as has been abundantly commented upon, he was a translator between two natural languages. Largely as a result of Waley's work, "the literatures of China and Japan...have become part of the main stream of intelligent reading in the West, so that a knowledge of classical Chinese poetry and of works like *The Tale of Genji* and the Nô plays are as essential to any broad, humanistic education as Homer and Virgil" (Morris, "Genius" 67). As has also been noticed, though much less frequently discussed, Waley was a translator between two theatre ontologies—the (East) Asian one based on union of dance, music, and epico-lyrical text, and the (West) European-cum-American one based on pruned verbal text and implicit gestural positions only. But he was also—and in the wake of my essay 1, I would argue centrally—a translator from a pre-capitalist epoch of supra-individualist values to the epoch of the (disenchanted and often threatened) individual as the supreme value of the universe. This is, in fact, why he single-handedly rescued *Tanikô* from the deep oblivion it had fallen into in Japan. As Donald Keene has rightly summed up, Waley

worked without the detailed elucidations and commentaries that translators would routinely have at their disposal a generation later, and he therefore made some philological mistakes. But they were "compensated for by his unorthodox and often brilliantly successful discoveries of works the Japanese themselves had ignored" ("Street" 59; cf. also Hirakawa, "How"). Much was gained by his re-exhumation and rewrite: not the least, a reclaiming of the theme for the "Western" 20th Century. Though there was some bitter opposition within the Japanese cultural establishment to this rediscovery (see Hirakawa, "Waley's" 24), the play was, by ricochet through Brecht, finally recuperated also for the threatened Japanese postwar scene.

However, the price was high. Put in partly post-Brechtian and not fully fair terms. "Waley's version plays down the religious and ritual elements of the *noh* in order to evoke empathy rather than critical understanding in his Western audience" (Wirth 610). I would rather say Waley comes up against the final blockage of liberal tragedy: *the impotence at causal explanation*. How can a society composed of individuals turn against the individual? A universe composed of individuals is much more than the best of all possible worlds, it is for him the only conceivable one. And yet this universe, the totality of all individuals, will physically annihilate the representative Boy, who is consubstantial to it (as, say, Rupert Brooke was): both a vulnerable particular entrusted to this universe and its potential future. No answer to this total dead-end is available within individualism except for some version of scapegoating—here: "the ruthless exactions of religion"; but though religion blessed, it did not cause the World War.

The cosmopolitan and enlightened Anglo-Jewish Waley might have well thought here, parabolically, also of the pseudo-religion of nationalism, just brought to a grotesquely bloody head in the World War. But he never envisaged the hidden springs by which the nationalism of imperial England was also what gave him and his brilliant friends the personal and collective means to study at Cambridge and pursue the aesthetic perceptions of "high" culture (cf. Williams 165). This is not meant to disparage culture, Waley or this redoing of *Tanikô* cloaked as translation; indeed, I have been arguing it is valuable in its own right. But it is valuable as showing, and showing up, precisely a dead end. While presenting the disenchanted killing fields, Waley's relatively very safe vantage-point of pre-Blitz England still held, in a kind of Enlightenment stoicism, to the saving grace of an ethical aesthetics as rampart of civilization. Walter Benjamin's deeper dialectics, for which every monument of civilization is also a monument of barbarism, would thus probably not have been shared by Arthur Waley; yet his *Tanikô* is a telling exemplification of this more somber saw.

2.2. The eminent critic Szondi called Elisabeth Hauptmann's 1929 translation of Waley's English rewrite, first published in a theatre periodical for 1929/30, exemplary in its fidelity (110), and this is almost but not quite correct. Consciously or not, Hauptmann was already so deeply brechtianized that she was getting expert at furthering laicized realism by means of quite small verbal changes. As she

said in retrospect, and possibly too humbly and sweepingly, she translated "rather freely and bearing in mind what Waley says in his foreword, namely that the translation loses much of the specificity and beauty of the original."⁹ To give the most important examples: Hauptmann emended Waley's "A pause" after the question to the Teacher whether he is troubled about the Boy's "tiredness" to "**Lange Pause**" (long pause), thus prefiguring Brecht's masterly dosage of pauses in the Boy's answers. She abbreviated Waley's final note, which—as observed above—gave a brief but precise summary of the religious finale, from seven lines to one and half which merely says that "the Boy was reawakened to new life" (Hauptmann, *Taniko* 18). Also, for Waley's Teacher she substituted "the very German 'Herr Lehrer,' thus bringing the story right into the classroom" (Tatlow 183). This might serve as the measure of Hauptmann's accomplishment: from Cambridge and the fields of Flanders we have been transferred to a German school-class of 1929, with a touch of **Wandervogel** (youth hiking movement) excursionism turning nasty in a way that her version of the play left unexplained but not too unfamiliar given the various competing authoritarianisms around, and with an incipiently brechtianized cognitive optic. This meant advancing from the baseline of, but also being deeply inconsistent with, Waley's muted tragedy; and it set into motion the whole train of Brecht's revisions. Völker's judgment about Hauptmann's and Brecht's collaboration on *The Threepenny Opera* holds here too: Hauptmann's share is quantitatively major, "but still: the effect, the charm, the final refinement of the text is due to the master-plagiarizer Brecht, the genius fitter, cannibalizer, and adapter of models from elsewhere" (94-95).

3. The Brechtian Cluster: What Is Right Consenting?

viele verneinen sich an dir,
der du sie einzeln erjast,
aufständisch...

Paul Celan

(A poor translation:

Many deny (denegate, naysay) themselves to you/ who affirms
(yeasays) them/ singly,/ insurgent...)

3.1. The filiation of texts from Waley to the final, today universally reprinted twin version of *Der Jasager* and *Der Neinsager* has one more intermediary link: Brecht's *Jasager*, first version (further J1). It was written in Winter 1929/30 for Weill's music, as a miniature **Singspiel** for music classes in high schools (and when that music is the reason of performance, it is still often performed). It introduces Brecht's first major modification: putting the play into the new framework and **telos** of **Einverständnis**, the consensus of the individual to a concept of social cohesiveness reinterpreted from Weber (cf.

Weber 126ff.). Brecht's consensus is explained in the introductory choral lines announcing the play's theme (a standard Nô-technique). These "framing" lines insist on the importance of learning a true consensus, which is here reconducted back to its etymological nucleus of **Ein-Verständnis, con-sensus**, "understanding into" or "meaning with" (see Steinweg 120 and Šubik 40-41 and 49-53). On the "triple error, one rightness" model of the New Testament parable, such as that of the Mustard Seed (cf. Suvin, "Metaphoricity" 60-62), this dialectical consenting is *not* to be found in lip-service, in exclusion from decision-making or in consent to what is wrong. Yet the problem with J1 is exactly that it rehearses this last option.

