

THE DOCUMENTARY THEATRE:
A REFLECTION OF THE SIXTIES

by

SUE QUINN FAUBION

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Approved by:

Harold J. Nichols
Major Professor

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PREFACE

Each age mirrors its own temper in its art. Greece found its image in the powerful work of Aeschylus, England in the thunders of Marlowe. It is not until the vibrations of the age are discovered that society responds to its art. Once discovered, the art thrives until "times change, visions alter, ambitions die," and the next social impulse awaits discovery.¹

The documentary theatre has been heralded as the new dramatic art of the sixties. The vogue was first discernible in Germany, and the term has been applied to plays that have as their basis the use of historical documents. In 1963, Rolf Hochhuth "shook the Vatican to its foundations with the presentation of The Deputy."² The play gained world wide attention with the impassioned debate that raged over the question, "why did Pope Pius XII never protest against Hitler's extermination of the Jews?" It opened at the Freie Volksbuhne in Berlin under the direction of Erwin Piscator. It was Piscator who used the term "documentary" in a program note. Since then the term has been widely applied by some critics and considered a misnomer by others.

Hochhuth's play was followed in 1964 with In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer by Heinar Kipphardt. Drawn from documents of contemporary history, the play depicts the distinguished physicist summoned before the Personnel Security Board. A storm of protests followed the production. It had barely subsided when Peter Weiss's documentary of the Auschwitz trials at Frankfurt, The Investigation, opened simul-

taneously in sixteen theatres. Then came Soldiers by Rolf Hochhuth. A play about Winston Churchill, it was banned in England and a furor began before the play was even published or produced. After its production, there was little question that the mode of documentary drama had gained world wide recognition.

It is this mode labeled "documentary" theatre that shall be the subject of this study. The purpose of the study is to analyze the plays first labeled "documentary" and the society of the sixties from which they emanated to determine if indeed the documentary is a reflection of the society of the sixties.

Research on the topic reveals that although many critics have attempted to define and analyze the documentaries, none have attempted to draw a definite relationship between the documentary and the society that it reflects. Such a study would be of value to better understand the mode and its plays.

The procedure used in this study begins with the analysis of the definitions of playwrights and critics to establish a definition for the purposes of considering the plays. The second consideration is of the society which sociologists Alvin Toffler and Marshall McLuhan recorded in their writings of the sixties. And finally, the plays first labeled "documentary" are considered in regard to that society.

Because the documentary is not a style unique to the sixties, a section is included on the comparison of the documentary of the sixties and that of the thirties. Another section on the theatre of the fifties is important because the documentary stems from this theatre. Some have praised the documentaries for showing the way out of the theatre of the absurd and others have declared it the first successful effort to go

beyond Brecht.

A number of plays were read and considered for inclusion in this study; they were rejected for various reasons. Among those rejected were several plays by American authors which met the qualifications of the definition, such as The Pueblo, The Trial of the Cantonville Nine, and Inquest, but which had not received the same recognition as the German plays. One could argue that Inquest, which had only twenty-eight performances on Broadway, was seen on American television, but even its television performance did not bring extensive comment.

Therefore, the plays chosen for study are: The Deputy, In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer, The Investigation, and Soldiers. These plays have three common qualities. One, they are the first to be called "documentary," and two, they are all by German playwrights and were produced at the Freie Volksbuhne. Three, they are the plays most discussed by the critics who have written about the mode.

CHAPTER I

A DEFINITION OF DOCUMENTARY THEATRE

Each age of the theatre has been a reflection of man's condition and the world of its time. A reflection of the sixties is discernible in a mode of theatre labeled "documentary." Although labels often defy precise definition, certain characteristics common to the plays usually called "documentary" can be identified by examining the definitions applied by the playwrights and critics. Playwrights Peter Weiss and Heinar Kipphardt have embraced the term and both have written about documentary theatre.

Peter Weiss's "The Material and the Models" was originally delivered as a paper to the Brecht-Dialogue held at the Berliner Ensemble in East Berlin and was subsequently published in Theatre Heute. It brought a great deal of attention to documentary theatre at the time of its presentation in 1968 and has since become a major article of reference for those writing about documentary theatre. The paper consists of notes toward the definition of documentary theatre. In fourteen points, Weiss presents his theories of a "theatre of reportage . . . re-defined, aimed at those groups who are interested in a policy of obscurantism and opacity . . . It emphasizes, through montage, significant details in the chaos of external reality. Through the confrontation of contradictory details, it shows up existing conflicts. According to the underlying material, it then makes a suggestion for a

solution, or an appeal, or asks basic questions. . . . Documentary Theatre leads to attention, consciousness, reflections."³ Weiss's definition is prescriptive and reflects his Marxist bias. He illustrates what Hayakawa calls "the Marxist two-process theory" in which there is only black or white; there are no shades of gray. In his tenth point he says:

Documentary Theatre takes sides. Many of its themes inevitably demand and assume judgment. In such a theatre, objectivity is likely to be merely a concept used by a ruling group to justify its actions . . . In the description of rapine and genocide black and white strokes are justified; no conciliatory traits need be indicated in the aggressor, while full solidarity must be shown for the underdog.⁴

In his fourteenth point he concludes that documentary theatre should be not a drama that reflects society, but a drama that leads society.

Heinar Kipphardt has not championed documentary theatre to the same extent as Peter Weiss; however, he has contributed his views toward a definition. Kipphardt defined documentary theatre as a species of historical drama dealing with contemporary events.⁵ He associated it closely with the political theatre of Erwin Piscator, who directed his Berlin production of the Oppenheimer play. In an issue of World Theatre, Kipphardt paid homage to Piscator by intermingling his comments with those written by Piscator in The Political Theatre. He quotes Piscator's comments on the mission of the theatre:

The mission of the present-day theatre cannot consist solely, however, in relating historic events as such. It must draw valid lessons for the present from these events. . . . We do not conceive the theatre solely as the mirror of the age, but as a means of transforming it.⁶

Kipphardt follows this statement with his own attitude toward the documentary theatre:

Your entirely new type of theatre was aimed at the representation of reality as a whole in order to change it in such a manner that it should be better suited and more agreeable to man, that his material liberation, regarded as one of the preliminaries to his spiritual freedom, should be assured.⁷

While Weiss and Kipphardt proclaim to write documentaries, Rolf Hochhuth has stated that "documentary" is merely a terminology applied to his work. Martin Esslin reports a conversation with Hochhuth in which he states that Hochhuth did not even intend for the term to be applied to his plays.

Did this mean, I asked Hochhuth, that he believes in the Theatre of Fact, the Theatre of Documentation? He answered, "No, I only noticed what had happened when Piscator (who directed the first production of 'The Deputy') wrote a program note in which he used the term 'documentary theatre.' I am very unhappy about that catch phrase, for I believe it means very little. Pure documentation can never be more than a bunch of documents. Something must always be 'added' to make a play."⁸

Esslin concludes that Hochhuth does not claim to write political plays. "His aim is to explore the human condition on the basis of verifiable human reality and to penetrate to the tragic core of man's plight on earth."⁹ No matter what his aim, his subject is still political, and his plays are based on historical documents. It is for these reasons that his plays are considered by critics as documentary.

Although Hochhuth doesn't seem to mind controversy, some playwrights fear the controversy that such plays are bound to engender. A label which implies a social and political play is not popular with many directors. For two years World Drama magazine sought information about the present state of documentary theatre in the world. Editor Marios Ploritis writes:

In most cases, the documentary theatre stands on the fringe of the theatre we know. To produce a play concerned with politics always constitutes a danger for the director of an ordinary theatre. He risks being censured by his board of

governors (remember the storm around Laurence Olivier because of Hochhuth's Soldiers), being castigated in Parliament (remember Jean-Louis Barrault's production of The Screens by Genet), being accused of bad taste by the critics, or, quite simply, seeing his public vanish . . . Under these conditions, one understands why a theatre director would prefer artistic or entertaining plays.¹⁰

These comments lead to two conclusions: that the documentary theatre is a theatre of reportage, theatre of fact, based upon historical documents; and that its plays are considered political. To complete a definition of documentary theatre these comments need to be viewed as they apply to the elements of materials, theme, and structure. The materials of documentary theatre are the documents that provide the subject matter and the physical properties that assist in the development of the structure. The theme is the main idea, and the structure is the manner in which the play is developed.

The subject matter of most documentary drama has been recent history. The plays differ from the historical plays of the past not only in the use of recent history, but also in the attempt to adhere more closely to factual material. The facts are carefully researched in all forms of documents. Peter Weiss catalogues a list of possible sources in the first of his fourteen points:

Records, documents, letters, statistics, market reports, statements, speeches, interviews, statements by well-known personalities, newspaper and broadcast reports, photos, documentary films and other contemporary documents are the basis of the performance.¹¹

The use of documents to obtain facts forces the playwright to make critical judgments about the documents' validity. The validity of a fact depends upon its reporter. Camus once said that for every news report there should be a second report that revealed the prejudices of the reporter of the first report. And this, of course, could be a never

ending process. Even with the best reporters, film documents are the most difficult to assess critically because the camera records exactly what it sees; however, the perspective of the camera or cameraman may be very limited. The documentary film of the variety seen on television has even less validity as a factual document because the film has been edited. Claus Zilliagus warns of the use of film:

. . . A documentarist proceeds fallaciously or naively if he underestimates the fact that even the most innocent camera looks, from a certain angle, through and with a certain objective into a three-dimensional material. Foreground may be brought to obscure¹², eclipse, comment upon or dialogize with background.

In addition to the problem of judging the validity of the facts, the documentary dramatist encounters another problem. All of the documents are not available to him. Peter Weiss says, "We are unable to see the personal papers of the people responsible for actions of which we only see end results."¹³ Investigative reporter Jack Anderson has accused the government of marking as "classified for reasons of national security" any document a government official did not wish to see published.

In addition to documents as materials, the documentary playwright has at his disposal the materials from other media. Song, dance, and mime, along with the design of the artist, have always been associated with the theatre; but today's dramatist makes use of the electronic media as well. Erwin Piscator was especially well-known for his use of multi-media in staging. The list of stage materials employed by Piscator were listed in an article by Kipphardt:

The title of the scene, the projection of photos, photographic mountings, accounts of facts, the equipment, the stage with several tiers on a revolving plateau, the spherical stage, the transparent and luminous stage floor, treadmill and lastly novelties.¹⁴

Piscator was especially interested in the use of light. He even designed a stage of light built in a translucent manner, as a grid or from glass bricks illuminated from below.

A much simpler use of media is the public address system. It was employed by the "living newspaper" in the thirties to function as a Greek chorus might function. Today the loud speaker is often used with film projections, or film alone is used in the function of the chorus. Film can also serve to acquaint the audience with the subject or to extend the subject into time and space and set the mood of the period.

In summary, the materials of the documentary theatre have been identified by Weiss "as reflecting life as we witness it through the mass media," by Kipphardt "as contemporary events," and by Hochhuth as "facts." The critics agree. The materials are the documents about the subject and the technical materials of the physical stage. It is the use of these materials that creates an art form.

Another element almost always used by critics in the analysis of a play is theme. The term, theme, has been used with diverse meanings. Some have used it to mean subject, and others have used it to mean thesis. A few have sought to find theme as a line of dialogue that consciously summarized the play. Then there are those who suggest that all plays do not have a theme. Walter Kerr's discussion of theme suggests that any of these usages may be valid depending on the play to which it is applied. He states:

A theme may be anything that helps the playwright to remember, and to nurture, his materials. It is a convenience, not a moral obligation. The playwright is under no injunction to explain his working processes; he is not bound to offer the critics a convenient analysis of his work; . . . The theme may in fact, remain the author's well-kept secret . . .

For the playwright, and in due time, the theme may very well become what we have always held it to be--an organizing principle.¹⁵

In giving advice to a prospective playwright he suggests that the image itself may serve as the theme:

The vitality of drama is not in any key word that can be deduced from it; it is in the crackling reality of the original image.

When you are working out a theme, stay close to the image. Don't look for a word that simply includes your image: "Brotherhood" included practically everything, and suggests nothing.¹⁶

Theme is an image developed by the playwright. It may be stated in one word only if one realizes that there may be a complex image involved in the word.

The source of a theme lies in an initial image. In the documentary theatre it is discovered through political consciousness. Dan Isaac states in an article in which he reviews a number of plays written in the present documentary vogue, that "Every instance of Theatre of Fact, beginning with the Living Newspapers in the thirties, dramatized the victimization of the individual by the State."¹⁷ He concludes that the most victimized and thus alienated of all groups of people after World War II are the German intellectuals.

Charles Sheldon further defines this argument. He theorized that post-World War II German writers can be divided into three generations. The older generation took part in the war. They have transferred their guilt feelings to the state and its symbols, Hitler and the S. S., and because Germany suffered greatly in defeat, they feel they have atoned. Those who were children during the war are painfully aware of being German. They feel the guilt of their parents and all of the older generation. Those born after the war take little interest in German politics.

"They scorn nationalism and national boundaries . . . The young people seem to be bored by the emphasis on German guilt, reunification, the silences of their parents, and the threat of Communism."¹⁸ Sheldon says the real creative genius must tear himself away from the generation shackles.

