

Brecht and Tragedy

This wide-ranging, detailed and engaging study of Brecht's complex relationship with Greek tragedy and the tragic tradition argues that this relationship is fundamental for understanding his radicalism. Featuring an extensive discussion of *The Antigone of Sophocles* (1948) and further related works (the *Antigone* model book and the *Small Organon for the Theatre*), the monograph includes the first-ever publication of the complete set of the *Antigone* colour photographs taken by Ruth Berlau. This is complemented by comparatist explorations of many of Brecht's own plays as his experiments with tragedy conceptualized as the 'big form'. The significance for Brecht of the Greek tragic tradition is positioned in relation to other formative influences on his work (Asian theatre, Naturalism, comedy, Schiller and Shakespeare). Brecht emerges as a theatre artist of enormous range and creativity, who has succeeded in re-shaping and re-energizing tragedy and has carved paths for its continued artistic and political relevance.

MARTIN REVERMANN is Professor in Classics and Theatre Studies at the University of Toronto. His publications include *Comic Business: Theatricality, Dramatic Technique and Performance Contexts of Aristophanic Comedy* (2006), *Performance, Iconography, Reception: Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin* (2008, with P. Wilson), *Beyond the Fifth Century: Interactions with Greek Tragedy from the Fourth Century BCE to the Middle Ages* (2010, with I. Gildenhard), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Comedy* (2014), *A Cultural History of Theatre, vol. 1 (Antiquity)* (2017) and *Semiotics in Action* (2019).

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Radicalism, Traditionalism, Eristics

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To Emrik

Über alles

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This book would not exist without the support of my family. It is dedicated to my dear son Emrik, with all my love.

A Note on Texts and Translations

The *Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe* (BFA) of Brecht's works (30 vols., 1988–2000) continues to be the foundation of Brecht Studies in the twenty-first century and is referred to throughout. All English translations are mine. This is in part because not all Brecht texts that I have made use of have been translated into English, and in part because existing translations can be quite problematic. My translation strategy has been 'foreignizing' in the sense that I try to convey a sense of the subtle and challenging complexity of Brecht's style by usually following his word order, syntactical structure and lexical choices quite closely. Brecht's German looks easy but is not, and my translations attempt to reflect that. If the translations, which are always accompanied by the German text, help readers to engage in a critical and alert manner with Brecht's thinking at close range, very much indeed would be gained by this alone. After all, Brecht himself always practised and asked for such engagement with anyone's work.