True, Brecht added to Hauptmann's version a number of other felicitous and at times superb touches: not only the full expunging of overtly religious remnants, such as the teacher being a priest and the voyage a pilgrimage where the boy can efficaciously pray for his mother,¹⁰ but, to begin with, important dramaturgic changes—e.g., the reduction in number (condensation) of choral **dramatis personae**; the division of scenic space into two, with concomitant spare indications of "mimetic" behaviour, e.g. the listening at the door, or attempting to carry the Boy across the mountain ledge with help of schoolroom props such as table, chair, and rope; a social collocation of the Boy into a lower-class family where the mother has to cook, sew, and earn money. With unerring instinct, he eliminated Waley's individualistic additions, and he went back to verse (sometimes as arias for Weill) at key lyrical and epic junctures. Nonetheless, Brecht's attempts to link the personal and the social—emblematically materialized in the pitcher for medicine which the Boy finally bequeaths to the expedition—fail because of the vague motivation system. The Boy joins the trip through the mountains in order to get medicine and counsel from the healer-teachers in the City beyond it. But the Mother's sickness is not dangerous, while the Boy's sickness carries no metaphysical guilt but simply prevents the expedition from crossing a narrow ridge, so that the Great Custom makes neither magical nor pragmatic sense. Therefore Brecht's gestures toward voluntary obedience only attain, as both positive Right-wing and negative Left-wing critiques remarked, overtones of Jesuit or Prussian—or neo-authoritarian—obedience unto death (**Kadavergehorsam**). While the Boy already demonstrates a non-consenting to his Mother's sickness, Brecht also—pace Knopf 90—introduces a dramatic demonstration of the Boy's wrongness in non-consenting when asked whether he is sick: after another tell-tale pause, his incapacity to remain standing contradicts the verbal denegation.

All in all, this play for children was, as Hanns Eisler remarked, a "horrifying success."¹¹ Brecht wrote it in haste, not having fully thought through the implications. With instinctive slyness, he had the escape door of fruitful contradiction ready. Still, just because J1 thus partook of his generation's relatively unpruned "collective unconscious," remnants of a fascination with myth—however laicized—may be seen here mingled with the spare severity of the dramaturgy. As Szondi commented

in retrospect, "[the Custom's] seeming senselessness could slyly put on metaphysical dignity, and it was endorsed by those who feel no need to pose the question what is the sense of hardness and victimization" (112). Brecht listened to the comments, especially those of the children (see *Versuche* 319-21 and Krabiel passim), and hastened through the escape door, reworking the play in 1930/31 with masterfully economic radicalness. As usual in Brecht's "plays for learning," he was the first one to have learned something from them, and one could even say that the play itself had learned something decisive (cf. Bloch, "Leninist" 363).

3.2. The final versions of *The Yea-Sayer* and *The Nay-Sayer* (further J2 and N, together J/N), published in 1931, are remarkable examples of clear and differential focussing.¹² The "healers and teachers" of J1 underwent a kariokinesis or splitting of genetic material, migrating in the two playlets to opposite poles that may be called "epidemic with overriding need to save the community" (including the Mother) by reaching the healers beyond the mountains, and "stable community wishing for increment of knowledge": in Brecht's terms, "Hilfsexpedition" vs. "Forschungsreise." In the first case the old wisdom is to be used—the salvation/health of the commonwealth is the supreme law (**salus rei publicae suprema lex**); in the second case the new wisdom is to be used which Brecht (who liked Latin) might have expressed as **salus cuique suprema lex** (the salvation/health of each is the supreme law). In the first case (J2) obedience is founded on the inescapable authority of the situation and not of a person; obversely, the misguided teacher is called "**Herr** Lehrer" (roughly: Master) only in the second, ironic case (N), where he also uses his authority in order to link permission for the Boy's participation in the trip to the Boy's consent to "all that might happen" to him. The narrow ledge preventing transport of a sick person is present in J2 but absent in N; obversely, the ancestral Great Custom is named (so that it can be denied) only in N.¹³ A good example of differential focussing is the Chorus passage at the end of the first or City part of both playlets. Waley/Hauptmann's verses on filial piety "Deep as our heavy sighs" were already in J1 transformed by Brecht into the simple "Oh, welch tiefes Einverständnis!" ("O what a deep consenting!"), followed by three new lines on the Boy's non-consenting to sickness which means consenting to its healing. Now, in J2, the cited exclamation of the first line is cut—physical evidence will take place of verbal exhortation, which is however retained in N as a piece of unnecessary idealistic ethics (cf. Knopf 91). In brief, J2 is based on dire communal and physical necessity, so that no Master or exhortation is needed. The necessity is not to be circumvented by the carefully constructed attempts at rescue, and is brought home to the Students too when they are asked not to leave the Boy to a slow death but to throw him into the abyss, i.e. to take physical responsibility for their ethical decisions. Symmetrically obverse, N is not based on necessity but on debatable, finally irrational, and therefore rejected authority.

Brecht seems thus, by means of a series of minimal but highly significant details, to encapsulate in these playlets the necessity of resisting both horns of the split between thought and deed historically

characteristic for German social psychology and constitutive of its backwardness, of **die deutsche Misere**: Germans have traditionally either liked to confine themselves to being thinkers divorced from doing (e.g. at the time of the French Revolution, as epitomized in part 6 of Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*), or they have followed orders blindly, doing without critically thinking. The way out of this Idealist vs. Prussian dilemma is indicated when the Boy—wiser than Galy Gay, the man who could not say no from *Man Is Man*, Brecht's play a couple of years earlier—proceeds to debate and deny authority on its own terms: denying the necessity of following an unworkable Great Custom, he opts for having more than one, the presently necessary one being "the new great Custom, to be instituted immediately, namely the custom to think anew in each new position." This spells out what I would claim is ***the basic epistemological rule for right consenting*** in these twin playlets: ***to have the stance reached correspond to the situation***, and to reach it by ***a thinking that takes its cue from the represented position or state of affairs*** (**Haltung** and **Lage** conserve the suggestions of bodily positions more strongly than the English equivalents). One might call this rule the Brechtian, or the dialectical and gestually materialized, eversion of the Thomist "adequation of understanding and thing" (**adequatio intellectus et rei**). The plays are a dramatization of such dialectics of bodily—and thus also mental—stance (cf. Suvin, "Brecht").

How is this final, underlined twin formulation of Brecht's position to be read? First, teaching and healing are (as in J1) both necessary and indeed cognate activities, but teaching the body how to regain health is qualitatively more urgent than—since it is a precondition for—teaching the mind results of new research. The parabolic applications of the age-old metaphor of healing to the equally old metaphor of body politic—both of which have probably flowered first in ancient India, whence they incided on both East Asia and the Mediterranean—are clear. Healing or saving the body politic (and its allegorical agential analog, the Mother) may demand the sacrifice of an (any) individual. As Brecht is quoted to have commented, "If the fox sticks his paw into the trap, the paw will be lost" ("Wenn der Fuchs seine Pfote in die Falle steckt, verliert er eben seine Pfote"—Brock, "Brecht" 3). But N reveals this to be an emergency exception to the political rule that the whole is not so much superordinated to as responsible for the individual: in the terms of Essays 1 and 4, it is basically a caressing rather than an antagonistic and superior whole. The exception exists, in fact, so that the rule may continue existing—for without the individual's responsibility for the whole, which may demand a sacrifice in case of exceptional threat, the whole (including, it is perhaps necessary to repeat today, all of its constituent and consubstantial individuals) might in such lethal emergencies cease to be.