Both Isaac and Sheldon view the German writer as alienated, a victim of the German inheritance of guilt and isolated from himself through the generation gap. It is significant that the most noted examples of documentary theatre were those written by German playwrights. Not only did they choose social and political themes, they chose to write about recent history. Claus Zilliacus explains that this, too, was a natural choice:

. . . in Germany: there the demands for a factual approach were felt with particular urgency. The situation demanded extreme sobriety in language and watchfulness against semantic dislocations of the Nazi era, and the recent past was heavy with themes and subject-matter that could neither be bypassed nor fictionalized.¹⁹

The first play called "documentary" was Rolf Hochhuth's The Deputy. The theme is man victimized by the state and deserted even by Christ's deputy on earth. Peter Weiss's The Investigation deals with the same subject, the enormity of the German concentration camps, and man helpless against the state. In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer by Heinar Kipphardt presents a man's scientific talent victimized by the state. Man is caught in the dilemma of serving his country or taking his responsibility to humanity as a whole. In summary, the theme of documentary drama is political and social, and deals with the basic theme of man against society.

In documentary drama the theme takes on added significance because

the traditional methods of organizing the play in the pattern of cause and effect, or of using a character as a source of unity have been abandoned. Instead the theme becomes the source of unity. Rather than reveal the theme through action and characterization, the dramatist selects incidents and examples to show the theme from various points of view. Oscar Brockett states:

What had brought much of contemporary theatre its journalistic fame is not its new methods but thematic unity achieved by introducing an idea or motif and then developing variations upon it.²⁰

This method of development is referred to by Peter Weiss in his eighth point. He suggests that the real strength of the documentary lies in shaping a model from fragments of reality:

It emphasizes, through montage, significant details in the chaos of external reality. Through the confrontation of contradictory detail, it shows up existing conflicts. According to the underlying material, it then makes a suggestion for a solution, or an appeal, or asks basic questions.²¹

Each segment may make a matter of fact statement, or it may make an almost neutral appeal to the emotions. It is the impact of the total effect of these segments, one after another, that creates an emotional effect for the audience.

The stagecraft reinforces the montage effect by presenting a camera-like view. Symbolism is avoided and real objects make up a scene, but scenery is only fragmentary: a doorway, a window, or a piece of furniture. In some instances the plays have been presented without scenery as readings; this was done with The Investigation. Other playwrights have made effective use of projections and a loud-speaker to enhance the play's artistic effects.

Language is also used to gain artistic effect. Blank verse is

often employed, sometimes for its economy of words and sometimes for its ability to lend refinement to the play. Also, in presenting mankind at his worst as social and political plays often do, the use of poetry makes the revolting acts more palatable to the listener.

At this point in the analysis of the definition of documentary theatre the playwright's definitions have been examined, and placed in the context of elements of materials, theme, and structure. To reach a conclusion to the discussion, one more consideration should be made. That is how these elements become a mode of theatre. Oscar Brockett states that "style in theatre is the result of three basic influences. First, it is grounded in a fundamental conception of truth and reality. . . . Second, style results from the manner in which the playwright employs this means of expression. . . . Third, style results from the manner in which the play is presented in the theatre."²²

First, in the documentary theatre the basic conception of truth is found in social and political subjects from history. Second, this truth is communicated through a thematic arrangement which permits the audience to view the truth as the playwright conceives it from differing perspectives. By the manner in which he arranges his play, the playwright lifts the basic idea from a conception of truth to a work of art. Third, the presentation of the play is sometimes a reading and at other times is enhanced by the use of other media.

Based upon this analysis, it is possible to present a definition of documentary theatre that will serve as a guide for discussing some of the examples of the plays that have been labeled as "documentary." Documentary theatre is the thematic arrangement of a social and political subject from history designed by the playwright to merge fact with art.

CHAPTER II

THE DOCUMENTARIES OF THE THIRTIES COMPARED AND CONTRASTED WITH THOSE OF THE SIXTIES

Even though the term "documentary" has been used as if to describe a new theatre, documentary theatre did not begin with the past decade. Both Dan Isaac and Claus Zilliagus have referred to the "Living Newspaper" of the thirties as a forerunner of the documentary theatre. Isaac views the documentary as theatre of fact, and writes:

Theatre of Fact, like a fast sock in the jaw from the thirties, has forced its way onto the American stage again. But unlike its noisy brawling predecessor, the Living Newspaper, which was fathered by the Federal Theatre out of the fertile discontent of the depression, this present brand of Theatre of Fact has lowered its voice and grown more decorous. It has entered the courtroom.²³

Zilliagus also presents the similarities of the documentary theatre to the Living Newspaper. He gives two reasons why the documentary of the sixties was welcomed as something decisively original:

(1) Conscientious adherence to the letter of the material used was, to a much higher degree than before, regarded as a sine qua non. (2) It appeared to lack an uninterrupted tradition.²⁴

Because of their similarity, it is important in completing an understanding of the term "documentary" to compare and contrast the documentary plays of the sixties with the plays of the Living Newspaper.

The Living Newspaper was a part of the Federal Theatre Projects, which was administered under the relief program of the Works Progress Administration from 1935-1939. This project, like others in the

depression years, was developed because of a need to provide jobs for the unemployed, in this case the unemployed actors. Hallie Flanagan was selected as its director. She saw the theatre project as a viable force in American society, capable of far more than providing jobs for unemployed actors. She stated:

On the philosophy of Federal Theatre, Elmer Rice, Philip Barber, and I were in agreement: we all believed that the theatre was more than a private enterprise, that it was also a public interest which, properly fostered, might come to be a social and educational force.²⁵

When the Federal Theatre needed to produce plays, without theatres, on small budgets, and employing many people, she promoted the idea of the Living Newspaper. Its organization and purpose Flanagan describes:

The staff of the living newspaper, set up like a city daily with editor-in-chief, managing editor, city editor, reporters, and copy readers, began, as Brooks Atkinson later remarked, "to shake the living daylights out of a thousand books, reports, newspapers, and magazine articles" in an attempt to create an authoritative dramatic treatment, at once historic and contemporary, or current problems.²⁶

Thus, the subject matter of the living newspaper was taken from documents. It differed from the documentary theatre, however, in that the playwrights sought the human interest or feature story and considered the biography as a suitable document, whereas present documentary playwrights have sought facts in a greater variety of historical documents.

One of the greatest differences in the plays can be illustrated in the way the playwrights adhere to the direct quotation. Arthur Arent has illustrated this with an example from Triple-A Plowed Under, and, in a similar way, Gerda Breit has illustrated the use of the quotation in The Investigation. Arent quotes the original statement of Dorothy Sherwood as published in the Daily News:

She (Mrs. Sherwood) walked into the Police Court with the baby in her arms and said, "He's dead, I just drowned my son because I couldn't feed him and I couldn't bear to see him hungry. . . . I let him wade in the creek until he got tired. Then I led him out into the middle and held him there until he stopped moving. I had only five cents and he was hungry. . . . I just thought it had to be done, that's all."

That was the quote. And this is what the scene looked like on the stage of the Biltmore Theatre:

LOUDSPEAKER. Newburgh, New York, August 20th, 1935 . . . Mrs. Dorothy Sherwood . . . (Overhead spot picks out police desk, down right. Behind it, a LIEUTENANT. Enter, MRS. SHERWOOD, left, with dead infant in her arms. She walks to desk, follow spot on her.)

MRS. SHERWOOD. (Stops at desk.) He's dead, I drowned him.

LIEUTENANT. You what?

MRS. SHERWOOD. I just drowned my son, I couldn't feed him and I couldn't bear to see him hungry . . . I led him out into the middle and held him there until he stopped moving.

LIENTENANT. (Calling, not too loudly) John! (POLICEMAN enters lighted area.) Take the body. Book this woman for murder.

(Blackout everything; music; a solitary spot picks out MRS. SHERWOOD, centre, facing out.) . . .

MRS. SHERWOOD. I just thought it had to be done, that's all.

VOICE. How could a mother kill her own child?

MRS. SHERWOOD. He was hungry, I tell you. Hungry, hungry, hungry!

(As her voice mounts, it is blended with that of another, the first in a progression of twelve voices crying, 'Guilty!' These, amplified and varying in color, increase in fervour until--)

DIM-OUT²⁷

Arent points out the dramatic build-up, the repetition and the splitting of the testimony into two parts. In contrast, the examples Breit gives from The Investigation show the direct quotation used in the context of the characters' dialogue. She compares the report by Bernd Naumann, who is considered by critics to have produced a factual note-taking of the proceedings in court, first published in the Frankfurt daily newspaper. Naumann was present each day of the trial; he records the events happening on the ramp:

A woman gave birth to a child. I wrapped it in cloth and put it next to the mother on the floor . . . Baretzki came with a stick and beat me and the woman. "Why are you playing around with this filth" . . . The infant fell to the ground and he

kicked it away like a football. Then he ordered me: "Bring the shit over there." By then the baby was dead.²⁸

In The Investigation the witness tells of the incident:

8TH WITNESS: . . . A baby was born during the unloading
I wrapped it in a piece of cloth
and set it down by the mother
Baretzki came at me with his stick
and beat me and the woman
What are you doing with that garbage there
he yelled
and he kicked the baby
so it flew about 10 yards
Then he ordered
Bring that shit over here
By then the child was dead²⁹

Even when one considers the element of translation from the German, it is easy to see there is little difference from a transcript of the trial and Weiss's dialogue in The Investigation. The point is that the plays of the thirties were designed by the playwrights to make an emotional appeal through the dramatization of the quote.

Another difference between the documentaries of the thirties and those of the sixties was in the use of the theme. The living newspaper dealt with the specific societal problems of the depression. Triple-A Plowed Under was a dynamic account of a crisis in the economic life of a nation. One Third of a Nation stressed the critical need for public housing. In contrast, the playwrights of the sixties deal with the problems of mankind; they ask questions that remain unanswered. The Investigation asks what is to prevent another Auschwitz, and In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer asks if the duty of the scientist lies with his country or with his responsibility toward humanity.

The structural arrangement of the living newspaper and the documentary of the sixties is the same in that neither was interested in using traditional plot nor in developing characters. Arthur Arent says the

writer has two choices of arrangement: a montage or episodic. Arent favors the episodic approach, which he describes:

The episodic approach is altogether different, the fewer scenes being self-contained and having each three primary functions:

1. to say what has to be said;
2. to build to the scene's own natural climax;
3. to build to the climax of the act curtain and the resolution of the play.³⁰

The episodes were related in a cause-effect relationship, whereas the montage flows from scene to skeleton scene without a causal relationship, and Arent believes it asks too much of an audience. The documentary of the sixties prefers the montage arrangement.

Many of the techniques of the living newspaper were borrowed from the past and were used again in the plays of the sixties. In writing about the first productions, Hallie Flanagan says:

Of course, certain of their elements had been used, for like all so-called new forms the living newspaper borrowed from many sources: from Aristophanes, from the Commedia dell' Arte, from Shakespearean soliloquy, from the pantomime of Mei Lan Fang. Being a flexible technique and only in its beginning, it still has much to learn from the chorus, the camera, the cartoon.³¹

The use of the loud-speaker began with the first production. At first the use of a teletype across the top of the proscenium arch was planned, but it proved too distracting. So the loud-speaker was used as a commentary. Eventually the speaker became a definite character in One Third of a Nation, but it never remained the same character for long. Projections were used as shadowgraph in Triple-A Plowed Under and lantern slides and motion pictures in One Third of a Nation. Thrown on a scrim, they replaced the usual flats, but they were more than scenery. They became "functional, a part of the action itself. . . . The characters observe them, talk about them";³² and the artistic effect of the

play is enhanced by their usage.

The philosophy of the living newspaper was to appeal to the emotions of the heart. It was interested in humanity; it championed the "little man" and dramatized a specific problem. Its plays were considered by theatre critics as a major contribution to the American theatre, but the Federal Theatre was ended by an act of Congress on June 30, 1939. The reason for the end of the project is well stated by Hallie Flanagan:

It was ended because congress, in spite of protests from many of its own members, treated the Federal Theatre not as a cultural issue, but as a political issue.³³

The United States Congress did not intend to support a theatre which its members considered dangerous. "But as Hallie Flanagan told the Theatre Council: 'The theatre, when it's good, is always dangerous.'"³⁴

In summary, the living newspaper and the documentary theatre have definite similarities, but they are not the same. In both styles the basic concept of truth is found in problems of society; both are political theatre. The styles differ in that the living newspaper dealt with problems of man in the depression years in American society, and the documentary deals with larger, more universal problems of mankind. In both modes the truth is communicated through a thematic arrangement, but the living newspaper playwrights usually chose an episodic structure and a cause and effect arrangement, while the documentary playwright usually selects a montage structure and attempts to show the theme from different perspectives. The direct quotation was used to dramatize an event and make an appeal to the emotions in the living newspaper, whereas the quotation is used in the context of the dialogue to reveal the fact and make an appeal to the intellect in the documentary. The presenta-

tion of the documtnary borrowed from the techniques of the living newspaper just as the living newspaper had borrowed from the past.

