

FOLKWAYS FH 5433

# SONGS OF HANNS EISLER

SUNG AND ACCOMPANIED BY ERIC BENTLEY FOLKWAYS RECORDS FH 5433

SONGS OF HANNS EISLER / SUNG BY ERIC BENTLEY

## SONGS OF HANNS EISLER

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

Viennese Song (Anon.)  
Und Endlich Sticht (Altenberg)  
The Love Market; Failure in Loving (Heine)  
There's Nothing Quite Like Money  
Change the World; Supply & Demand  
On the Sprinkling of Gardens; On Suicide

The Wise Woman and the Soldier; Song of the Moldau  
And What Did She Get?; Solidaritätslied  
On the World's Kindness  
Berlin, 1919 (Anon.)  
Das Lied vom Trockenbrot (Mehring)  
Tree & the Branches

Easter, 1935; Ballad of Marie Sanders  
January 7, 1937 (Remo); To the Little Radio  
A German Soldier at Stalingrad; German Miserere  
Song of a German Mother; Homecoming, 1945  
The Poplar on Karlsplatz; Keiner oder alle!  
Peace Song (Meruda-Brecht)

Library of Congress Catalog Number: R 64-1385

FOLKWAYS FH 5433



COVER DRAWING BY B. F. DOLBIN

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



FOLKWAYS RECORDS ALBUM # FH5433  
Copyright © 1964 by Eric Bentley.  
(Previous copyright of individual lyrics is indicated  
at the foot of the text concerned.)

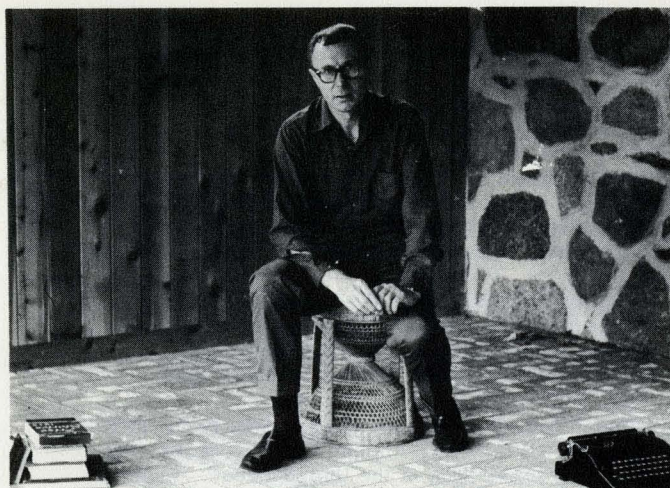
## SONGS OF HANNS EISLER

Sung and accompanied by ERIC BENTLEY

The English lyrics are all by Eric Bentley and, except where otherwise indicated, are based on the German of Bertolt Brecht. German lyrics are by Bertolt Brecht except as otherwise indicated.

The accompaniments are played either on a Baldwin piano or on an old Mason and Hamlin harmonium. Some are reductions of orchestral scores. Many have been specially adapted for Mr. Bentley's use.

HANNS EISLER, 1898-1962, is at last emerging from the relative obscurity imposed upon him by political prejudice. Born in Leipzig, he was later to show himself one of the most gifted pupils of Arnold Schoenberg in Vienna. In 1924 he won the Prix de Rome. Aligning himself with the pro-Communist Left, he was known to large numbers of listeners in the Thirties, but only as the composer of militantly political songs such as "Comintern" and "The United Front." An exile from Hitler Germany, he visited the United States in 1935, and came for what might have proved a permanent stay in 1940. But 1947 was a year of crisis for the Eisler family. Hanns's brother Gerhard was denounced as a Soviet agent by -- among other people -- their sister Ruth Fischer. Gerhard Eisler would later find his way back to Germany by jumping bail in New York and boarding the Polish ship, The Batory. Accusations fell on Hanns Eisler too. More than two hundred pages of the published records of the House Unamerican Affairs Committee are devoted to him in 1947. He was allowed to leave this country voluntarily, avoiding actual deportation. His last years were spent in East Germany where again he became known for the "official" type of composition: he did the music for the East German national anthem. Only now, after Hanns Eisler's death, is the world beginning to realize what were his actual contributions to music and theatre. He wrote scores to a number of Brecht plays -- scores that are on the plane of Kurt Weill without being imitative of Weill. He composed a good deal of purely instrumental music. Then there is his Lenin Cantata, highly praised by certain critics, but so far only heard in the United States on a very imperfect tape-recording used by Eric Bentley in the "Bentley on Brecht" series as produced by Pacifica Radio. It is not known if he finished the opera Johann Faust, the published libretto of which got him in trouble on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Finally, Eisler was a prolific composer of songs of very many kinds. The present album presents a choice of these.