Thus, the Romantic or generally Individualist dichotomy between individual and group (or society) is not centrally debated but refunctioned here: it is felt as a double-bind, the only answer to which is to step out of it and recast the discussion into more productive terms. At stake is rather the **framework**

and the *bearer* (protagonist) of a desperately needed *new system of behaviour*. The framework should be metamorphosized from a *priori* or doctrinal monotheism (the sway of God the Patriarch) and therefore fixity, into a *posteriori* or pragmatic, situation-driven (*Situationsbezogen*) polytheism, which means a renewable flexibility of the, no doubt indispensable, plural Great Customs. Authority is not being downgraded here in favour of individual inspiration (which may also be whim). To the contrary of any wishywashiness or laxity, the plays "apply a clerical severity to the instruction in a modern technique" (Benjamin 537)—here the technique of fitting the thinking to changing positions. In it, the authority of "really existing" physics is exalted at the expense of the authority of ethical idealism, such as that of The Master ("Herr Lehrer") and his Three Pupils ("Drei Studenten," almost better translatable as Three Apprentices). "The realist," remarked Brecht in his journal, "weighs ideals against reality and constantly corrects his *vorstellungen* (imagination) of it" (1: 148). Benjamin quoted Meyerhold, the director nearest to Brecht's horizons, as saying that the actors of his theatre differ from the west European ones in two ways: "First, that they can think, second, that they think in materialist, not idealist ways" (528).

Benjamin also implied that the ideal protagonist of such "plays for learning" is not a traditional hero, the athlete of fixed certainties, but a quick and movable learner—including teachers who (like Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenforde) can still learn: "the place of *Bildung* (absorption of knowledge data) is taken by *Schulung* (education of judgment)" (776). As the learning teacher in N concludes of the refusal: "What the boy says is reasonable, even if it is not heroic." This is of a piece with the most radical horizons of the "school-opera" (*Schuloper*) movement in Germany. The original *Jasager* (J1) came about after Kurt Weill read Hauptmann's translation and proposed to Brecht to rework it as text for a school-opera, to be performed as a part of this movement in the music teaching of lower high schools. "Brecht agreed to Weill's proposal as he was himself very interested in the experiment of an opera for children..." (Hauptmann, "Wie" 216, cf. *Julia* 176-77). The "school-opera" was shaped by a pedagogics issued from the turn-of-the century youth movement, the radical wing of which in the Weimar Republic came to foster the children's creativity and autonomy through playing. This wing was well-known to Brecht through his friend Suhrkamp and, especially, through Benjamin, who memorably formulated its utopian horizons in his 1928 "Program for a Proletarian Children's Theatre," that reworked also the Soviet experiences and subversively argued that children playing carnivalesque theatre should be empowered to educate the educators. This is why even the not quite clear J1 ushered in a brief renaissance of the genre, with over 60 performances in schools and on the radio in the three years before Hitler's coming to power (Brock, *Musiktheater* 11, 32-66, and *passim*; see also Voigts 132-47, with further rich bibliography in both).

Within this horizon, where the child may become a privileged revolutionary teacher of the adult, because "the child's gesture is the *secret signal* of what is to come" (Benjamin 769), "the decision of

the Yes-Sayer and of the No-Sayer [is] equally rational" (Wirth 613); the Nay-Sayer is a potential Yea-Sayer, and viceversa. I hope this also makes clear how deeply justified is Brecht's final note: "The two playlets should wherever possible not be performed without each other" (Szondi ed., 30). The yea-saying boy is not a tragic hero, just as the nay-saying boy is not a comic one: they are both good learners. Usually in Brecht, death is either not heroic or the hero/ine does not die. Only with exceptional security for avoiding pseudo-tragic pathos was Brecht prepared to have a heroic death performed. Nonetheless, in spite of the spare and reserved diction, the precise and powerful relationships in the twin playlets are to my mind immensely affective, with music (see Martens) or without it.

3.3. But if we take seriously Brecht's meta-rule that postures may only be appropriate to given positions, to which position in his time, and then in our times, are J/N and its meta-rule appropriate? I would agree with Ernst Bloch that Brecht's work attempts to turn the stage into a "paradigmatic institution" which works out a "**Probe aufs Exempel**," exemplary tests:

The stances and events should be shaped and playacted so as to experiment whether they are proper or not for changing life. Thus one can say that Brechtian theatre intends to be... a laboratory of correct theory-cum-practice in small, in play form, as it were in the stage case, which is related to the reality case (**Ernstfall**) as experimental basis.... Possible alternatives may thus be shown as being attempted, with the stage bearing out the ends of each alternative (cf. the opposed plays for learning *The Yea-Sayer*, *The Nay-Sayer*). (Bloch, "Schaubühne" 482).

For Brecht's times, ingenious if somewhat monochromatic suggestions have been made by later critics to read the twin parables as allegories of the sick City (Weimar Germany, or capitalist society in general) which is to be healed by working through the deadly difficulties of the Mountains (meaning the struggle for political power—cf. Brecht's poem "Die Mühen der Gebirge" and the best such attempt at exegesis in Brown). If these suggestions could lead us to identify the whole theme, from *Tanikô* to J/N, as a variant of the old Buddhist exodus from the Burning House or Biblical exodus from the bondage and plagues of Egypt through purgational hard terrain to the Pure or Promised Land, I would find them initially rather useful. It is well known that Buddha's Parable of the Burning House in the *Lotus Sutra*¹⁴—invoked in *Tanikô* too—was refunctioned by Brecht in a famous poem about the necessity of getting out of an unbearable existential situation (clearly intended for capitalism), while a defensive or escape-oriented variant of the wandering led by Moses underlies some of his major picaresque plays, such as *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (see Suvin, *To Brecht*, ch. 6). But I would then object that such identifications are too general. First, the threatened death of the young generation makes it a very specific variant, perhaps more akin to the Flight to Egypt, that needs further

elucidation. Second, an efficient parable cannot be a classical allegory with one-to-one referents (e.g. Brown's "promised" Soviet Germany), so that the J/N vanguard expedition can apply to a large spectrum of collective and personal variations on the Road of Life (Dao or *iter vitae*), including protracted as well as point-like events of our and future times. Further, the agential dynamics in Brecht's twin plays may then be read not only as a neophyte joining a vanguard group for the good of his Mother and Land, "like a bourgeois intellectual who joins the [L]eft" (Brown "8"): it would apply to any thinker (in the widest Brechtian and Gramscian sense, cf. Suvin, "*Brecht's Life of Galileo*") who joins a deeply worthwhile but existentially very dangerous collective enterprise.