Although there are similarities, the documentary theatre of the sixties is not the same mode of theatre as the living newspaper. In the following chapters the reason for its differences should become evident. The documentary theatre reflects a different society, the society of the sixties.

CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SIXTIES

Any successful drama is likely to reflect the society of its time. As Walter Kerr stated: "Dramatic activity operates in lively short-term cycles. Each brief cycle takes its peculiar shape, and its impetus as well, from whatever is most urgent in the society around it."³⁵ Therefore, a discussion of the drama of the sixties must consider the society of that decade.

The years preceding 1960 saw the end of World War II. During that period the intellectual energies of the Western World were devoted to war and its aftermath. By 1960 the world had begun to respond to the economic and technological changes that were rapidly taking place.

The society of the sixties was distinguished by the amount of change that occurred. In the past, change had been a more or less gradual process. By 1960 society was changing so rapidly that Alvin Toffler warned of "future shock," a disease of man overwhelmed by change. His book is nearly an encyclopedia of the changes that have come about in the last decade. To illustrate the rate of change, Toffler suggested the division of the last 50,000 years of man's existence into lifetimes. He concluded that there have been about eight hundred lifetimes, and the first six hundred fifty of these eight hundred lifetimes were spent in caves. He points out "that only during the last seventy lifetimes has it been possible to communicate effectively from one lifetime to another--as writing made it possible to do."³⁶

The first major change of the sixties was a change in man's thinking brought about by the proliferation of knowledge. As Toffler continues to point out, changes in language have been so great that the increase in the number of words makes Shakespeare a semiliterate, and knowledge has been progressing at an ever increasing rate. The storage of useful knowledge increased significantly with the invention of the printing press, but by 1960 the rate of output of books had increased so that what once took a century to produce could now be produced in seven and a half months.

Books have changed not only in the amount of time required to produce them, but also in the number of books published and the content of the books published. In a 1967 article, Hayden Carruth stated:

The British critic Walter Allen . . . made three observations on British book publishing . . . 'too many books are published in Britain anyway; . . . as the number of books published creeps up year by year, the number of novels among them falls slightly but steadily; . . . fiction is becoming an increasingly less important element in publishing.' Certainly the experience of 1966 would indicate a parallel trend in the United States.³⁷

The print medium has increased its output of factual material.

Marshall McLuhan sees this increase of factual material in the print medium as a result of television. One of the reasons for the great influence of television lies in its capacity for disseminating knowledge more rapidly than any other medium. In turn, McLuhan theorizes that television has created a desire for more knowledge.

. . . the mosaic form of the TV image that commands immediate participation in depth and admits of no delays. The mandates of that image are so various yet so consistent that even to mention them is to describe the revolution of the past decade. . . . The American since TV has lost his inhibitions and his innocence about depth culture. . . . Europeans have always felt that the English and Americans lacked depth in their culture. Since radio, and especially since TV, English and

American literary critics have exceeded the performance of any European in depth and subtlety. . . . The paperback itself has become a vast mosaic world in depth, expressive of the changed sense-life of Americans, for whom depth experience in words, as in physics, has become entirely acceptable, even sought after.³⁸

This desire for depth and for the quantification of facts has been reflected by the documentary theatre which presents "documented facts" and often quotes the document almost directly in the context of the dialogue. Likewise, the presentation of arguments presented from differing perspectives has resulted from the rapid changes in society and is reflected in the arrangement of the documentary drama which allows the audience to view the theme from differing viewpoints. It also reflects the mosaic form, which McLuhan explains more fully with his idea of "hot" and "cool" media.

The idea of a hot medium, the radio and the movie, opposed to a cool medium, the telephone or the television, is explained by McLuhan as a matter of definition. "A hot medium is one that extends one single sense in 'high definition.' High definition is the state of being well filled with data."³⁹ A photograph has a high definition or is a hot medium because it presents a high degree of information. The cartoon is a cool medium because it leaves the viewer to fill in for himself. "One way to spot the basic difference between hot and cold media uses is to compare a broadcast of a symphony performance with a symphony rehearsal."⁴⁰ TV is a cool medium capable of involving the viewer in the process. The more involvement the viewer is allowed, the more pleasure is derived from the medium. One of the marks "of our time is its revulsion against imposed patterns. We are suddenly eager to have things and people declare their beings totally."⁴¹

The documentary theatre is a cool medium. The playwright attempts to present all points of view through a matter-of-fact dialogue, and the audience is asked to reflect and to judge. The appeal is not to the emotions but to the intellect.

A second major change in society has been in one of man's basic organizational patterns. Toffler contends that we are witnessing the breakdown of bureaucracy, and predicts a new organization of the future which he calls "Ad-Hocracy." He explains:

Man will encounter plenty of difficulty in adapting to this new style organization. But instead of being trapped in some unchanging, personality-smashing niche, man will find himself liberated, a stranger in a new free-form world of kinetic organization.⁴²

He argues that an observable effect of the breakdown of bureaucracy is the change in man's loyalty. For example, man has transferred that loyalty he used to give to his company to a loyalty towards his profession. In a world that McLuhan describes as a "global village," a loyalty to mankind has been developed. As was mentioned in Chapter I of this study, the young people of Germany scorn nationalism and national boundaries, but the values of Western civilization are important.

In addition to loyalties, another organizational change has been one of emphasis. The focus has shifted from the individual to the group. Dr. Martin Luther King's advocacy of civil disobedience demonstrated that the individual can find strength by joining with others to achieve a common goal.⁴³ Man's identification with groups and causes has become an integral part of society.

The documentary dramatist has reflected ad-hocracy and changing loyalties both in the content of his subject matter and in the questions he has posed. He has reflected the focus on the group by using indivi-

dual characters as representative of specific groups.

A third change in society has been in the depth of the "generation gap." George Paloczi-Horvath has written a political survey of the years 1955-1970. He calls the years immediately following the war, the peace shocked years:

There certainly seemed to be very little hope for devastated, half-starved, paralysed Europe. Some fathers returned from prisoner-of-war camps, others did not. Millions were dead. Other fathers and mothers were suspect in the period of war-crime trials, when from Norway to France the victorious countries were arresting and trying the collaborators. Some mothers and elder sisters had their heads shaved as punishment for their affairs with enemy soldiers. Defeat was sheer horror. Victory was a sad shock of disappointment.⁴⁴

Paloczi-Horvath stressed that it was the children of this period who became the youth in rebellion against the older generation, and that the effects of the Nuremberg trials on children and teenagers were underestimated by the adult world.

Nothing is beyond and above the realm of reason and of common decency, nothing at all.

The individual, with his own conscience, is responsible for being an ardent patriot in a country led by criminals; for being a law-abiding citizen, who upholds the wrong law and the wrong order.

Authorities, laws, supreme commanders must not be blindly obeyed.

Carrying out the orders of higher authorities is no excuse.

The individual, with his own conscience, must decide whether a war is just or unjust, whether a command is criminal or not.

The 'My country right or wrong' slogan is evil and it can lead you to the gallows.

Year after year, these lessons were driven home to those who passed through their late childhood or adolescence between 1946 and 1968.⁴⁵

He catalogues the youth rebellions from the first of conspicuously uniformed Teddy Boys in Britain in 1952 to the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, where over ten thousand boys and girls between fifteen and twenty-three died in Budapest. He mentions the British Emergency Committee for the

Direct Action Against Nuclear War, founded in 1957, and The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament which launched the Ban the Bomb movement in 1958. He discusses the post-war liberation of women, the sex-bombs versus the "Beattles" and the Rolling Stones," Berkeley in 1964, the convention in Chicago, 1968, and he concludes:

In the period 1957-64 there was some form of unrest at over two-thirds of the world's universities and other institutions of higher learning. Besides rebelling against repressive regimes, hopeless and immoral wars, against racial oppression and for civil rights and liberty, two or three student generations at the universities demanded with increasing intensity and frequency a radical reform of the university system itself.⁴⁶

The protests and the rebellion of the sixties are reflected by the documentary dramas. If society had not been conditioned by the lessons of the Nuremberg trials, the controversial topics of the documentaries would not have been acceptable. The youth who had held nothing as sacred in their attack upon the society of the older generation had created the conditions that made it possible for Hochhuth to attack the Pope.

As a final note on the society of the sixties, both Toffler and McLuhan have commented on its literature. Toffler calls for a new literature with a type of team authorship because he thinks the book is inadequate:

First no book, by itself, is adequate to describe a super-industrial future in emotionally compelling terms. Each conception of a super-industrial utopia or anti-utopia needs to be embodied in many forms--films, plays, novels, and works of art--rather than a single work of fiction.⁴⁷

The documentary theatre reflects this need with its many viewpoints and its use of other media in its presentations. It is also significant that the arrangements were made for The Deputy to appear in book form simultaneously with its first production as a play. In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer was first seen on television before it became a

stage play. McLuhan points out that the differences in media have caused them to compete with one another for man's attention. Each change has resulted in a change in other media, for example:

When the press opened up the 'human interest' keyboard after the telegraph had restructured the press medium, the newspaper killed the theater, just as TV hit the movies and the night clubs very hard. . . . Then TV pervaded the movie and gave the theater-in-the-round back to the public.⁴⁸

The theatre-in-the-round broke from the concept of the proscenium arch and the "fourth wall." TV had developed an audience that felt a need for a participational quality in drama, and McLuhan argues that "Brecht's plays have the same participational quality of the world of the comic strip and the newspaper mosaic that TV has made acceptable, . . ."⁴⁹ The following chapter will contain a discussion on the influence of Brecht upon the documentary theatre.

In summary, there were three major changes in the sixties. The society was distinguished by a rapid rate of change. Among the results of change was a proliferation of knowledge which in turn changed man's thinking, and the development of TV, which disseminated the knowledge and influenced not only what man thought but how he thought. The second major change in society was the change in organizational patterns observed in the changes in man's loyalties and a shift in focus from the individual to the group. A third change was the depth of the "generation gap" which resulted in protests and rebellion and consequently changed attitudes within adult society. In the last part of this study an analysis will be made of the reflection of these changes within the plays of the documentary theatre.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEATRE OF THE IMMEDIATE PAST

Each mode of the theatre draws some of its concepts from the past, and the documentary theatre is no exception. There are two influences that are particularly noteworthy because they can be seen in almost all of the plays labeled "documentary": the influence of the theatre of the absurd and that of the "epic" theatre of Bertolt Brecht.

In his book Understanding Media, Marshall McLuhan traces the results of changes in society on man himself. He sees man as a result of a "hot" culture stunned by his encounter with the "cool" world of mass communication. The result has been apathy, anxiety, and alienation. "The Theater of the Absurd dramatized this recent dilemma of Western man, the man of action who appears not to be involved in the action."⁵⁰ The movement reflected the apathy that is associated with the society of the fifties. Its plays left the audience not knowing how to respond, whether to laugh or to cry at the floundering of man.

The French author Ionesco is one of the best known writers of the absurdist plays. The Bald Soprano is an anti-play concerned with language and with man's inability to communicate. In the play The Chairs, the individual is faced with the overwhelming task of coping with the world. In Rhinoceros stress is placed upon the incapability of the human condition and the futility of individualism. When Berenger is faced with no choice he stresses that he "will not capitulate." In each

of these plays man is lost in a chaotic world with no code to guide him.

Foremost of the American absurdists is Edward Albee. His play entitled The Zoo Story is a portrait of a man who can't even establish a genuine contact with a dog, let alone another human being. In The American Dream Albee attacks American idealism. The dream is embodied in the ideal young man--beautiful, charming, but materialistic and dead inside. Like Ionesco, Albee illustrates man's problem without offering a solution.

Martin Esslin discussed the theatre of the absurd in a book by that title and, in fact, the label is considered to have originated from his book. He writes that the theatre of the absurd was not without purpose. The philosophy is that in the modern world, which has lost its unifying principle, man must be shown the way to comprehend. "The spectator is confronted with the madness of the human condition, enabled to see his situation . . . to face it consciously."⁵¹ In a book published eight years later Esslin devotes a chapter to "The Theatre of the Absurd Reconsidered." He states:

. . . important to the concept of the Theatre of the Absurd is the form in which this sense of bewilderment and mystery expresses itself: the devaluation or even downright dissolution of language, the disintegration of plot, characterization, and final solution which had hitherto been the hallmark of drama, and the substitution of new elements of form--concrete stage imagery, repetition or intensification, a whole new stage language.⁵²

In his discussion of the contributions of the theatre of the absurd he states that most important is that the theatre of the absurd has illustrated that poetry is not merely a matter of language but the theatre itself is a form of poetry. A play can be a powerful poetic metaphor subject to meaningful interpretations. A poetic image can serve as the

essence of a drama, eliminating the need for traditional plot structure. Esslin continues to say that the absurdists have further demonstrated the theatre's ability to deal with internal reality. They have conditioned audiences to accept happenings on the stage as expressions of internal psychic reality. They have re-emphasized the physical nature of the theatre, its intimate links with ballet, slapstick, acrobatics, and ritual, and though Esslin warns it may appear paradoxical, they have re-emphasized the importance of form, for as in a poem the content is revealed through form.⁵³ The theatre of the absurd was important to the documentary dramatist because it led the way in gaining acceptance for an anti-theatre which emphasized change and eliminated traditional plot structure.

