

BRECHT



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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521290036

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First published 1976 Re-issued 2010

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Gray, Ronald D.

Brecht the dramatist.

(Major European authors)
"A chronological list of Brecht's plays and of translations": p.

Bibliography: p. Includes index.

1. Brecht, Bertolt, 1898-1956-Criticism and interpretation. I. Title.

PT2603.R397Z634 83

832'.9'12 75-19575

ISBN 978-0-521-20937-3 Hardback ISBN 978-0-521-29003-6 Paperback

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GENERAL PREFACE TO THE SERIES

The Major European Authors series, as the name implies, considers the most important writers of the European literatures, most often giving a volume to each author, but occasionally treating a group or a genre. The basic assumption is that the general reader and the student will be able to find information on biography and literary history fairly easily elsewhere: that what he will look for in this series is a single volume which gives a critical survey of the entire oeuvre or the most important works. Authors of books in the series are asked to keep this general critical objective in mind, to write critical introductions which will help the reader to order his impressions of the works of art themselves, to assume little prior knowledge, and so far as possible either to quote in English or to translate quotations.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book had its origin in a much smaller one which was published in 1961 by Messrs Oliver and Boyd in their 'Writers and Critics' series, now out of print. Some fragments of that earlier book are scattered through this one, but it is essentially rewritten, and extended to cover several aspects not touched on before. Some of the chapter on *Mother Courage* appeared in the *Oxford Review*, and some of the final chapter, so far as it concerns Shakespearean productions, in *The Human World*.

Although Brecht wrote poems and novels, and was involved in several films, his work in the theatre is what has aroused interest abroad, and I have kept strictly to that; I have also not ventured into the musical compositions associated with his plays.

I thank Mr. Michael Black for many critical comments and helpful suggestions.

R.G.