Four aspects of agential relationships in J/N seem to me most significant. First, as proper in a "play for learning" and an "opera for schoolchildren," there is a clear gradation of agents according to what one could call "pragmatic suitability," i.e. to how compatible they are with Brecht's meta-rule on the correct stance or true consenting as spelled out in the underlined sentence of 3.2 above. In the most clearcut case of N, the least suitable is the Deputy Leader (already in *Tanikô* characterized as an **apparatchik**, see 1.1), then the sheepishly following Students, while the Boy, who breaks through to critical thinking, is clearly best, and the Teacher, who is willing to learn from his pupil (like Clavius from Galileo in the homonymous play), is second-best. Second, the model proposed for correct agential relationships amounts to a Luxemburgist plebeian democracy of self-governing Councils (**Räte** or the original Soviets), which obey the centralized Great Law of Leninist stripe in the absolutely exceptional case of a mortally sick community (J2) but as a rule allow for changing leadership based on who has best understood the lessons of reality (like the Boy in N). Third, as I suggested at the end of 3.2, there is a remarkable tension yet a mutual induction between distancing coolness (**Unterkühlung**) and passionate participation, both of which are expected of the audience—the former constantly clarifying and confirming the latter.¹⁵

Finally, for the World War 1 generation of not only Waley but also the slightly younger Hauptmann, Brecht, Weill, e **tutti quanti**, the most pathetic subject for poetry was not Poe's death of a fair young woman but killing the child (**Kindermord**): the authority-ordered and group-enforced killing of a (representative) young man was surely *the* traumatic event of the age, which engaged their deepest psychic energies. Most of them responded with the symmetrical theme of **Vatermord** (title of a characteristic play by Brecht's friend Bronnen); this Killing of the Father, the dethronement of the undisputable ruling authority and of the blind obedience to it, was transferred by Freud into both the child's ontogenetic and the prehistoric horde's phylogenetic Oedipal depths. Many rebel sons, however (e.g. Bronnen), soon went back to a substitute Father. **Pace** some improvised liberal psychoanalysts like Esslin, Brecht never did: while a strong personality, wedded to a clear **telos**, he was more matriarchal than patriarchal. And while his play too is the resolution of a collective, allegorical psychodrama, it has a much richer position for the Mother. True, the Mother as a personalized agent

is threatened and backgrounded, but she is also the reason for the whole action. And her widowhood may also be autonomy: far from being a sexual object of domination by a Master, the full materiality of the situation into which the Boy is immersed is both an analogy to the Maternal Principle and a touchstone for choosing the right stance. It provides the ground for correct consenting (to death, if exceptionally need be), just as the salvation of the community—its survival or rebirth into the future—provides the *telos* or orientation. Lacking the only partly patriarchal, distributive ancestral authority of the Japanese versions, the European 20th-Century versions have to decide between the monotheistic Law of the Father coming down from the patrician heights, and an Antaeian rebirth upward from the plebeian Mother. The Boy's hurling follows the patriarchal downward vertical, while his firm stance of refusal is an insurgency or uprising that denies the downward vector, taking the Law into his own hands and subjecting it to the claims of nurturing pragmatic reason.

Nonetheless, this whole theme, from the original *Tanikô* on, totally brackets out nubile women of the younger generation. While this is explainable as the allegorical emplotment of deadly political anxieties ranging from medieval civil wars to the First World War, from which women were traditionally excluded (except as mothers and widows), it ceases to function as a proper excuse by the time of Brecht. He may for J/N have had the additional reason of writing for boys in the German gender-separated high schools, and of course his plays will from the early 1930s on turn away from the dominance of male dramaturgic agents. Nonetheless his treatment assorts ill with his return to and refunctioning of pre-individualist traditions, in which death and sex were almost always linked (cf. Bloch & Parry). This may be the theme's limitation, though if so then it is also a limitation of almost all *Nô* plays—the dark obverse of their *yûgen* sublimation.

4. Toward a Conclusion: Readiness for Death, Proper Living

ten auten einai meleten tou kalos zen kai tou kalos
apothneskein.

(The art of living well and of dying well is the same one.)

Epicure, *Maxims and Aphorisms*

To attempt now a synoptic view of this whole filiation, from medieval Japan to modern Europe, one could begin by noting the metamorphoses of the underlying motif of important journey. In the pseudo-Zenchiku *Tanikô* (further T), it is a pilgrimage to numinous mountain powers which provide salvation; in Waley (further W), it is a "ritual mountain-climbing" (231) where the absence of the numinous framework and of the final pragmatic justification by resuscitation turns the exercise into a not only empty but ruthlessly murderous ritual; and in Brecht's final pair of playlets, it is the

stage-setting for a demonstration how to reach a correct stance, "consenting" to the necessities of the always particular human and indeed cosmic (physical, natural) position at hand, as a parable applicable to political psychology—or to any other communal dynamics. All three sets of versions—*Tanikô*, Waley/Hauptmann, and Brecht—are only significant if read as parables or *exempla* for *a situation of mortal danger for the whole community* and/or the bearers of its future—the Young Man and the Mother. In that lofty sense, which would have been shared by Aristotle and Zeami, all three sets—not only Brecht's one—present "plays for learning," pedagogic poetry and political drama.

Most nearly foregrounding the allegory, the Nô play's Winter-time corresponds in its threat and lowered vitality to the bureaucratized yamabushi group, while the thaw induced by the flame of Fudô and the harrowing of the grave correspond to the original charismatic purity of the vivifying founding ancestors. The play could psychologically almost be read as a literal presentation of some esoteric Buddhist proceedings of initiation. For ex., a Ch'an master counselled the meditation novice who is at an early stage faced with the deathly sensation of hanging over a precipice:

Bravely let go the edge of the cliff
 Throw yourself into the abyss with decision and courage
 You only revive after death!¹⁶

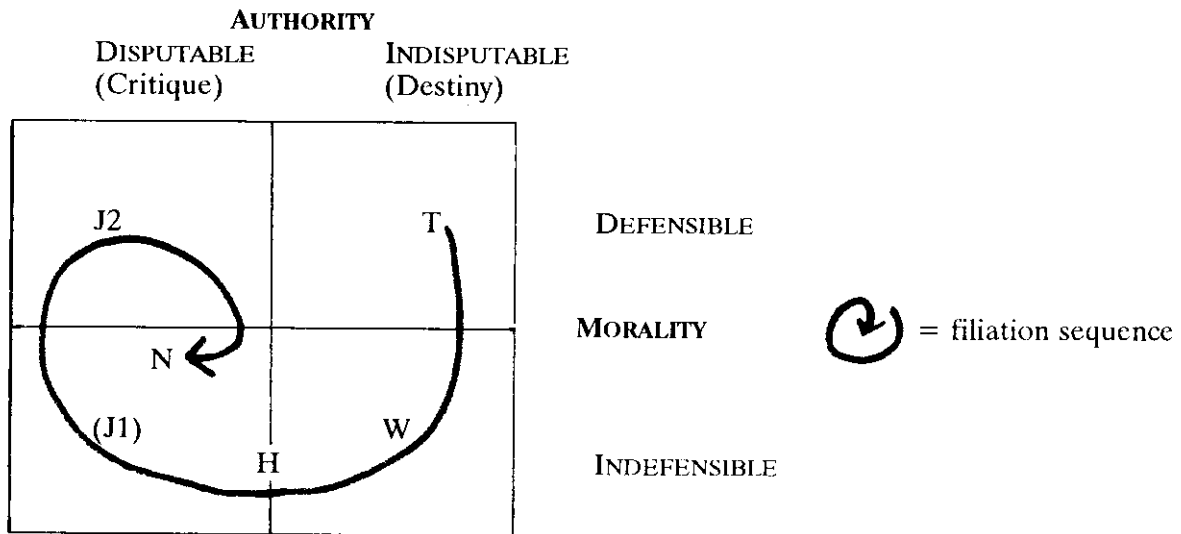
But socioeconomically, already the first stage of this filiation about the use-value of dying presents a perfect case of Weber's "economic ethics of religion" (see 424 and *passim*). In the later stages, the allegory or parable shifts from the elite Boy of *Tanikô*, through Waley's violated individual (whom I, despite the Maeterlinckian abstraction on the stage, imagine as a dutiful British upper-class youngster of World War 1 psychology), to the plebeian high-school kid in Brecht, exemplary but held up for emulation by all others in a collective interplay. Through various versions in different social formations the danger shifts back and forth from the City to the Mountains, from the literal and distributive Highest Good of the community to the allegorical and personalized one of the Boy. In *Tanikô* the framework is mythically absolute and young Matsuwaka's consensus assumed: "[In the culture] of the Middle Ages...[people have to] conform to rules, to a law. And it is in the strict observance of this law that [they] can attain to complete freedom, for this law (the way of flowers, of tea, of Nô) transcends the individual." (Frédéric 217) Yet, most interestingly, this Nô play rehearses the *breakdown* of this framework, or at least of the orthodox, fixed but barren, stony patriarchal purity, "an attempt to force experience into logical categories of non-contradiction. But experience is not amenable and those who make the attempt find themselves led into contradiction." (Douglas 162) In Waley's liberal tragedy, an attenuated lay transmogrification of Benjamin's *Trauerspiel*, the whole framework falls away and the consensus invites (though on the stage it does not get) doubting. Brecht has then to thematize