The second influence on the documentary theatre from the theatre of the immediate past is that of the epic theatre. The epic drama was chiefly the development of Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht. Erwin Piscator was a young communist producer and a disciple of Vsevolod Meyerhold, who was a powerful force in the Russian theatre. His theories of unrealism and the reduction of the actor to an "unindividual" suited the propagandist theatre and conformed with theories of Marxism. Piscator was a ruthless opponent of theatrical illusion, atmospheric production and identification of the actors with their roles. In 1924 he was put in charge of production of the Volksbuhne Theatre in Berlin, and epic drama began with his first production. In dealing with the topical, historical, and factual material that was beginning to invade the arts, he introduced a film sequence as a part of his staging. John Willett writes:

This was the origin of a new, so-called 'Epic' theatre whose first production--Alfons Paquet's documentary-style 'dramatic novel' Fahnen--was subtitled 'epic' by its author and staged with the help of what became identified as 'epic' methods: narrative aids based on the (silent) cinema and the magic lantern. During the prologue, photographs of the chief characters were projected on two screens either side of the stage; written titles preceded each scene to explain the plot.⁵⁴

In 1927 Piscator took over the Theatre-am-Nollendorfplatz where he produced The Good Soldier Schweik, and Brecht was called in to collaborate on the script. The staging is described by Alan Lewis:

Piscator transformed the old picture-frame theatre drastically. Short, rapid scenes rose out of the orchestra, flowed in from the wings and aisles; placards, signs, graphs, and posters pointed out what was happening on stage; motion pictures flashed on the screen to interrupt the action and supply more background information, and a treadmill ground away, taking Schweik to different scenes of battle. . . . the production was a technician's holiday.

So violent grew the debate between the advocates of simple staging and the proponents of Epic Theatre that the name Piscator became identified with mechanical excesses.⁵⁵

Brecht considered Piscator one of the most important theatre men of all times, and Piscator's influence was seen in the staging of Brecht's The Three Penny Opera, which had a pipe organ outlined in electric lights as a permanent background, along with free-standing pieces of scenery that included iron-barred prison cages and a long stairway on casters. Explanatory titles and illustrations were projected on screens, and half curtains were strung on a wire across the front of the stage. The half curtains were closed during scene changes, and the rest of the proscenium was left open.

As Brecht began to develop an epic theatre of his own, he differed somewhat from Piscator. John Willett notes:

. . . In Brecht's case the real novelty and force of his plays lay in the words, which simply could not stand such top-heavy staging. Where he used Piscator's methods he used them on a small scale.⁵⁶

Brecht's plays were not dependent on stage effects, in fact, when Berlin police found Die Mutter too subversive for anything but a reading, its production as a reading was tremendously successful.

To define Brecht's epic theatre is not easy. His theories were explained as notes for productions of his plays; often they were misunderstood and required more notes. As times changed, his ideas became more mature and his theories acquired more depth, but even then his own work did not always reflect his theories.

Strictly speaking, "epic" is an Aristotelian term for the division of literature into three fields: epic, lyric, and dramatic. Brockett describes Brecht's theatre as having three key terms: historification, alienation, and epic.

Historification refers to the use of history. Brecht would employ its "pastness." The playwright should attempt to arouse in the spectator the feeling that if he had been living under the conditions shown in the play, he would have taken some positive action. The audience should then go on to see that, since things have changed, it is possible to bring about desirable social changes in the present.

Alienation is the American translation of Brecht's Verfremdung, which really defies English translation. Its purpose is to create an effect by the force of the perspective that the scenes reveal, so that the audience is stirred by enlightenment achieved through reason, not emotion. Charles Hampton explains Brecht's theory:

For Brecht's intention, as manifested repeatedly in his theory, is to change the audience's mode of apprehension of the play from one of emotional acceptance to the scientific critical detachment necessary if the perceiver is to learn from the drama how to change the world.⁵⁷

The third term "epic" refers to the structural arrangement of Brecht's plays. Brockett likens the plays to an epic poem. The structure allows the playwright to mix dialogue and narration. He can tell some scenes and show others. He can move rapidly, carrying the audience through any amount of time in a few sentences, or he can move slowly and emphasize a period or scene. Alan Lewis provides a good summary of Brecht's theatre:

To Brecht, the conventional form--division into acts, suspense, plot development--is inadequate to express historical fact. Its emotional demands destroy objectivity. Epic prefers scenes, each complete in itself, each a poem, a portrait, a contribution of the totality of life, so that the play becomes a series of narrations.⁵⁸

Although it has been fashionable to ignore Brecht's politics and enjoy his plays in the United States, Brecht's theatre was definitely political. He used the theatre to expound his Marxist philosophy and to reveal the problems inherent in capitalism. While his political allegiance has been claimed by the communist world, Martin Esslin remains assured that Brecht was not a communist:

. . . while he was a fervent believer in the Marxist creed, he had been highly critical of the party's theory and practice and bitterly opposed to the official doctrine of socialist realism; that he had hesitated a good deal before finally deciding to settle in East Berlin and in accepting the East German invitation had been largely motivated by his desire to get his own theatre; . . . his disillusionment with the realities of life in a Communist-ruled country might have been a contributory factor in his early death.⁵⁹

Esslin reflects that since Brecht died in 1956, he has "acquired the status of an established international classic."⁶⁰

A direct link between the epic and the documentary theatre was provided by Erwin Piscator. He was seventy years old when he agreed to direct the first of the documentary plays, The Deputy. In the next few

years he directed In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer and The Investigation. Marios Ploritis, editor of World Drama magazine, stated that these were the plays for which Piscator had waited all his life.

Like Brecht's, the documentary plays are political theatre. The playwrights are committed to social and political themes and hope to lead their audiences. They subscribe to Brecht's theory of historicification with a change in emphasis and to his theory of alienation. They use a structure much like the epic, but they rely on their themes for their structural unity. The major difference between Brecht's plays and those of the documentary playwrights is the documentary's use of historical documents for their dialogue, and their choice of subjects from recent history.

The theatre of the absurd and the epic theatre are two opposing wings of avant garde, but as Esslin observes they have the same ideological and philosophical premises:

Brechtian leftism, Sartrean existentialism, and the philosophical basis of the Theatre of the Absurd, for example, spring from a common root: They are reactions to the collapse of former systems of ethics based on supernatural sanctions. . . . For the Brechtians reality changes with external circumstance; for the absurdists external and internal reality are interchangeable. The same concept applies to language.⁶¹

This is the heritage of the documentary theatre from the theatre of the immediate past. Some critics have said the documentary has shown the way out of the absurd because its playwrights advocate that man must take a moral stance and act upon it. Other critics like Esslin have heralded the documentary as a theatre beyond Brecht. One chapter of Esslin's Reflections is entitled, "Peter Weiss: Dramatist Beyond Brecht and Beckett."

CHAPTER V

THE PLAYS OF THE MODE

Fundamental to any discussion of theatre is an examination of the playwright's work. It is best to say first what this section is not. It is not an attempt to analyze the plays themselves. It is not based on theatrical productions, but on plays as read in the published English translation of the original German.

The purpose of this chapter is to show that the plays studied meet the definition of the documentary theatre and that in doing so they reflect the society of the sixties. In establishing a definition for "documentary" in Chapter I, the subject matter, the theme, and the structure were examined and the development of a mode considered. A conclusion was reached that the documentary theatre is a thematic arrangement of a social and political subject from history, designed by the playwright to merge fact with art. Each play is considered in the light of this definition, and an attempt is made to show that the elements that create a documentary play were also a reflection of the sixties.

The Deputy

The first play to be presented in the mode of the new label "documentary" theatre was The Deputy by Rolf Hochhuth. The play has as its basic thesis that Pope Pius XII could have influenced Hitler and the German SS to halt the mass murders of Europe's Jews. A storm of contro-

versy began with its first production on March 20, 1963, at the Freie Volksbuhne in Berlin. Noted critic Eric Bentley declares that "it is almost certainly the largest storm ever raised by a play in the whole history of drama."⁶² Catholics and non-Catholics, critics and historians, even the present Pope responded to Hochhuth's attack. Bentley asserts that the storm was predicted by Erwin Piscator, who directed the Berlin production, and intended by Hochhuth.

That the play was produced by Piscator was almost an accident. In an introduction to the German edition Piscator tells how he received a copy of the play in galley proofs from Rowohlt Publishers. They had received it in this form from a publisher who had acknowledged that he did not have the courage to publish it. Rowohlt thought it was more than just a play; everyone who had read it was profoundly shaken. Yet they had no idea how it could be staged. When Piscator agreed to produce The Deputy, he was faced with a play too long for the theatre public. After considering performances on successive nights, he decided to cut the play and made an agreement with Rowohlt Publishing House that the book would reach the public at the same time as the Berlin production.

Rolf Hochhuth, the author of this long play, did not come from a theatrical background. He had left school at seventeen to become a bookseller, and when an illness forced him to quit work, he attended the University. In 1955 he became a reader and an editor for the largest book club in the world. Eventually he began writing, more history than fiction, and it was in studying the documents of the Nuremberg trials that he became fascinated with Kurt Gerstein. Gerstein had been an active youth leader with the Evangelical Church and was arrested in 1936

for distributing anti-Nazi pamphlets. After his release, he became a German SS officer and attempted to bring about reform from within. It was the story of Gerstein that led Hochhuth to the considerable research and the eventual writing of The Deputy.

The Deputy is the story of a young Jesuit, Father Riccardo Fontana, who is deeply moved over a report by SS Lt. Kurt Gerstein, a secret resistance fighter, on the annihilation camps in Poland. He tries to obtain assurance from the Papal Nuncio in Berlin and later from the Cardinal in Rome that the church will openly declare its opposition to Hitler's Germany and that the Pope will break off the Concordat. When the Pope in these days of persecution devotes himself instead to the financial transactions of the Curia, Riccardo decides to take the contemporary Jewish martyrdom upon himself. He takes a Star of David which he had received from a young Jew that Gerstein hid in Berlin, puts it on and treads the path of Martyrs. At Auschwitz the Doctor, a representative of the devil, enjoys Riccardo's revulsion and keeps him as a "philosophizing pet." Gerstein tries to free him, but Riccardo wants to pass this possible escape on to a Jew. The Doctor discovers the plot, Riccardo is shot, and the Jew is sent to the gas chamber.

The basis of the play is the controversial assertion that Pope Pius XII could have influenced a halt to the mass murders of Europe's Jews by Hitler and the German SS. True to the documentary mode, the play is structured in the manner of thematic arrangement, and the main idea is repeated to allow the audience to view it from different perspectives. The opening scene reveals the young priest, Riccardo, with the Papal Nuncio in Berlin. Near the beginning of the scene the Nuncio says that the Pope will not let him speak.

Nuncio: The Pope should decide what he prefers;
 peace with Hitler at any price, or else
 let me be authorized to take a stand
 the way my brother Nuncio in Slovakia
 did two weeks ago when he spoke up
 against the wholesale killing of Jews. ⁶³

The next scene illuminates the German viewpoint through high ranking Germans relaxing at a hotel. Salzer, Chief of the German Police in Rome interrupts the bowling game with the news that the Church is kicking up a fuss. Eichmann is agitated with the interruption.

Eichmann: Investigation! What's there to investigate? Ashes?
 Damn it to hell--the Nuncio in Rumania
 is starting to stir up trouble too.
 The bishops in these countries don't much bother me.
 But a Nuncio as representative of the Vatican . . .
 There's nothing we can do, we'll have to
 take it easy in Slovakia for a while. Shit. ⁶⁴

In still another scene Riccardo argues with his father, who is one of the highest ranking laymen in the service of the holy see, that the Germans fear the Pope and that the Pope should speak.

Fontana: How you simplify! Good God,
 do you believe the Pope could suffer to see
 even a single man hungry and in pain?
 His heart is with the victims.

Riccardo: But his voice? Where is his voice? ⁶⁵

But his voice is not heard. That Pope Pius XII should have spoken is reinforced from differing vantage points and through this repetition the structural unity of the play is maintained.

In addition to maintaining structural unity, a playwright must also evoke a response from his audience. Hochhuth seeks to make his audience feel the rage that he feels about the injustice continued because the one person who could speak for the Jews refused to do so. Scenes are carefully structured so that the audience reacts with revulsion, indignation, and finally ponders their own guilt. In the first

scene Riccardo is repulsed by the report of SS Lt. Gerstein:

Gerstein: So far they've been running the gas chambers
on carbon monoxide, common exhaust gas . . .

. . .
Seven hundred and fifty persons
in each of four chambers--
each room with a volume of sixty cubic yards--
three thousand human beings.

. . .
Like marble columns the naked corpses stand.
You can tell the families, even after death
convulsed in locked embrace--with hooks
they're pulled apart. Jews have to do that job.⁶⁶

In the second scene the revulsion is deepened as the audience witness
the Germans' casual remarks about Auschwitz:

Hirt: Only after you've got all that
is the Russki to be liquidated. You cut off the
head from the trunk and . . .

