

Conclusion

Brecht as a famous playwright has showed disapproval to the absolute in his plays. By employing the historical character, Galileo Galilei, he has found a medium to dialectically discuss the scientific progress and the ethical responsibility of his own time. The three versions of Galileo were written over a period of nineteen years (1938-1957) and he moved from Hitler's Germany, to the U.S.A. and back to East Berlin. As his mind became more mature, he changed the contents of his play. In fact, he had to make some adjustments to the character and plot each time he sets out to write a new version. The three versions still have a great deal in common, even with some structure changes and each play stands alone, complete in itself. Although some scenes are wholly cut out of the play and some after cutting are reintroduced again (such as the plague scene), the storyline does not change. As for the characters, some die in one version, some stay alive in another (such as Mrs. Sarti), some characters are being replaced (such as Ludovico with Doppone) and some have changed their names (Matti to Vanni) but the most basic characters remain the same. All in all, despite all the changes, the play remains dramatic and moving but they do not make any of the three versions a new play.

The story, despite the three different versions, is still all about the life of Galileo Galilei, the great scientist who was able to prove a discovery, which could shake the foundation of his time, but later on, he recants all his previous studies due to his cowardice to the terrors of the inquisition. What has changed basically was Brecht's thought and motive for writing each different Galileo. Galileo of the Danish version, was created when Brecht was fleeing from the Nazi Germany. The protagonist was idealistic and humanistic, striving for a better future that he believed could be achieved with his studies, and the same ideas were retained when Brecht

was in his exile. In this version, Galileo who retreated from the threat of the inquisition, has stayed alive, and finished the Discorsi to have it smuggled out to the public. Just like Brecht who escaped from the Nazis to make a statement through the Danish Version of his Galileo play to all intellectuals remaining in Germany to hold their heads up and wait for the authority to crumble.

In the second version, the American Galileo was written in 1945-46 when Brecht resided in Hollywood, the play was shortened to fit the general American audience, and the theme could fit with the newest topic of that time, namely the concerning over the newly invented atomic bomb. Scientists in the 1940s had the capability of creating weapons of mass destruction, and if they become the puppets of their authority, all humanity will suffer the fateful consequences. This thought had become his new main topic in the American version, that Galileo; a defiled scientist has given in to authority. In collaboration with British actor Charles Laughton, the American Galileo was more interested in the scientific studies than the wellbeing of the people. Because of his recantation, science has walked a different path, away from humanity.

The Berlin version was written when Brecht became a famous, rich, prominent figure of the GDR. He was running his own theater by then, and his luxurious life probably prompted him to write another version of Galileo, and in which, Galileo is depicted as the traitor of his own class, just like Brecht who was more in the company of politicians than workers (BBCAP 171-72). In the latest Galileo he has admitted that his sin was the failure to straighten out a path to be beneficiary to the people in general and to become the role model of later scientists to follow.

From the above discussion, Now that the different meanings of the three versions of Galileo have made clear, first, Brecht found the previous two versions as

failures to his own alienation theory because his idea for the theater is to create a play which is didactic.³⁸ His ideal audience is supposed to learn from the play and above all, his audience is supposed to figure the meanings in it by themselves. His plays are designed so that his audience will not be affected by the on goings of the stage, and all emotions of identification need to be suppressed. In the Danish version, Galileo is too strong a character to be alienated. He is idealistic, witty and energetic, his goal was to write the Discorsi in order to set the people free and he arouses more sympathy from the audience than making them feel hateful towards him when he recanted. The audience would identify themselves with the protagonist and that is a result Brecht did not hope for.

The second Galileo was created with the collaboration of Charles Laughton, who was famous for his energy and animated style on stage. The second Galileo, whom Brecht stripped away the idealism, became a gluttonous, arrogant and self-serving scientist, but the character is still too amicable to achieve the effect Brecht expected. Despite the changes of the dialogues and plot to make the new Galileo more a villain than a hero, the changes were too small to stifle his spirit and his personality. The play was again regarded by critics as a failure in alienation. However, according to Prof. Margaret Yang Mar (my advisor) the alienation technique was itself successful since the alienation devices such as lyrics and narrations are successfully applied to create a distancing effect. What has failed, is the story itself since it could not provide enough evidence for the audience to convince them of Galileo's crime. Despite the fact that the audience might sympathize with Galileo, it does not make the alienation a failure since sympathy

³⁸On February 25, 1939, Brecht wrote in Arbeitsjournal that The Life of Galileo can be seen as a large step back when it comes to its dramatic techniques. According to Brecht, the play was arousing empathy (32).

and alienation are not contradictory. New elements and ideas were introduced, owing to the drop of the atomic bomb, the role of the scientist this time has evolved into the destroyer of worlds, the character change could be echoed by Albert Einstein's phrase that a scientist needs a proper schooling of the right values establish a sense of moral and duty towards the good of mankind, if without it, the scientist would be merely a "well-trained dog".³⁹ And we can see that the role of Andrea has become the student that lacked the education that Einstein was talking about, and he did not have the understanding that Galileo was trying to convey to him when they met for the last time.⁴⁰

The Berlin Version, written in communist Germany, was written by Brecht to depict Galileo's recantation as an act of betrayal. But again, Brecht has failed to create a play that runs according to his epic theory. The actor Ernst Busch would second Laughton to perform a Galileo that is too much a great man to be downplayed by simple speeches put into the mouth of the protagonist by the end of the play.

As an artist and political thinker, each time when Brecht revised the Galileo play, his emphasis changed with his maturity. His political position has changed greatly throughout his years: Starting from his exile in the late 1930s which was a direct result from his conflict with the authority, continued in the 1940s when the political witch hunt in the USA prompted him to leave the States, to his later success

³⁹"It is not enough to teach man a specialty. Through it he may become a kind of useful machine but not a harmoniously developed personality. It is essential that a student acquire an understanding of and lively feeling for values. He must acquire a vivid sense of the beautiful and of morally good. Otherwise he, with his specialized knowledge, more resembles a well-trained dog than a harmoniously developed person. He must learn to understand the motives of human being, their illusions, and their sufferings in order to acquire a proper relationship to individual fellow-men and to the community" (Einstein 66-67).

⁴⁰In the Berlin version of *Galileo*, Andrea argues that: "In science only one thing counts: contribution to knowledge" (92-93). He does not realize the true purpose of science, which is to educate the people instead to chase after new inventions.

with the GDR which bonded him closer to the authority more than ever in his entire life. Both on the political level and on the social level he was not the same anymore compared to the 1938 proletariat director and the expatriate in USA; Brecht was running his own theater in Berlin and had his own theater group, he even had a sports car and a chauffeur, Brecht's success surpassed far more the artist he started out to be, and Fuegi also noted that Brecht practically never belonged to the working class since he was surrounded by people from the film studios and directors and producers, and even in his exile he managed to buy a villa in Denmark (BBCAP 172). It might not be a coincidence that the early Brecht sought idealism in the Danish Version of the Galileo play while he was in exile and was looking at Galileo as a social traitor in the Berlin version. Brecht's success in real life has made him, search for the sins of Galileo in the social aspect instead of reintroducing his idealistic Galileo.

With Brecht's growing maturity throughout the writing of the three versions of the Galileo play over a period of 19 years, he has increasingly found out the guilt for the world disaster really lies on Galileo-the scientist, by analogy, the poet and the knowledgeable which includes Brecht himself, because he fears and lacks the courage to stand up, to lead, or to wake up the bourgeoisie, the common, the ignorant to know the truth in order to save themselves, and no one should rely on the powerful or the authority for his salvation.