consensus as a problem, and work through it in his non-mythic and non-tragic terms. In Schiller's terms, we can read the Nô as mythically naive, Waley as the individualist breakdown of naivety, and Brecht's versions as a meander through sentimentality to a higher naivety of precisely reasoned pragmatics. In Weber's terms, to the enchanted magical Nô and disenchanted Waley there succeeds a very specific Brechtian horizon of re-enchanting reason. In J/N, as different from T, the beneficent ancestors are absent; as different from W, the maleficent father generation may be disputed. In the major post-Nietzsche and post-Lenin rearticulation within this whole sequence, the lethal threat elicits therefore within J/N clearly *different reactions* and outcomes from the group in power and the young generation.

In all versions the pervasive threat of Death needs to be countered by Salvation. Where the Nô play seeks for a saviour from outside of this world and human action (though he may be called up by human virtue and prayer),¹⁷ Waley's reduction denies the pertinence of salvation—it is a zero-salvation option, so to speak. Brecht's final pair investigates how (and indeed whether—there is no guarantee of "progress") thisworldly humanity may save itself by recognizing or "consenting to" the power-demands of the situation; it then proposes complementary answers within a dialectics that negotiates the conditions for a correct stance in this dangerous world. This is predicated on the threatened protagonist's self-empowerment, his taking the destiny into his own hands. Insofar as death is a social construction, Brecht immediately disentangles the question lurking beneath the theme's surface from its very inception: In whose hands is the control over death?¹⁸ Curiously, quite apart from very probably non-existent direct ideational influences, Brecht's stance may be illuminated by the Japanese religious semantics. In its terminology the possibilities of people's salvation run the spread between their own efforts and reliance on a transcendental Other. The first, *jiriki* or self-power, is associated with elite personalities, as in Zen; the second, *tariki* or other-power, is associated with mass salvational movements, as the Amidist ones. After the mistaken *tariki* of J1, Brecht resolutely opts for people's salvation by their own efforts, but this *jiriki* is an everted or dialectically distributive one: the exemplary or parable-nature of his "plays for learning" makes of its central agent(s) an example for everybody. This was also stressed in Brecht's insistence that the performers should play all roles in turn. As Jameson interprets Sartre's theory of group formation, this "decenters" the individual "by making [centrality] omnipresent: the members of a group are thus decentered because all become centers in rotation..." ("Representations" 23). Everyman as Luxemburgian Aristocrat, or each person (and in particular, each child-player) as the community's distributive light-bringer, is the Brechtian theatre laboratory's immodest horizon.

Again, in this almost Hegelian triadic progression through historical time, the Nô play and J/N are fully consistent with the clear presuppositions that constitute their framework, while Waley and J1 are unclear and/or internally inconsistent. A magico-religious metaphysics with both indisputable custom

and miraculous salvation can only be impugned if it is denied that its syncretic religiousness is efficacious and/or moral. A dialectics of material gestuality based on a maximization of survival chances in the feedback between person and community, and issuing in mutual care, can also be refused only if its ruthlessly critical stance is found deficient in some crucial aspect. On the contrary, the stringency of W and J1 cannot withstand a critical examination of the elementary logic of action, imported with due modifications to the Possible Worlds of the stage from our empirical world. The Great Custom is indisputable (Destiny) in T and W, disputable (relations between people) in J1 and J/N; yet it is defensible only in T and J2, while it is indefensible in Waley with J1 and in N (J1 is a special "impure" case: indefensible and disputable but not disputed). A Lévi-Straussian square of Authority (Power) vs. Morality might run as follows:



(Warning: like all two-dimensional models, this has deficiencies; a pyramid aligning N above T would be better.)

It will be apparent that Brecht's central contribution is not a moral one: that shift was initiated by Waley. In the materialist vein, Brecht foregrounded the nature of power/authority: is it founded in feedback with material necessities of the situation or merely in an idea applied to it?: which simultaneously meant showing the availability of power for a critique by reason. With some help by Hauptmann and some fumbling in J1, he shifted the theme from indisputability to disputability of

authority (cf. Oba 252), exposing it to the skepticism of reason—*de omnibus dubitandum* (all is to be doubted).

Thus, the "translation" activities, which in this filiation run from the shite and other changes in *Tanikô* through Waley and Hauptmann to the twists and turns (*Wendungen*) of Brecht,

reveal... an essential disarticulation, which was already there in the original. They kill the original, by discovering that the original was already dead... The translator belongs... to the afterlife of the original, thus assuming and confirming the death of the original. (de Man 84-85)

A way to continue the life of a dead body is by resurrection (cf. Essay 2). For example: in a strange chiasmus, Waley's text resurrects *Tanikô*, but without its final resurrection part and *telos*. The medieval Destiny of miraculous help to the community's endangered future and its affective bonds gave in Waley way to personal bonds faced with a Destiny-like though unmotivated (and therefore bitter) Law of the World, in which the young perish. In a further translation-cum-reversal, in Brecht's J2 the community is endangered just as in T, but the master-discourse is physics, not magic. The societal destiny is still metaphorized as Nature, but this is explained as an exception to the rule in N that (as Brecht put it in his poem "To the Danish Worker-Actors") "the Destiny of Man is Man," including very much human groupings, institutionalizations, and doctrinal codifications. It is well-known that roughly at the time of writing J/N Brecht also became deeply fascinated by (at least the name and the idea of) the Salvation Army, in which he saw a kind of significant caricature of an association supremely necessary for collective salvation (see his *St. Joan of the Stockyards*, analyzed in Suvin, *To Brecht*, ch. 5; in some notes he drew explicit parallels to the Communist Party). But the principle on which such salvation must in our times be necessarily based partakes of a dialectical, (self-)critical rationalism. The supreme law or Great Custom, the arbiter of the fictional Possible Worlds, is in the diagram's right-hand column outer-directed *Destiny* (bright in *Tanikô*, dark in Waley), while in the Brechtian left column it is a feedback *Critique*—the custom of thinking adequately to the situation. As Barthes, an early Brechtian, tellingly remarked: "[Brecht's] work is in a state of 'complicity' with the world, with our world" (84).