Littke: (in a cold sweat)
Jawohl, Herr Professor. May I inquire, sir,
whether--whether I . . . personally . . .

Eichmann: Professor, duty is duty. You must bowl.

Hirt: (to Littke as he goes to the rack)
Of course not--the SS police take care of that.⁶⁷

The intermingling of references to the atrocities with the carefree talk
of men at play is never overdone, but leaves the audience to fill in for
themselves. Several times they mention fear of the Vatican, and finally
one German says to another:

Barron Rutta: . . . As far as I know, he does not
meddle in German internal affairs.

Hirt: That Concordat he made with us
after we took over here--that was a stroke of luck.⁶⁸

Would it serve a useful purpose for the Pope to protest or would it
merely aggravate the situation? In Act II, Riccardo pleads with the
Cardinal:

Cardinal: The Chief would lose a great deal of prestige
if he endangered his position for the Jews, Riccardo.

Riccardo: Among the Germans--perhaps.
But what about the United States, Your Eminence?

Cardinal: In the United States as well there are extremely militant
foes of the Jews, you know.
Men love butchery, alas, God knows. . . .

Can you guarantee that threats
will really not aggravate the situation?

Riccardo: Your Eminence, a hundred thousand Jewish families in
Europe
face certain murder!
It could not, could not, possibly be worse!⁶⁹

Thus, as the basic theme is reinforced, reaction is provoked.

In addition to the structure, the language of the play adds to its effectiveness. Hochhuth uses a free, iambically accented verse form which provides not only the economy of words common to poetry, but also invests the play with a dignity that seems appropriate to the church. He defended his use of verse form in an interview:

Free verse carries its speaker along much more readily than prose, especially when it concerns a subject which is so closely involved with contemporary events and depends so extensively on historical documents. Then things must be transposed, heightened by language. Otherwise, it would often be likely to sound as if one were merely quoting from the documents.⁷⁰

Another artistic consideration is the characters in the play. All characters and names in the play are fictitious with the exception of the Pope, the Nuncio, Gerstein, Hirt, and Eichmann. Hochhuth grouped the minor characters to be played by the same actor:

. . . for recent history has taught us that in the age of universal military conscription it is not necessarily to anyone's credit or blame, or even a question of character, which uniform one wears or whether one stands on the side of the victims or the executioners.⁷¹

Thus, he calls for one actor to play the roles of A Father in the Papal

Legation, Witzel, SS sergeant, and A Jewish Kapo. The effect is to emphasize the message rather than the character.

Hochhuth's characters are not drawn in depth, rather they are grouped into a pattern. On one side is the outraged group, Riccardo and Gerstein; and on the other side is the anger-provoking group. The Doctor provokes the most anger. He appears gentle and kind as he greets the Jews at Auschwitz, but he is completely ruthless. Hochhuth describes him:

Because this "doctor" stands in such sharp contrast not only to his fellows of the SS, but to all human beings, . . . it seemed to me . . . an ancient figure in the theater and in Christian mystery plays is once more appearing upon the stage . . . Since this uncanny visitant from another world was obviously only playing the part of a human being, I have refrained from any further effort to plumb its human features--⁷²

Others in the anger-provoking group are the Germans at the hotel, the SS soldiery, and the Cardinal. The Cardinal's conviviality shows a total lack of responsibility. The other characters see what is happening but refuse to become involved.

Riccardo represents the other group, the outraged, and presents Hochhuth's attitude through an uncompromising moral position. The character is based on the real Provost Bernhard Lichtenberg of St. Hewig's Cathedral, Berlin, who prayed publicly for the Jews, was sentenced to jail, and asked Hitler's henchmen to let him share the fate of the Jews in the East. His petition was granted. Father Riccardo Fontana is not a shallow character in the usual sense, but his heroic qualities are emphasized only as they provoke empathy with the emotions of revulsion and indignation.

The greatest amount of criticism of the artistic design of the play centered on the lack of character development of the Pope. He is

shown as concerned with finances, the menace posed by Russia, and the necessity of maintaining a neutral role as a mediator. Critics argued that if he is to be held accountable as a human being, then he should be shown as human and allowed to expose the difficulty with which he reached his decisions. Hochhuth has sacrificed this artistic effect to show merely a Pope who did not act.

Although Hochhuth is convinced that Pope Pius XII through the power of the church could have called a halt to the mass murders, the question can never really be answered. The Catholic Historian, Professor Leiber, points out that the courageous appeal of the Dutch Hierarchy against the deportation and killing of their Jewish compatriots only fired the extermination fury of the SS. Hochhuth could have portrayed both positions in the conflict, but he took sides. And as Weiss said in his tenth point, documentary theatre takes sides.

Moreover, a lack of depth in the characterization serves to remind the audience that the play is not a character study, but an "exploration of the human condition." The character is to serve as "a verification of human reality" and evoke an intellectual response "to the tragic core of man's plight on earth." As stated in the first part of this study, this was Hochhuth's basic aim.

Even though Hochhuth does not claim to write in the mode of documentary theatre, this play meets the definition of "documentary." The subject is taken from recent history. The basic concept of truth is the question of power and responsibility. The Pope, the Deputy of Christ on earth, should have spoken. This thesis is repeated again and again to provide the structural unity. The play takes sides and attempts to evoke an intellectual response. The use of language and arrangement of

facts lifts the play beyond reportage to art.

The society of the sixties was receptive to documentary theatre. McCarthy's tactics of the fifties had pointed out the vulnerability of man and the civil rights marches had shown the effectiveness of man finding a commitment and acting upon it. Not only was there a great deal of political consciousness in the sixties, but there was also a transfer of focus from the individual to the group. Hochhuth's play takes advantage of these trends.

Additional trends were discernable in the sixties, and among these were the mass media, especially television. McLuhan's views of "hot" and "cool" media are illustrated by The Deputy, for it is a "cool" play. The scenes are fragmentary, allowing the audience to fill in, and the characters are not drawn in depth, but sketched, to permit the audience to become involved in their decisions. Had this play been presented before the days of television when the "hot" medium of the cinema had conditioned the public's responses, it probably would not have been successful.

Other reflections of society added to its success. McLuhan is famous for the saying "The medium is the message" and in the case of The Deputy, the medium (structure) is the same as the message (theme). The differing vantage points from which the audience views the theme are the different levels of abstractions. The assault on the emotions in rapid pacing, scene after scene, is reflective of the rapid change in society. And, as a result of the rapid change in society, there is a tendency to group or use a team to serve a purpose and regroup for another purpose. The grouping of characters in The Deputy mirrors this trend.

Western civilization has been affected by the rapid change in the availability of knowledge. Man's renewed quest for more knowledge and more depth of knowledge created a climate to receive a long history play and a long book. The fact that Hochhuth's work was presented simultaneously in two media, a play production and a book which provided supplementary material, reinforces Toffler's argument that no one medium can reflect today's society.

In conclusion, The Deputy is a play of the sixties; written in a documentary mode, it uses a thematic arrangement of a social and political subject from history. It is designed to merge fact with art. It evoked a storm of controversy that drew attention to the theatre. Rolf Hochhuth has indeed made an important contribution to drama with The Deputy.

In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer

When In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer, by Heinar Kipphardt, opened at Freie Volksbuhne in Berlin, it had already been a success in two other media. Originally it was written for television and then adapted as a radio play. On October 11, 1964, it opened both at the Volksbuhne and at the Kammerspiele in Munich.

The source of Kipphardt's play is the three thousand page record of the proceedings instituted against J. Robert Oppenheimer, published by the Atomic Energy Commission in May, 1954. In place of the sterile question of guilt, Kipphardt poses a counter-question: Is it wrong and irresponsible of a physicist to refuse to build new and more terrible weapons of destruction? Kipphardt adheres strictly to the facts which emerge from the documents and reports concerning the investigation. He

"exercised his freedom only in the selection, the arrangement, formulation, and condensation of the material."⁷³ He admits that a few liberties were taken by reducing the forty witnesses to six and as a result merging the evidence from several witnesses into one. Furthermore, he introduced monologues between scenes, the final decision is read out at the end of the proceedings, and Dr. Oppenheimer makes a closing statement. Kipphardt intended his play to be "a play for the theatre, not an assemblage of documentary material."⁷⁴

Heinar Kipphardt, like Piscator who directed his Berlin production, is a man with a theatre background. Born in Silesia in 1922, he was studying medicine when he was drafted into the German army. He experienced war as a soldier on the Russian front, and after the war practiced medicine in Berlin. From 1950 to 1959 he was the dramaturg and a director at Berlin's Deutsches Theatre. He left the theatre position to become a freelance writer.

The Oppenheimer play is the story of a secret hearing. It is set in 1954, at a time when America's delay in the development of the hydrogen bomb threatened her position in the nuclear arms race. In this atmosphere, Oppenheimer is brought to trial by the Personnel Security Board. J. Robert Oppenheimer, father of the atomic bomb, was widely criticized for delaying the development of the hydrogen bomb in a manner which had allowed the U.S.S.R. to gain ground on the United States in the nuclear arms race. Oppenheimer is revealed as a man caught in the dilemma of serving his country or taking his responsibility to humanity as a whole, and he claims the right of the patriot to express views at odds with those of his government without his loyalty being called into question. Photomontage, tape recordings, films, records of proceedings

and the testimony of witnesses are used to present the antecedents of the case. Roger Robb, Counsel for the Atomic Energy Commission, tries to prove "ideological treason," and in the end the security clearance is denied.

The mood of the fifties is dramatically established in the beginning. The stage is open with white hangings separating it from the auditorium. On them are projections of scientists in battle dress, looking like military personnel, doing the countdown in English, Russian, and French. Cloud formations caused by atomic explosions unfold in great beauty, watched by scientists through dark filters. And then the contrasting scene appears of the terrible results of the bomb: on the wall of a house, radiation shadows of a few victims of the atomic explosion on Hiroshima.

Oppenheimer's entrance and impersonal announcement in the third person about his trial begins the play:

On the twelfth of April 1954, a few minutes to ten, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Professor of Physics at Princeton, formerly director of the Atomic Weapons Laboratories at Los Alamos, and, later, Adviser to the Government on atomic matters, entered Room 2022 in Building T3 of the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington, to answer questions put to him by a Personnel Security Board, concerning his views, his associations, his actions, suspected of disloyalty.⁷⁵

This is followed by a projection of McCarthy and a recording of his voice from a radio program.

If there are no Communists in our government, why do we delay the hydrogen bomb by eighteen months while our defense services report day after day that the Russians are feverishly stepping up on the H-bomb? Now they've got it! Now our monopoly is gone! When I tell America tonight that our nation may perish, it will perish because of that delay of eighteen months. And I ask you, who is to blame? Were they loyal Americans or were they traitors, those who deliberately misled our government, who got themselves celebrated as atomic heroes, and whose crimes must at last be investigated.⁷⁶

The emotional tone of McCarthy's statement about the delay in the development of the hydrogen bomb is effective in showing the conditions under which the trial takes place. Kipphardt has managed to provide considerable exposition before the dialogue begins.

Throughout the play, the structural unity is maintained by the interplay of two themes, the conflicts in a man's loyalty, and the assertion that in our age everything factual is dubious and incapable of being verified. Further unity is provided by the projections of theme at the beginning of each scene, and the reinforcement of theme at the end of the scene in a brief monologue by a character who steps forward to the footlights.

The conflicts which result from varying demands for loyalty projected on the screens at the beginning of each scene trace the progress of the trial. For example, at the beginning of the second day the audience sees:

EXCERPT FROM THE PROCEEDINGS ON THE SECOND
DAY: GUILTY THROUGH ASSOCIATION?⁷⁷

In the next scene Oppenheimer's communist associations are discussed. His brother, his sister-in-law, and his former fiancée were all members of the Communist party at one time, and Oppenheimer himself admits to being a "fellow traveller" but says he broke off relations when he went to work on the atom bomb. But did he? He saw his former fiancée and spent the night with her because she was going through a severe emotional crisis; a few days later she was dead. And so the argument builds.

Scene four is introduced with hangings that intensify the question by approaching it from a slightly different perspective:

FROM THE PROCEEDINGS ON THE FIFTH DAY:
 WHERE DOES LOYALTY TO A BROTHER END, AND
 WHERE TO THE STATE?
 SHALL A MAN BE PERSECUTED FOR HIS OPINIONS?⁷⁸

The intensity increases to the very end of the play when the ultimate question is asked:

THE PROCEEDINGS ENTER A DECISIVE STAGE
 LOYALTY TO A GOVERNMENT
 LOYALTY TO MANKIND⁷⁹

If the audience entered the theatre with an answer to these questions, they are now unable to apply it to Oppenheimer. They have responded to the basic idea that in our age everything factual is dubious and incapable of being verified.