Waley axiologically husked the individualist nut out of its communal shell of stringent relationships from *Tanikô*: this husking led to insoluble yet undisputed opposition between individual and society, which is senseless death. Brecht disputation ends by denying Waley's supposedly indisputable individualist *aporia* as decisively as did *Tanikô*'s blithely undisputed refusal to envisage it; however, Brecht adopts a diametrically opposed orientation from the latter. Paradoxically, he goes back to the oldest surviving poetry (Chinese) and the oldest surviving theatre (Nô) to pose questions defining a

revolutionary Novum (cf. Banu, ch. 5). Within what we could in Brechtian terms call an "estrangement from the Right," *Tanikô* is oriented toward overwhelming thisworldly utopian desire in its magical materialism of En no gyôja's resuscitating powers that break through the religious dogmatics of the Strict Law. Waley finds that his liberal-utopian principle of individualism is inexplicably overwhelmed by the ultimate anti-utopia of institutionalized murder perpetrated upon the confiding individual. Brecht's "paraphrastic original" (the term is Tatlow's in relation to his "Chinese poems") spirally returns to the horizons of overwhelming thisworldly utopian desire, but within the "estrangement from the Left," a cognitive materialism of dialectical pragmatics as consistently carried through as in the magical gradation of *Tanikô*. As Frisch remarked observing him in 1948: "Brecht relates to a projected world which doesn't yet exist anywhere in this time, visible only in his behaviour... Christians related to the other world, Brecht to this world." (287)

The three main stages are deeply imbued and strongly oriented by the social breakdowns of their respective epochs—*Tanikô* between shogun Yoshinori's 1441 assassination and the samurai civil wars (Ohnin War 1467 on, cf. Varley), Waley following on the First World War, Brecht on the eve of Hitler and the Second World War. This synecdochic participation, and these plays' significant formulation of people's deeply frustrated desire at such times, may explain many of their parallels—in particular the uncanny way in which Brecht went back to and rethought some of the central tensions and proceedings of the *Tanikô* part which he did not know—as well as their differences and oppositions. Yet instead of opting for the Nô play's heart of a heartless world magically redeemable in an exemplary miracle, or for the liberal tragedy's stoic complaint and revulsion against the heartless world, Brecht strove to find a methodology for effecting heart operation. "One sees how much is involved in atheism if it is not understood as a bourgeois one, as merely an assuasive denial," said Bloch of him ("Leninist" 361).

What then is the use-value of dying? In an introductory note to the publication of *The Baden Learning Play on Consenting* in 1930, Brecht dismissed it as small (Brecht et al., 57). But the question pursued him: this period of his most intense involvement with the "plays for learning" and with politics coincided, significantly, with an intense interest in what stance (**Haltung**) to take when faced with dying. J/N is perhaps the central link in Brecht's great chain of plays which begins with *Baal* and *In the Jungle of Cities* but gathers steam in the "plays for learning" that culminate in *The Measures Taken*. Together with strong echoes in his subsequent plays, notably the World War parable *Mother Courage and Her Children*, this series is in a way a prolonged and evolving meditation on death with few rivals in fiction since Tolstoy. One could in that vein further discuss whether the ground bass of Brecht's entire dramaturgic opus was not the threatening but also potentially fertile choice of either loss of one's individual face (e.g. for Shen Te in *The Good Person of Setzuan*) or full bodily extinction (e.g. for Azdak in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*); his Galileo remains impaled on the choice. An important

confirmation may be another laconic fragment of Brecht's which explains the nucleus of the *Baden Learning Play* itself as "The question is posed who can die—nobody—from this follows: needed, the transformation of all things..." (Brecht et al., *ibid.*). The paradox of this note—the overriding need to die properly or well—, the history of the texts considered in this study, as well as what we can infer about their significance for the target audiences, together suggest a more complex answer than Brecht's initial quick shrugging off.

For, this second note becomes understandable only from the standpoint of most intimate interaction between the exemplary part and the whole. In relation to the society or community, as Hertz has discussed at length, death is not only the destruction of one person but also of "the social being grafted upon the physical individual...: his destruction is tantamount to a sacrilege." The consubstantiality of all community members—clearer in the smaller and tighter groups Hertz examined—makes of death a strong allegorical threat to the immortal continuity of the whole society:

it cannot normally believe that its members...should be fated to die....Of course, reality brutally contradicts this assumption, but the denial is always received with the same indignant amazement and despair.... Thus, when a man dies, society loses in him [sic] much more than a unit; it is stricken in the very principle of life, in the faith it has in itself.... [Therefore,] collective consciousness...refuses to consider death irrevocable.... The last word must remain with life: the deceased will rise from the grip of death and will return, in one form or another, to the peace of human association. (77-78)

This is, of course, exactly and overtly what happens in *Tanikô*, and what was lost in the disenchantment so well expressed by Waley. At that point, "the thematics of death and the rhetoric of mortality", while not ceasing to be directly referential, bear also the additional heavy burden of analogy "for the sharper pain of exclusion by history" (Jameson, *Political* 238, and cf. 261).

Brecht could obviously not return to either Hertz's tribal situation or the old **Gemeinschaft** community of his Black Forest roots. But he carried on into a qualitatively new situation the Maori culture-hero's ancient indignation at death (especially a not absolutely necessary one) as "something degrading, and an insult to the dignity of mankind" (cited in Hertz 148). In Brecht's writings the subject threatened with death, whether single or collective, is always parabolically exemplary and (as subjects or imagined persons always seem to be) co-defined by imagination. Such a subject will necessarily evolve and articulate possible stances towards death. No doubt, Brecht's "crude thinking" counter-position in his first, dismissive note was quite right in its opposition to pseudo-mystical and fakely communal glorification of Death by the Nazis and various other mass necrophilic movements characteristic for our century, growing out of the repression of death that Benjamin saw as a principal object of

bourgeois society. Yet a legitimate use-value for death in this our age may be, dialectically, to say not only No but also Yes to carefully chosen instances of it. Death may confer and indeed force upon the subject threatened with it the faculty of choice, enabling that person to die well, i.e. with the right consenting (cf. today's raging euthanasia debates). The subject may (should) acquire the ability to *consciously choose when and whether to consent to die, and for which cause*—or Cause.

Thus, the decision about death is a decision how—against what horizon—to live. Death does not have to be the absolute and eternal leaden lid of all defeats and failures from one's reality-project clamping down on one, or the black shadow of bright life; instead, death could be the lens inflecting and concentrating the rays of vitality. Further, Benjamin's great simile for the bourgeois theatre's orchestra pit that Brecht's theatre wishes to fill up, "the abyss that separates the dead from the living" (539), suggests not only Styx but also Lethe, the dark river of forgetfulness. Perhaps it is only after facing its co-defining twin, death, that life can be a fully conscious choice and that **memento mori** ("remember that you must die") may be everted into **memento vivere** ("remember that you must live"—cf. Steinweg 123 and 125). This memory is not a Platonic anamnesis but a capacity for understanding and therefore for acting. In the *Baden Learning Play*, the "Learned Chorus" tells the fallen airmen:

Wir können euch nicht helfen. Nur eine Anweisung
Nur eine Haltung
Können wir euch geben.
Sterbt, aber lernt
Lernt, aber lernt nicht falsch.