This second theme is reinforced by a character who steps forward to the footlights and speaks to the audience. The first such speaker is the counsel for the Atomic Energy Commission, Robert Robb:

. . . I have come to realize the inadequacy of being strictly confined to facts in our modern security investigations. Must we not examine the thoughts, the feelings, the motives--which underlie those facts--and make them the subject of our inquiries?⁸⁰

Another member of the Personnel Security Board and the only scientist on the board, Ward Evans, summarizes from a different position:

We develop instruments in order to pry into unknown solar systems, and the instruments will soon be used in electronic computers which reduce our friendships, our conversations, and thoughts to scientific data. To discover whether they are the right friendships, the right conversations, the right thoughts, which conform. But how can a thought be new, and at the same time conform?⁸¹

The idea is expressed again by Herbert S. Marks, counsel for Oppenheimer:

. . . Lewis Strauss is the man whose first official action was to start these proceedings when he took over the Atomic Energy Commission--he is the same man who granted Oppenheimer's clearance in 1947. Now he cables the news of its suspension to the Air Force, the Army, and the Navy. Are these proceedings fair? The Board has access to secret F.B.I. files, but we are

not allowed to see them. Oppenheimer cannot look at his own correspondence, his own reports; they have been confiscated and declared secret.⁸²

Thus the questions of loyalty and man's inconsistency in identifying facts are interwoven throughout the play.

The play achieves dramatic impact from the building and easing of tension. Ideas are developed in a strikingly effective manner, and laughter producing lines serve to ease the tension without distracting. Just the right amount of characterization is given to the roles to provide a sharp outline for the audience to fill in. The language of the play also gives impetus to its artistic development. The effectiveness of the language is commented upon by Urs Jenny in a German publication:

. . . The neutral tone, inclined towards abstraction, and the rough-hewn, sometimes unwieldy sentence structure give this play exactly what it needs. Even minor Americanisms, such as the use of the German "geben" in the manner of the English "to give," are unobtrusively slipped in.⁸³

Even though some of the artistry of the language is lost in the English translation, the language remains effective.

The language, however, is not as important in this play as in The Deputy. Whereas Hochhuth makes his assault on the emotions aurally through his dialogue, Kipphardt skillfully combines both the visual and the aural. Thus, by bringing both senses into play, he lessens the need for powerful language. Emotions and tensions are developed through a skillful handling of everyday prose.

Some of the factors that attracted attention to The Deputy were also present in the Oppenheimer play. Like Hochhuth, Kipphardt is a German writer. In fact, it is interesting that this play about an American was written by a German, and that it was not produced in America until nearly four years after the world première. Like The Deputy, this

play was directed by Erwin Piscator. It was produced in Berlin about six months after The Deputy. Both plays are written in the style of documentary theatre. If Hochhuth's play became a documentary by accident, Kipphardt's play became a documentary by purpose. He provided Piscator with a play ideally suited to the director's use of media in staging.

The use of media is only one of the factors that qualifies this play as a documentary. The use of documents to present a subject from recent history, the presentation of multiple views, the repetition of the basic thesis, and the use of thematic structure are all part of the documentary style. In addition, Kipphardt's attitude is one of detachment, even of precise scientific analysis. The audience is forced into an intellectual response rather than an emotional one. They are asked to reflect and judge.

Oppenheimer's case is acted as an example and the audience is being asked to judge the issue, not the man. Kipphardt's greatest contribution is that he is able to take a historical incident of the fifties and place it in the context of that period by emphasizing McCarthy, the cold war with Russia, and the development of the hydrogen bomb. Then he asks the audience to judge from a viewpoint of sixties. This provides the detachment of the "cool" media.

The audience of the 1960's was conditioned by television to "cool" media. They were also conditioned to a new feeling of loyalty. Toffler points to examples of the professional man no longer having the feeling of belonging to the organization. Man has come to belong to himself rather than to the company; therefore, he is only selling the company his knowledge and skills. Man's loyalty is to his profession instead of to his organization. Kipphardt is not suggesting that Oppenheimer

worked for America by chance, or that his loyalty was to his profession of science, for that was not the attitude of the fifties. Kipphardt is, however, suggesting that if his play is viewed with the attitudes of society of the sixties, Oppenheimer can be seen as a victim of the state, for in the sixties loyalty to the organization could be questioned. Kipphardt reflected the society of the sixties, and presented a play that society was ready to accept.

The society of the sixties was marked by constant change. Man's thinking changed and one of the best examples of the results of change lies in the story of Oppenheimer. His security clearance was withdrawn. The man who had been praised by his country as the father of the atom bomb was thus publicly humiliated, yet only a few years later, in 1963, President Johnson presented Oppenheimer with the Enrico Fermi prize for services rendered to the atomic energy program. The conflict inherent in these facts is a conflict of today.

Kipphardt does not moralize but makes the very insolubility of this conflict the heart of his play. In notes in the program of the Lincoln Center Repertory production at the Vivian Beaumont Theater, Kipphardt relates:

Interestingly enough, writers of the so-called documentary drama have developed their techniques quite independently of one another as they were faced with the problem of bringing into the theatre major political themes. But I would say that there are certain themes dependent upon documentations which can hardly be handled by any other than the documentary approach. . . . I found that the problem of the contradictions between the grandiose development of the new sciences and the retarded development of our knowledge of society could not be portrayed as a parable or tale, but rather as a factual description, backed up by documentation. . . . But of course, I did want to use the extreme case of Oppenheimer to portray the contradictions and conflicts of the scientist in our age. And these should be equally applicable to other fields of activity.⁸⁴

Thus, Kipphardt has intentionally used the story of Oppenheimer to bring current history to the theatre. He has chosen the documentary mode, and he has skillfully managed to merge fact with art. To what extent he has influenced society cannot really be measured. But he certainly has presented a play that makes one think. And, only when man thinks, can change occur.

The Investigation

The Investigation, by Peter Weiss, opened simultaneously at Berlin's Freie Volksbuhne and in fifteen other German cities. The play is a stage documentary on the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials of 1963-64. Weiss attacks an entire nation by confronting them with the horrors of Auschwitz as seen through the eyes of the witnesses and the accused. It is a story that the world would like to forget; but Erwin Piscator, who directed the Berlin production, says it is a story that needed to be told:

A people who try to do away with a specific, extremely fatal segment of their past is on the way to becoming a people without a history. By refusing to confront this past, they are evading the necessary consequences, that is: learning a lesson from the past. . . . The reverberation among the spectators in mass media was so great, that the conscience of each and every person was emphatically drawn to Auschwitz, to its origins and its consequences.⁸⁵

Weiss used the story of Auschwitz to criticize the modern world. As will be seen, he presents the popular Marxist argument that the concentration camp is the ultimate and inevitable result of capitalism.

That Peter Weiss told the story of Auschwitz is not surprising to anyone who is familiar with his background. Peter Weiss is a German and a Jew. He was born near Berlin, the son of a Czechoslovakian Jew who converted to Christianity, and a Swiss mother. In 1934 the family

went to England, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, and in 1939 to Sweden. It is by choice that he writes in the German language. He escaped the fate of the Jews physically, but it is reasonable to assume that he did not escape emotionally. His play, The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade, was an international success. In the United States it won the major awards of the 1965-1966 season on Broadway. The New York production of The Investigation closely followed Marat/Sade in 1966.

The Investigation, however, was not as well received by theatre critics. Commenting on the New York production, John Gassner writes:

Didactic but not imaginative and actually a documentary exposition, The Investigation, . . . presented a chilling account of the horrors of Hitler's extermination camp at Auschwitz. The production evoked thought and emotion with its factuality. Without ever crystallizing into a play, its stark documentary presentation of the bestialization of the world was nonetheless evocative and frightening.⁸⁶

Whereas Gassner attacks both the form and the content of the play, Ernest Wendt, former editor of "Theatre Heute," attacks the thesis. In his review, "What is Investigated?" he suggests that Weiss is merely investigating "the degree of bestiality of which man is capable." He states:

. . . that the concentration camp is the ultimate and inevitable form of self-expression of the capitalistic system, is not only absurd but historically untenable. By linking this idea to the conclusion "that the heirs of these concerns today are achieving splendid annual balance sheets and are, as they themselves would say, entering on a new phase of expansion," Weiss is presumably referring to the possibility of a repetition of Auschwitz.⁸⁷

Wendt is also critical of Weiss's choice of the Auschwitz trial, which was concerned with the establishment of individual guilt, and suggests the trial of Eichmann in Jerusalem would have provided better historical

material, because in Eichmann's trial the historical aims were explored "in spite of scruples about its strictly legal justification."⁸⁸

The story is that of a trial, set in the present time in a court of law. From the testimony of the survivors comes a literal and sickening account of the procedures at Auschwitz; the torture, the cruelty, the inhumanity, the medical experimentation, the gas chambers and the mass cremations were all carried out with routine efficiency. In succeeding cantos, witnesses tell that the doctor who selected them "was very friendly," and that they got a feeling of confidence from seeing the Red Cross car. Little did they know then that the doctor was sorting those capable of working from those condemned to death, and the Red Cross car was carrying gas to the crematoriums. They tell of the cruelty. The accused Boger was in the political division--he saw a child eating an apple; he killed the child and then ate the apple. There were those who were able to survive by pretending to cooperate. Lili Tofler was not a Jew, but she was shot for attempting to smuggle a letter. SS Corporal Start was studying "Goethe's humanism" for an exam, but meanwhile, he shot a mother and children. Testimony reveals the murders at the Black Wall, the medical experiments, the gas chambers, and finally the crematoriums. The accused deny their actions, plead that they can't remember, or repeat that they were only following orders. Because they have led normal lives since the war, they neither understand nor feel their guilt.

Weiss had originally thought of writing the story in the form of a long poem patterned after Dante's Inferno, and retained the division of the play into "cantos," which were called Songs in the English version. The sequence of the "cantos" and their titles are basic to the

structure of the play. They permit Weiss to reveal not only the horrors of the camp from differing viewpoints, but also to show a progression. As the witnesses proceed to tell their story in a chronological order, an artistic effect is achieved through the emotional revulsion produced by the revelations and the subtle contrast of the coldness of the accused.

The viewpoint of the prisoners upon their arrival is presented in the first "canto," "The Song of the Platform," which vividly illustrates how their basic faith in humanity was met by the cruelty of the accused.

3rd Witness: There were 89 of us in the freight car

. . .
Many were sick
and eight were dead

. . .
The dead and the luggage
were thrown out of the cars

. . .
people were shouting for
their families their relatives
They were being beaten with clubs⁸⁹

In "The Song of the camp" the prisoners who walked "unsuspecting through the gate" and "saw the hundreds of ragged figures many of them starved down to skeletons" lost all hope. The scene proceeds to contrast the filth and inhumane treatment of the prisoners with the attitude of the accused.⁹⁰

3rd Witness: The straw was rotten
and it sifted down from the top
onto the lower bunks

. . .
The latrines kept getting stopped up

. . .
The stink from the latrines
mixed in with the smell
of smoke⁹¹

Everywhere in the camp, sanitation conditions were shocking.

8th Witness: In the quarantine camp there were rats
 They bit not only the corpses
 but also the critically ill

Furunculosis flourished in the camp
 Guards clubbed abscesses open
 until the skin peeled off to the bone⁹²

Even after the recitation of these conditions, the accused denied guilt.

Accused #7: Sometimes though I'd only lift my hand
 and somebody would fall over
 pretending he had fainted
 (The Accused laugh)

Why should I have to pay now
 for what I had to do then
 Everybody else did it too
 So why of all people
 Did they arrest me⁹³

The eighteen accused keep their names, but are symbolic of all that are guilty; the nine witnesses are representative of the four hundred and nine witnesses at the Frankfurt proceedings.

The character development of both witnesses and the accused is sketchy. The real characters are the people the witnesses describe, and even then the audience receives only the point of view of the story teller. One of the eleven "cantos" is "The Song of Lili Tofler." In a traditional play the character of Lili would probably have been portrayed with the emphasis on the humanism of her motives. She had written a letter to a prisoner, and when she tried to smuggle it in to the prisoner in a shipment of carrots intended for research, the letter was found. She refused to give the name of the prisoner, so she was tortured and killed.

Instead of developing Lili as a character, Weiss uses her story to link big business with the camp. He explores her job rather than her motives:

Judge: What kind of research

1st Witness: That I don't know
All I know about the camp
was that it had to do with
a large industrial complex
and that its various branches
employed prisoners as labor supply⁹⁴

Further testimony about Lili reveals that the prisoners were paid a dollar a day for the skilled worker, seventy-five cents for unskilled.

Their wages for the eleven hour day were paid to the camp administration. When they could no longer work, they were shot.

The popular Marxist argument that Auschwitz was the result of the capitalistic system is a basic thesis. Weiss not only writes with a Marxist bias, but also with the intensity of one involved with his subject. Auschwitz was of special importance to him because of his Jewish background. To stress the importance, he chose a free verse form which gives weight to the appalling facts of the play, and even in verse form the sickening details flood the senses with the enormity of Auschwitz. The language and arrangement of details are sufficient theatre without stage effects. The play has been produced with the use of projections, but the first productions were given as readings.

Wherever it has been produced, the play has provoked lively discussion. The use of protest themes and vivid language was characteristic of the sixties. The civil rights marches, the protest marches, and the commitment to right the ills of society were prevalent. There were protest songs, protest poetry and protest literature. Weiss embodies the political rebel, the youth of society with a firm commitment to bring about change.

Another reason that society accepted The Investigation was that

changes in technology and knowledge had created a desire for the whole story, an in-depth knowledge of the subject being studied. Weiss presents the atrocities of Auschwitz in depth. In fact, some critics suggest that he tells so many horror stories that he loses his effectiveness, but others have written that he remains effective because society has been conditioned to violence on television.

One feature of the generation gap that was easily discernible was the vocabulary of the younger generation. They sought new expletives, and words that were formerly reserved for toilet walls were bantered about as everyday language. The effect was to shock the older generation, but eventually much more vivid language became acceptable. In this climate, the intense descriptions of Weiss's play were acceptable.

Even the relating of violence and the intensifying of language does not prevent Weiss from creating a "cool" play. By his effective use of the documentary style, he turns a "hot" topic into a "cool" medium. He asks the audience to complete his characterizations by answering a basic and inescapable question about the citizen's relationship to the society in which he lives.

In conclusion, the force of Weiss's contribution to the theatre lies in his ability to reflect a segment of the society of the sixties. He has managed to tell the story that many said could not be told, and most importantly he has forced his viewers to think.

Soldiers

That Rolf Hochhuth's second documentary play opened in Berlin at the Freie Volksbuhne in 1967 was not by his choice. The play is about Winston Churchill, and Hochhuth had arranged to have it premiere in

England. The director of Britain's National Theatre, Sir Lawrence Olivier, and Kenneth Tynan had agreed to stage the play and had hoped to have Richard Burton play the role of Churchill; but the National Theatre Board turned it down because it "grossly maligned" Sir Winston.⁹⁵

Hochhuth's reason for wanting the play produced abroad was that he feared the German right-wing would use it as proof that the bombing of Dresden was equal to the horrors of Auschwitz. When the British production was canceled, he permitted it to be premiered in Berlin. The play caused nearly as much storm as The Deputy. As with The Deputy, Hochhuth confronted a popular world figure. This time he questioned the Allied bombings of civilians, and the death of General Sikorski, which he believed was a political assassination.

Soldiers, subtitled an Obituary for Geneva, opens amid the ruins of Coventry Cathedral in 1964, one hundred years after the signing of the first Geneva Convention. The Everyman figure, Commander Dorland, is rehearsing the play "The Little London Theatre of the World," a reenactment of the time in 1943 when Churchill sanctioned the saturation bombing of German cities, and when General Sikorski died in a plane crash. Dorland, already doomed to death by cancer, has written the play in atonement for his role in the bombings. He hopes to convince his own generation and his son's generation that the Convention regarding aerial warfare drafted by the Red Cross for the protection of cities should be given the status of international law. He hopes, perhaps, that this production on the occasion of the centenary of the Red Cross may also serve as a requiem for Geneva. Before the dress rehearsal begins, Dorland seeks guidance and justification from the Sculptor, the Air Marshall, his son, and others who cross the stage on their way to the Red

Cross dinner. The action is interrupted by the dress rehearsal.

The play within a play takes place in three acts. Churchill has determined a definite course of action. He becomes a tragic hero caught in the complexities of war. When Lord Cherwell, the atomic physicist, advocates victory at any cost, Churchill knows that his decisions affect the lives of millions. He has suffered over the decision to bomb civilians when his friend the Polish leader, General Sikorski, discovers the Katyn graves and threatens Churchill's relationship with Russia. General Sikorski is right in demanding the truth about the graves found at Katyn, but Churchill is not in a position to risk losing the support of Russia. Sikorski is not a politician and cannot be persuaded to wait. Soon after, Sikorski dies in a plane crash. Meanwhile, Bishop Bell wants to stop the bombing of defenseless people, but Churchill feels compelled to get the most out of his machinery of war. Then news of Sikorski's death is received, and as Churchill mourns his death, his staff faces the probability that Churchill was responsible for it. Bishop Bell comments that Sikorski was Churchill's friend, and Churchill replies:

Churchill: Men may be bound by friendship, nations only by interest:
a discovery which makes the greater man
the lesser human being:⁹⁶

The rehearsal has ended, and in an Epilogue, Dorland is justifying himself to his son when a telegram arrives. The play has been banned in England.

In the stage directions Hochhuth says that the prologue can be staged "as 'reality' or as a dream: persons and places in a trial of conscience" are as real as one wishes anyway. It is set in the ruins of Coventry, and the confusion of an orchestra rehearsal, a sculptor

working on the new cathedral, the stagehands, and those passing through complete a setting for the montage arrangement of conversations that Dorland seeks.

The complexities of war are reinforced by the conversations. In the opening scene, the ineffectiveness of the Red Cross is stressed by several representatives of the world leadership on their way to the Red Cross dinner. A Japanese civilian on crutches, who is Nagasaki's most publicized victim, speaks:

Japanese: all military men, no matter what their country--
 . . .
 all are agreed to accept the Red Cross draft
 only to make it disappear--this congress is a farce⁹⁷

Later in a conversation with his son, Dorland projects the same idea:

Dorland: . . . Airmen kill civilians
 as if the Red Cross simply did not exist.
 Yet only minutes later,
 when they are shot down and fall
 defenseless into the hands of the defenseless
 whom they have bombed:
 then the Red Cross exists all right--for them!⁹⁸

The humanistic detachment of the officers is shown by Weinmuller, the German representative, in a press conference. He quotes the philosophic observations of West German writer Reinhard Baumgardt.

Weinmuller: I quote: Behind the technical machinery of war,
the individual can no longer be identified.
The causal nexus of action and responsibility
has been broken.⁹⁹

Hochhuth refers to Weinmuller in the stage directions as a "philosophizing idiot." The Hague conventions could not protect Rotterdam, but it protects the man who destroyed it. Dorland reinforces the irony of humanistic detachment:

Dorland: Baumgardt's article of faith.
 War is "anonymous"--
 It is not individuals, not people with faces,
 we are aiming at . . . just a "population."¹⁰⁰

Throughout the prologue Dorland continues to comment on attitudes of war. To the argument that our side only did what the others did, he says:

Dorland: On the other hand, no soldier can sink lower
than to justify his own actions
by measuring them against Hitler's.¹⁰¹

The argument that the bomb was dropped to save an invasion, is answered as follows:

Dorland: But what we didn't know was that Japan
had been making offers of surrender
for months before the bombs were dropped,
but all on the one condition
(which, after the bombs had been dropped was granted)
that they should be allowed to retain their Emperor.
That the war had to last till the bomb was ready,
to sober up the Russians:¹⁰²

Thus, the complexities of war are reinforced in scene after scene.

Hochhuth uses this repetition of a basic thesis to maintain unity. He asserts that man is victimized by society through the vehicle of war, and uses Dorland as his voice. Before the rehearsal of the play within a play begins, he muses: "The technique of war also is making progress with the aid of technology and industry. War is not like the theater--it's the spectators who take the money." Finally, Hochhuth tries to punctuate, through the playwright, Dorland, that the "theater isn't a museum. History only ceases to be academic when it can illustrate for us and now man's inhumanity to man."

Once the rehearsal begins, the theme is reinforced again. Not only Churchill but the people around him ponder the meanings of war. His secretary, Helen, calls it "the worst inhumanity," and Bishop Bell is not quite as definite when he says, "I cannot condemn the war, only its worst inhumanities." Finally Churchill projects the leader's position:

Churchill: But does my office not oblige me still,
 each day to send young men
 who wish for nothing but to go on living
 to battle and to death.¹⁰³

Whereas the structural unity is maintained through theme, the artistic unity is maintained through the use of symbolism and staging. Dorland symbolizes mankind. His name comes from that of Dorlandus, who was the probable author of "Everyman." The Red Cross symbolizes those who would provide justice to humanity. Sikorski symbolizes those who do not understand the games of war, his objective is to "force Stalin morally," and Churchill, the realistic politician, tells him that "every schoolboy learns the foe you cannot conquer, you must court." Lord Cherwell, the atomic physicist who advocates victory at any cost, is the villain of the play, and some critics have said he symbolizes the devil. The sculptor "inhabits the twilight zone of allegory." He is symbolic of the messenger of death, even though Dorland learns of his illness from his doctor.

Artistic effectiveness is also achieved through the use of projections and stage business. One of the most effective uses of projections is the scene in which Dorland projects his feeling of guilt by reminiscing about when he had to bail out over Dresden. He was captured and forced to help remove the bodies of the civilians he had helped to kill. As he speaks, the picture of the woman whom he describes is projected behind him.

Dorland: This woman sat there, where the heat had thrown her down,
 the blast of the firestorm all around her--
 eyes and flesh melted away,
 only the bridge of the nose, inexplicably,
 was still covered with skin
 as if fireproofed,
 And her hair had been preserved . . .¹⁰⁴

Hochhuth uses stage business with equal effectiveness. In the stage directions he describes the Japanese civilian:

. . . on crutches. The hair on one side of his head has been permanently burned off and his scalp is covered with various colorful scars. He is a professor who, as Nagasaki's most-photographed and publicized cripple, has been traveling to congresses like this . . .¹⁰⁵

Later, stage business gives a view of Churchill as he enters dripping from the bath "that the harmless element of laughter shall for the length of a heart beat, reveal the hidden depths below--this is something the actor can achieve, the author cannot describe."¹⁰⁶

Soldiers, like The Deputy, is an example of a play written in the style of the documentary theatre. It achieves its structural unity from the repetition of its basic assertion that man is victimized by war, and it manages to merge art with fact by the use of symbolism, stage business and setting. The chief distinguishing element of Soldiers from that of other documentaries is the amount of history covered and the number of questions posed. Hochhuth has shown considerable skill in handling so many facts without confusing his audience. The play is truly a document in the documentary form. It is located in the ruins left by the German bombs. It explores the horror of the burning of Dresden; it centers on the Polish graves at Katyn, and it presents the English Prime Minister. One of the first characters to appear on stage is the victim of Nagasaki. The questions that it poses are related to the tragedies of war and man's sense of guilt.

Even though it has more definition in its characters than most of the documentary plays, it is a "cool" play. It poses question after question and leaves the audience to fill in the answers. Like other plays in the documentary mode, it seeks an intellectual response.

Soldiers was first produced in 1967 when the Vietnam war was an international issue, Ban the Bomb campaigns were at their height in the United States, and anti-war literature was popular with the students in high school and on the college campus. The play's subject matter and its protest appealed to the political consciousness of the sixties. It also provided in-depth coverage when depth and quantification of facts was in demand. It stressed loyalty to mankind rather than nationalism. It called for an international agreement on protection of civilians from war. It questioned the morals of war, and asked if morality can be different in war and in peace. All of its questions reflect the sixties.

Hochhuth's greatest contribution to the theatre with Soldiers is that it shows a refinement of the documentary mode in that he has tempered the starkness of the structure by providing a setting for his montage, and has allowed some character development and narrative line in his play within a play. Yet, it is a documentary that leaves important questions unanswered, and that is its claim to timeliness.

CHAPTER VI

DOCUMENTARY THEATRE: A REFLECTION OF THE SIXTIES

In the 1960's, at a time when observers of world history were discouraged with the outlook of international events, a time when the spirit of violence intensified and major problems seemed far from solution, a new mode of theatre appeared which the critics labeled "documentary." It was a change from the theatre of the absurd which had gained attention in the fifties, and it was a definite departure from the traditional mode which had begun with Ibsen. It was identifiable by its thematic arrangement of a social and political subject from history which was designed by the playwright to merge fact with art. It created considerable controversy with both its fact, which was often an attack on a figure from contemporary history, and its art, which was a definite departure from the traditional mode.

The new mode was an especially suitable form to express the society of the sixties. Its most recognized plays were The Deputy, In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer, The Investigation, and Soldiers. Each of these plays is political, each deals with a subject from current history, and each one makes a protest. It is as protest theatre that the documentaries reflect the sixties. The society of the sixties was distinguished by the amount of change that occurred. Its mood changed from the apathy of the fifties to one of political consciousness, and along with political consciousness came a need to become involved.

Many became involved through protests. There were protest marches, protest literature, and, sometimes, just protests.

As documentary theatre has been called protest theatre, it has also been called a theatre of fact. All of its plays are based upon facts taken from documents. The playwright is concerned with interpreting and arranging the facts. These plays adhere closely to the original documents and present an in-depth view of the subject. Actually, Peter Weiss was accused by some of presenting more facts than the audience could absorb. This might have been true in the fifties, but by the sixties, television had created a demand for depth and quantification of fact. Fiction became a less important part of the publishing business, and factual material arranged in literary styles began to appear. An outstanding example is Truman Capote's In Cold Blood.

A basic theme of the documentary theatre is man victimized by society. It is a theme that would hardly have been acceptable a few years earlier. By the sixties, however, things had changed; they had changed so rapidly that change became the distinguishing sign of the sixties. Even man's loyalties changed: from his company to his profession, from nationalism to humanism. It was this change that allowed Hochhuth to attack the Pope and Churchill, and that allowed Weiss and Kipphardt to ponder individual responsibility. Kipphardt provides the best example of man's changing attitude towards loyalty with his play about J. Robert Oppenheimer wherein he points out the irony of the United States' attitude during the fifties. Oppenheimer was praised for his loyalty when he made the atom bomb but was denied a security clearance when he failed to show enthusiasm for the hydrogen bomb.