"The Fallen" answer:

Wir haben nicht viel Zeit
Wir können nicht mehr viel lernen.
(Brecht 2: 601; cf. Fetscher 609)

(LEARNED CHORUS: "We cannot help you. Only a direction/ *Only a stance*/ Can we give you./ *Die, but learn*/ Learn, but do not learn wrongly." THE FALLEN: "We do not have much time/ We cannot learn much any more." [trans. and emphasis DS])

To live, and especially to live in the face of death, means for Brecht to learn, and particularly to learn right (Luxemburgian, and we could also say Gramscian or Sartrean) consenting to the necessities of situation and human group. And if one remembers and accepts Hegel's classical dictum in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* that "The great difference lies in a person's knowing what s/he is; only

then is s/he truly that"—then it is only thus, having made that cognitive and affective choice, that life can become truly lifelike. Dying well, the classical *ars bene moriendi* here refunctioned into dying as part of a proper community build-up of meaningful practice, is in wholly indispensable feedback with living meaningfully, the *ars bene vivendi*: indeed, Brecht's and Marx's great ancestor, Epicure, said it was the same art. Or, as Montaigne put it: "La premeditation de la mort est la premeditation de la liberté: qui a appris à mourir, il a desapprins à servir...": and "Qui apprendroit les hommes à mourir, leur apprendroit à vivre" (The premeditation of death is the premeditation of freedom: whoever has learned how to die, s/he has unlearned how to serve; Whoever would teach people how to die, s/he would teach them how to live," 1:xix: 102 and 106). The possibility, and in final though exceptional consequence the readiness, of having one's face effaced (at which Brecht will worry in the final avatar of the T-to-J/N sequence, *Die Massnahme—The Measures Taken*) is the precondition for having a human face.

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A PHILOLOGICAL ADDENDUM ON THE TRANSMISSION FROM *TANIKÔ* TO HAUPTMANN

Elisabeth Hauptmann's *Sammelband* reprints a text by her from 1966, where she reminisces on how she came to translate *Tanikô* (175-77; see also Steinweg ed. 214-17 for the only readily available collation of two textual variants). She mentions there that her translations from Waley's book *The Nô Plays of Japan*, which she received in Winter 1928/29, and her opinions about the originals were later supplemented and modified by "Japanese students," presumably then studying in Germany:

Dann [i.e. after having made the translations, DS] erfuhr ich auch durch japanische Studenten, die mir kurz darauf einige No-Stücke und Teile von Seamis Schrift *Kwadenscho* aus dem Original übersetzten, dass Waleys Uebertragungen, die sehr schön sind, zugleich sehr frei gehandhabt waren. (176)

During my work in Japan I was alerted by Professor Iwabuchi Tatsuji—scholar, critic, theatre director, and the leading authority on Brecht in today's Japan—that an *Altmeister* of Japanese Germanistics, Professor Takahashi Kenji, had at that time been in Germany and in contact with Hauptmann. I accordingly contacted him and posed some written questions to him. I reproduce the relevant part of his answer, dated June 17, 1990:

Ich kannte Elisabeth Hauptmann gut, da wir Anfang 1932 [sic] zufällig ganz nah in Charlottenburg Berlin wohnten. Sie bat mich bei der Uebersetzung von *Tanikô* zu helfen. Ich liess den japanischen Text davon über Sibirien schicken. Dadurch verbesserte ich einige Stellen der Uebersetzung. Dass ist alles, was ich für sie getan habe. Ich traf Brecht selbst nicht.

A number of possibilities are opened up by this new information, bearing in mind that Hauptmann's translation was printed in the periodical *Der Scheinwerfer* in Jan. 1930, and Brecht's first *Jasager* version in 1930 (see Szondi ed., 51-52, and Hauptmann 248). Thus, either Professor Takahashi, who was 88 at the time of writing the above letter, has written "1932" as a mistake for "1929"; or the date is correct, and Hauptmann may have changed an early version of her translation later on, possibly too late for Brecht to take this into account in his text—though not necessarily too late for him to profit from the realization that Waley's "translation" was indeed very free. (I argue elsewhere that Waley's *Tanikô* should rather be called an adaptation, and may be more profitably treated as an independent play than a translation, cf. Suvin.) The state of Professor Takahashi's health has so far prevented me from checking out the first possibility. In any case, Hauptmann speaks above of more than one student, so that further helpers in the *Tanikô*-Hauptmann mediation remain to be found.

Notes

1. Cf. an interesting converging argument about *Shikimi tengu* in Goff 133.
2. Cf. Masuda, Omote, Keene, "Introduction" 317, and Immoos, "Brauch"; the latter also cites the head of the Umewaka school to the effect that even when the waki can, once or twice a year, choose a play for themselves, they avoid *Tanikô*, since it offers relatively little chance for their virtuosity either.
3. "Bishop" (or "Presbyter") would seem to be the nearest rank approximating that of an *ajari*, Sanskrit *acharya*, denoting a senior religious master and teacher (see Yamasaki 177; Morris translates it as "Holy Teacher," *World* 133); while *sotsu* is a (pilgrimage) "Leader". *Sotsu no ajari* is something like a Bishop-Teacher-Pilgrimage Leader, but because of what I take to be his most important trait (and dramaturgic *raison d'être*) of spiritual fatherhood I shall use "Bishop."
4. My proposed articulation does not quite fit into the traditional *jo-ha-kyû* scheme of Nô division which would allot the Kyôto part after the Master's arrival already to *ha* (cf. Bohner 628-29), a proceeding that is possibly defensible in respect to music and dance but makes no visible thematic sense. But see for an interesting proposal to revise this somewhat technically rigid scheme Zobel, reviewed in my Appendix to Essay 4.

5. The other translations of this passage are more or less the same. All further quotations will, unless otherwise identified, be from the Tyler *Valley Rite* translation.

6. I can find no reason or justification for Sembritzki's speculation ("Anmerkungen," 102) that "the yamabushi Master [i.e. the pilgrimage leader] is in the last scene revealed as an incarnation of En," which Sembritzki believes is proved by his reply, when prayers to En are proposed, "I hoped you would be of that mind" ("Solches zu hören war mein Wunsch")...

There are two other Nô plays in the repertory with killing and revival on stage, Zeami's *Take no yuki* (*Snow on the Bamboo*) and the anonymous *Aisome-gawa* (*Aisome River*). A similar situation is found in at least one **kyôgen** farce, *Mamako*, where a stepmother has the boy killed by one yamabushi and resuscitated by another, more powerful one (see Morley 201), but this is apparently a 17th-Century pastiche. It could be argued that all these plays merely foreground the theme of rebirth or resurrection (**fukkatsu**) present in much Japanese classical theatre (see Hoff 73). However, I find it significant that in all cases it is a dead *wife* or *child* who gets revived (because these are weaker agents, in need of more protection, and possibly also, in a dialectical yin-and-yang context, nearer to cosmic forces?); and in all three, the saviours are unorthodox godheads, very near to humanity (En the Anchorite; the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, deified Chinese poets; resp. Tenman or the deified Sugawara no Michizane).

7. Lee's charges of a number of "errors" in Waley's translation passages are to my mind themselves in error: Lee's examples (234-36), where pertinent, can better be understood as some deliberate rewriting by Waley as well as much cutting or condensation; cf. also Oba 67-73 and *passim*. The detailed case-study of a systematic Nô rewrite in Hirakawa, "Waley's," recognizes that intention well; indeed, within the spectrum of Waley's multitudinous translations he himself claimed the Nô ones were at the "free" end (in Morris ed. 142). Thus, if Waley's work is taken as a rewrite, even Tatlow's more balanced judgment that "this translation, in important respects, distorts the original meaning" (183) does not apply: the "distorts" may indicate the new structure emerging, but its referential orientation is irrelevant.