Emphasis on character development is not a part of the documentary.

Characters are usually sketchy or representative of the group. For example, Hochhuth groups his minor characters to be played by one actor because it doesn't matter "which uniform one wears." The Deputy was criticized for the lack of development of the character of the Pope. In Soldiers, Churchill is treated with more depth of characterization, but the emphasis is on his responsibilities as a world leader in the time of war rather than on his role as a man. This emphasis on the group rather than the individual was one of the major changes in society during the sixties.

The structure of the plays draws unity from a thematic arrangement of the subject. The living newspaper of the thirties did the same thing, but today's documentary usually uses a montage arrangement that was avoided in the thirties. The print-oriented audience was accustomed to a chronological order and an episodic development of scenes was advocated. In the sixties television had created an audience which was aurally oriented. Also, viewers were accustomed to switching the television from situation comedy to news of violence and tragedy, to live sports coverage, all in a short time span. Thus the audience of the sixties could readily follow a montage arrangement.

As structural unity was dependent on theme, artistic unity was often achieved through the use of stagecraft and language. Both the Oppenheimer play and Soldiers made extensive use of projections. None of these plays uses traditional scenery or staging. The proscenium arch was replaced by the thrust stage, the stage flat was replaced by projections, and the off stage voice became the loud speaker. Once again this change from the traditional reflects the society of the sixties.

The language is intense, stark, and often brutally frank. It is softened only slightly by poetry, for poetry when absorbed creates images beyond those that can be expressed in prose. The Investigation illustrates that the language without the visual staging can be just as successful. The original productions of The Investigation were presented as readings. Also, it is likely that the intensity of the plays would have been too much for an audience to bear, had not the sixties already experienced a change in attitude toward language. Traditional language usage changed during the sixties, and, to the shock of many, taboo subjects and words became everyday language.

The documentary plays sought to appeal to the intellect rather than the emotions. Although the plays of the thirties had tended to use "feature" material and make an emotional appeal through dramatization, the documentary is concerned with fact and an intellectual appeal. Emotional appeals are used only as a stimulus to thinking, and the question is always dominant. For example, Kipphardt uses projections to point up the questions in the Oppenheimer play. The audience is asked to think, and it was the many changes in society--especially the proliferation of knowledge--that resulted in a change not only in man's thinking but in his willingness to think.

The productions of the documentary plays have shown an awareness of media. They have not only made media their primary stagecraft, but also the plays themselves have appeared in more than one medium. For example, In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer was originally written as a television play, and it appeared as a radio play before it was produced on the stage. Even the stage production has been given both as a reading and as a multi-media show. The sixties was distinguished by

the development of electronic media. Toffler suggests that no longer can man's society be reflected in any one medium. Interestingly, the documentary theatre is a mode that adapts well to differing media. It is indeed a reflection of the sixties. Its subject and materials and the art form in which they are arranged are all reflections of the society of the sixties.

Now that the sixties have passed one can only speculate on what will become of the documentary theatre that so vividly reflected those years. Even though the documentary is a "new" mode of theatre, it owes a part of its form to the theatre before it. As Hallie Flanagan said, "All so-called new forms . . . borrowed from many sources." There are similarities to the living newspaper and the epic theatre of Bertolt Brecht. Some have heralded the documentary as showing the theatre the way out from the theatre of the absurd and others have proclaimed that its playwrights have gone beyond Brecht. It seems reasonable to assume that society has continued to change and new form will be created to record the seventies. The documentary mode has become one of many modes from which future playwrights may borrow.

FOOTNOTES

¹Walter Kerr, How Not to Write a Play (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1955), p. 17.

²Martin Esslin, Reflections (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969), p. 127.

³Peter Weiss, "The Material and the Models: Notes Toward a Definition of Documentary Theatre," trans. Heinz Bernard, Theatre Quarterly, 1 (1971), pp. 41-42.

⁴Weiss, p. 42.

⁵Michael Kowal, "Kipphardt and the Documentary Theatre," American-German Review, 33 (June/July 1967), pp. 20-21.

⁶Erwin Piscator, The Political Theatre, as quoted by Heinar Kipphardt, "Heinar Kipphardt Pays Tribute to Erwin Piscator," World Drama, 42 (1968), p. 303.

⁷Heinar Kipphardt, "Heinar Kipphardt pays tribute to Erwin Piscator," World Drama, 42 (1968), p. 305.

⁸Martin Esslin, Reflections, p. 133.

⁹Esslin, Reflections, p. 135.

¹⁰Marios Ploritis, ed., "Documentary Theatre Here and There," World Drama, 42 (1968), p. 391.

¹¹Weiss, p. 41.

¹²Claus Zilliagus, "Documentary Drama: Form and Content," Comparative Drama, 6 (1972), p. 237.

¹³Weiss, p. 43.

¹⁴Kipphardt, p. 41.

¹⁵Kerr, p. 84.

¹⁶Kerr, p. 82.

¹⁷Dan Isaac, "Theatre of Fact," The Drama Review, 15 (1971), p. 132.

¹⁸Charles Sheldon, "German Writers Between Generations," American-German Review, 35 (June/July 1969), p. 46.

¹⁹Zilliacus, p. 224.

²⁰Oscar Brockett, Perspectives on Contemporary Theatre (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), p. 24.

²¹Weiss, p. 42.

²²Oscar Brockett, The Theatre: An Introduction (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 45-46.

²³Isaac, p. 109.

²⁴Zilliacus, p. 224.

²⁵Hallie Flanagan, Arena (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1940), p. 54.

²⁶Flanagan, p. 64.

²⁷Arthur Arent, "The Techniques of the Living Newspaper," reprinted from Theatre Arts (November 1938), Theatre Quarterly 1 (Oct/Dec 1971), pp. 58-59.

²⁸Bernd Naumann, Auschwitz, a Report on the Proceedings against Robert Karl Ludwig Mulka and others before the Court at Frankfurt (New York, Washington, London: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1966), pp. 212-213 as reported by Gerda Breit, "Peter Weiss' Personal Experiences as Reflected in his Works," (thesis, Denver University, 1969), p. 80.

²⁹Peter Weiss, The Investigation, trans. Jon Swan and Ulu Grosbard (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 23.

³⁰Arent, p. 59.

³¹Flanagan, p. 70.

³²Arent, p. 59.

³³Flanagan, p. 65.

³⁴Whitman Willson, Bread and Cruses (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 172.

³⁵Kerr, p. 16.

³⁶Alvin Toffler, Future Shock (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 15.

³⁷Hayden Carruth, "Literature," The 1967 World Book Year Book (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1967), p. 396.

³⁸Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: The New American Library, 1964), pp. 283-284.

³⁹McLuhan, p. 36.

⁴⁰McLuhan, p. 36.

⁴¹McLuhan, p. 43.

⁴²Toffler, p. 113.

⁴³Brockett, Perspectives, p. 47.

⁴⁴George Paloczi-Horvath, Youth Up in Arms: A Political and Social World Survey 1955-1970 (New York: David McKay Company, 1971), p. 80.

⁴⁵Paloczi-Horvath, p. 82.

⁴⁶Paloczi-Horvath, p. 204.

⁴⁷Toffler, p. 413.

⁴⁸McLuhan, p. 61.

⁴⁹McLuhan, p. 237.

⁵⁰McLuhan, p. 20.

⁵¹Martin Esslin, The Theatre of the Absurd (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1961), p. 303.

⁵²Esslin, Reflections, p. 184.

⁵³Esslin, Reflections, pp. 184-189.

⁵⁴John Willett, The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht (Norfolk: New Directions, 1959), p. 110.

⁵⁵Alan Lewis, The Contemporary Theatre (New York: Crown Publishers, 1971), p. 222.

⁵⁶John Willett, p. 117.

⁵⁷Charles Hampton, "Verfremdhanseffekt," Modern Drama, 14 (1971), p. 340.

⁵⁸Lewis, p. 234.

⁵⁹Esslin, Theatre of the Absurd, pp. 64-65.

⁶⁰Esslin, Theatre of the Absurd, p. 61.

⁶¹Esslin, Perspectives, pp. 203-204.

⁶²Eric Bentley, The Storm over "The Deputy", (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 8.

⁶³Rolf Hochhuth, The Deputy, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, (New York: Grove Press, 1964), pp. 16-17.

⁶⁴Ibid, p. 40.

⁶⁵Ibid, p. 100.

⁶⁶Hochhuth, p. 25.

⁶⁷Hochhuth, p. 52.

⁶⁸Hochhuth, p. 55.

⁶⁹Hochhuth, pp. 120-121.

⁷⁰Rolf Hochhuth, "Patricia Marx: Interview with Rolf Hochhuth," trans. Joan Simon first broadcast WNYC, The Storm over "The Deputy" (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 53.

⁷¹Hochhuth, The Deputy, p. 12.

⁷²Hochhuth, p. 32.

⁷³Heinar Kipphardt, In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer, trans. John Roberts (New York: Hill and Wang, 1968), p. 5.

⁷⁴Kipphardt, p. 5.

⁷⁵Kipphardt, p. 10.

⁷⁶Kipphardt, p. 10.

⁷⁷Kipphardt, p. 22.

⁷⁸Kipphardt, p. 32.

⁷⁹Kipphardt, p. 71.

⁸⁰Kipphardt, p. 20.

⁸¹Kipphardt, p. 25.

⁸²Kipphardt, p. 31.

⁸³Urs Jenny, "Dramatized Trial Records: Heinar Kipphardt's 'Oppenheimer,'" German Theatre Today (Germany: Friedrich Verlag, 1967), p. 32.

⁸⁴Heinar Kipphardt, The Best Plays of 1968-1969, ed. Otis Guernsey, Jr., (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1969), pp. 235-236.

⁸⁵Erwin Piscator, "Post Investigation," printed with permission of Ludwig Hoffmann, World Theatre, 42 (1968), p. 345.

⁸⁶John Gassner, "Theater," The 1967 World Book Year Book (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1967), p. 524.

⁸⁷Ernst Wendt, "What is Investigated?: Peter Weiss' 'The Investigation,'" German Theatre Today (Germany: Friedrich Verlag, 1967), p. 40.

⁸⁸Wendt, p. 38.

⁸⁹Weiss, The Investigation, pp. 11-12.

⁹⁰Weiss, Investigation, p. 35.

⁹¹Weiss, Investigation, pp. 38-39.

⁹²Weiss, Investigation, pp. 47-49.

⁹³Weiss, Investigation, pp. 54-55.

⁹⁴Weiss, Investigation, pp. 124-25.

⁹⁵Lewis Gintler, "Churchill a Villain," American-German Review, 33 (June/July 1967), p. 19.

⁹⁶Rolf Hochhuth, Soldiers: an Obituary for Geneva, trans. Robert MacDonald (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 216.

⁹⁷Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 17.

⁹⁸Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 37.

⁹⁹Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 31.

¹⁰⁰Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 33.

¹⁰¹Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 34.

¹⁰²Hochhuth, Soldiers, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰³Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 216.

¹⁰⁴Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 25.

¹⁰⁵Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 16.

¹⁰⁶Hochhuth, Soldiers, p. 165.

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THE DOCUMENTARY THEATRE:
A REFLECTION OF THE SIXTIES

by

SUE QUINN FAUBION

B. S., Kansas State University, 1951

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This study examines a mode of theatre labeled "documentary." It is an attempt to analyze that mode and the society of the sixties to determine if indeed the documentary plays are a reflection of the society of the sixties.

It begins with an investigation of the definition of the term "documentary" as defined by the playwrights and critics. Three German playwrights are identified as the first to gain world wide attention with the style of the documentary. Peter Weiss's definition of fourteen points is considered as are Heinar Kipphardt's writings about the mode and his quotations from the writings of Erwin Piscator. Rolf Hochhuth's denial of the intention to write documentaries is included. An attempt is made to show that the playwrights are not in complete agreement on the matter of definition, but that by examination of their definitions in the light of the elements of theme, materials, and structure a working definition of documentary theatre can be obtained. Documentary theatre is the thematic arrangement of a social and political subject from history designed by the playwright to merge fact with art.

Second, this study examines the documentaries of the thirties as evidenced in the work of the Federal Theatre's "Living Newspaper" and compares and contrasts these with the documentaries of the sixties.

Then the society of the sixties is considered. In Future Shock Alvin Toffler reports that the society of the sixties is a rapidly changing society, and Marshall McLuhan presents recognizable results of change in Understanding Media. The rapid rate of change affected man's thinking, his loyalties, and his attitudes.

Consideration is given to the theatre of the immediate past with

particular attention to the theatre of the absurd which gained the attention of the theatre world in the fifties and to the work of Bertolt Brecht in the "epic" theatre.

Finally, an attempt is made to examine the first plays of this mode and to show that they reflect the society of the sixties. The plays chosen for study were The Deputy by Rolf Hochhuth, In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer by Heinar Kipphardt, The Investigation by Peter Weiss, and Soldiers by Rolf Hochhuth.

The conclusion is reached that these plays reflect the society of the sixties in both their structure and their style.