As to Waley and Brecht, Bridgewater's article, the only one I could find on this theme outside of the above books, makes some worthwhile technical points but it is disappointing both in devoting only one of 16 pages to Brecht's plays—as against the poems—and in its frequently idiosyncratic or plain wrong comments (Brecht did not need to learn from Waley, or the Nô, how to write "epic" plays; as Willett remarks, they "taught him to cut narrative corners, and 'deliver the contents' in a forceful yet unemotional way"—123). By the way, through Copeau's work and Suzanne Bing's translation, Waley has probably been of some use to Beckett too (Perlmutter 335), a parallel worth pursuing. A further intriguing possibility which does not seem to have been investigated at all is that between Brecht's prose jottings and Waley's translation of *The Pillow-Book of Sei Shônagon* which was in Brecht's library.

8. Two points: The knocking is noted as delocalizing in Hirakawa, "How" 572, with whose conclusions I otherwise disagree; I have been unable to get in time his longer study *Yôkyoku no shi to seiyô no shi* (1975). As to **tani**, it means "valley," but often used with a pronounced vertical dimension, as befits the sense geographically dominant in Japan—a hollow seen in relation to high mountains or seen from above. This is certainly the case

of perilous yamabushi ascents, such as the one represented in this play, and **tani** could well be translated as "ravine" (cf. Burton Watson's translations in Saigyô's tankas "Tani no ma ni" and especially "Arashiyama," 174 and 101).

9. "Wie kam es," 216; this passage was cut when reprinted in Hauptmann's *Julia* 176, and indeed as far as *Tanikô* is concerned it exaggerates as much as Szondi does, to the opposite direction (possibly Hauptmann meant all four of the Nô translations she did at the time). Cf. the "Addendum" to this Essay.

10. These laicizations are exclusively focussed upon by some Christian commentators such as Immoos; cf. Nössig 420-23 for publication details and small variants thereof. It should be added that, though Weill wrote some added music for J2 but not for N (see Kemp 143, though he is unreliable on Brecht's horizons), it is J1 that is being performed when Weill's splendid music is foregrounded—in practice, when the Weill Estate copyright is involved. This was the case in many performances after 1929 and is still often the case today: J1 was Weill's greatest theatrical and financial success beside the *Threepenny Opera* (see Dümmling 270-71), which together with his ideological indifference is the reason why he never felt the need to change it. But J/N may be (only too rarely) performed as linked prose playlets; the first performance was by the Living Theatre in New York 1951, see Nössig 429.

11. Eisler, in Brecht et al. 207. An English translation of a reduced version of J1, taken from the vocal score of Weill's music, is available in Feingold tr., with a misleading prefatory note. Eisler and some other, orthodox CP collaborators of Brecht's, probably Burri and Dudow, acknowledged that Weill wrote very beautiful music for J1 but called the text of the play "'idiotically' feudal" (cited in Knopf 92). For samples of other critiques cf. Szondi ed.

12. John Willett has argued in oral and written communication to me several points against my filiation. First, that Brecht was working on *Die Massnahme* (*The Measures Taken*), which was clearly *begun* as a concretization of J1, by 1930, so that my argument ought to include that stage. And we have Hauptmann's testimony that a first scene sketch for that play was begun in October or November 1929 (sic—see Steinweg ed., *Brecht: Die Massnahme* 270, and Dümmling 287, who however highlights the elements of that scene descended from Hauptmann's and Brecht's *Happy End*). Yet the theme (false compassion) and destinies of *Measures Taken*, which was almost totally reworked in successive stages beginning with the first full version of July 1930, bifurcated from the J2 and N theme and destinies, and I do not see what place would any of its presently known versions have in the argument of this essay. As Willett rightly put it, the real issue is here *Jasager* vs. *Massnahme*, or Weill vs. Eisler, i.e. Brecht working simultaneously on two diverging projects. Still, more archival and historical work would be welcome here. Second, Willett argues that in the quite different musical and textual (dramatic) fortunes of J1 and J/N, the performance frequency is a judgement for Weill and against Brecht. But as Kant once said, a thousand years of something being so does not necessarily make it right, and I believe both the final Weill version and the final Brecht version has a right to a place in the sun, and to independent examination: I attempt it for the latter.

13. Nündel's sensible pedagogical commentary counts 7 uses of "der grosse Brauch" (the great Custom), 5 of "Brauch" (Custom) without "grosser," and 2 of "Gesetz" (Law) in N, against one use only for "Brauch," "Gesetz," and "Notwendigkeit" (Necessity) in J2.

14. It should be noted that of the Seven Parables in the *Lotus Sutra*, which were "a major component of the medieval Japanese world of images, ...[and are] conspicuous in the Nô plays of the Ashikaga period," besides the **Katauyu** three more may possibly have some bearing on the shaping of *Tanikô* and thus of the whole filiation down to Brecht: the parables of the Medicinal Herbs (**Yakusôyu**), of the Magic City (**Kejôyu**), and of the Physician (**Ishiyu**); cf. *Princeton Companion* 387-88.

15. This whole matter, the undoubted though supple and unorthodox use of emotion in Brecht, has so far not received proper elucidation; cf. Suvin, "On **Haltung**." To the brief indication in this Essay I would only add that *Tanikô* was written in the heyday of the poetic ideal of **hie** in Japan. This was a state of penetrating detachment associated with water and coldness (cf. Thornhill 188). Already Zeami, that most affecting of playwrights, had described one of the best styles of Nô performance in the image of snow piled in a silver bowl. — All of my foregoing arguments up to here mean I find Professor Pronko's brief comparative judgement that "Brecht's operas [sic] J and N "lack...intense inner concentration and poetic suggestivity" as well as his conclusion that they "resemble the Sunday School pageants that teach in no uncertain terms the lessons our elders deem wise" (101) an exemplary piece of ill-considered misreading. A number of other partly similar if less abrupt judgments in the Cold War age (I have gone through the complete secondary literature in German and English) are best consigned to oblivion.

16. In "Discourses of Master Po Shan," in Chang ed., 94-102; the Japanese Zen had of course quite similar approaches (I owe this example to David Loy, Zen adept). The non-Zen (Shugendô) Yamabushi sect had similar ritual initiations, in which they were reputed to hold the candidate over a precipice as a test, cf. Suvin "Yamabushi." For "coping with death" in medieval Japan cf. Ruch and Grapard.

17. It would be in line with today's orientation toward self-referentiality to note that the agential constellation *inside* this Nô play is homologous to the Nô-plays' founding *external* institutionalization by the shogun Yoshimitsu, sparked by his encountering the famous Kan'ami-Zeami performance in the same Ima-guma-no shrine from which this play's pilgrimage sets out. The Nô theatre's problems—creative and economic—in mid-15th Century could then be a parallel to the breakdown of the play's pilgrimage. Though I would not refuse such associations if they were sufficiently buttressed, I would treat the Nô creators' eventual self-reflection as a synecdoche for overarching processes in Japanese society.

18. The literature on death is immense. To begin with, I would mention the two books by Ariès, Bloch & Parry, Tenenti, Thomas, and Vovelle.

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