Eric Bentley

Some of Eisler's songs, naturally, are only for professional singers to sing. But many are songs for the theatre, the cabaret, the meeting hall, or the street. ERIC BENTLEY has made his selection from these latter.

It was as a student of Bertolt Brecht's works, as indeed their chief translator and interpreter in the English-speaking world, that Eric Bentley came to the music of Hanns Eisler. His album "Bentley on Brecht" (Riverside Records) has already reached a large public.

Born in England and brought up there, Eric Bentley took a doctorate in comparative literature at Yale and has subsequently taught at universities in the West, the South, the Middle West, and the East. He gave the Christian Gauss Seminar lectures at Princeton and the Norton Lectures at Harvard. He is now Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia.

But all that is only one side of Eric Bentley's life. Another has been given to the world of theatre. For some years he was dramatic critic of The New Republic. He adapted Brecht's Good Woman of Setzuan for the Phoenix Theatre, and Mother Courage for Broadway. A Man's a Man in his adaptation has been called the best Brecht so far seen outside Germany -- and has incidentally been put on disc by Spoken Arts. Folkways is confident that he will prove the ideal mediator between these Songs of Hanns Eisler and the American public.

Discography: Up to 1963 only the best-known of Eisler's songs -- the political songs of the Thirties -- seem to have been put on disc in the United States. In the Thirties the Timely Recording Company issued a couple of ten-inch discs, 78 RPM, which offered three Eisler songs sung by "the New Singers" with Mordecai Baumann as soloist: "In Praise of Learning," "Solidarity Song," and "Rise Up." The English lyrics of the first two are printed in full in the booklet issued with the BRECHT BEFORE THE UNAMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE album (Folkways, FD 5531). The third was more widely known as "Comintern" and, in the English of V. J. Jerome, reads as follows:

Rise up, fields and workshops! Come out, workers,  
farmers!  
To battle, march onward! March onward, world  
stormers!  
Eyes sharp on your guns, red banners unfurled,  
Advance, proletarians, to conquer the world!



Oh you who are missing, oh comrades in dungeons  
 You're with us, you're with us, this day of our  
 vengeance:  
 No fascist can daunt us, no terror can halt!  
 All lands will take flame with the fire of revolt!

The Comintern calls you! Raise high Soviet banner!  
 In steeled ranks to battle! Raise sickle and hammer!  
 Our answer: red legions! We rise in our might!  
 Our answer: red storm troops! We lunge to the fight!

From Russia victorious, the workers' October  
 Comes storming reaction's regime the world over.  
 We're coming with Lenin for Bolshevik work  
 From London, Havana, Berlin, and New York!

A fourth Eisler song is included in SONGS OF THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR, Volume One (Folkways, FH 5436). This is "Song of the United Front", from the sequence "Six Songs for Democracy," originally issued in the Thirties by Keynote Recordings. Lotte Lenya sings "Song of a German Mother" in the Columbia Album BRECHT ON BRECHT, released in 1963, and in his own BENTLEY ON BRECHT (Riverside -- also a 1963 release) Eric Bentley sings "Easter 1935," "The Ballad of Marie Sanders," "To the Little Radio," "Supply and Demand," "Song of a German Mother," "The Wise Woman and the Soldier," and "Keiner oder Alle!" The broadest selection of Eisler work ever heard in this country was broadcast in Eric Bentley's radio series "Bentley on Brecht" (Pacifica Radio) but most of this material is not otherwise accessible to the public.

#### Bibliography

Eisler, Hanns:

Composing for the Films. Oxford University Press, 1947.

Fischer, Ernst:

The Necessity of Art. Penguin Books, 1963.  
 (Not of course a book about Eisler but one which touches on him significantly.)

Lowenfelds, Walter:

"Eisler on Schoenberg: a Conversation with Walter Lowenfelds," in Saturday Review, August 31, 1963.

Tretyakov, Sergei:

"Hanns Eisler," in International Literature, No. 5, 1933-1934. Reprinted at the expense of the American taxpayer in "Hearings Regarding Hanns Eisler," House Unamerican Activities Committee, Government Printing Office, 1947.

#### SIDE I, Band 1: VIENNESE SONG (1955)

Anonymous

O Captain, O Captain, put an end to my woe!  
 My beloved's in the army, won't you please let him go?  
 Your beloved, maybe, I can restore  
 But first you must answer these riddles four.

Firstly, where is there a king with no land?  
 Second, where is there an earth with no sand?  
 Thirdly, where is there a house with no dish?  
 Fourthly, where is there much water but no fish?

Firstly, in the card pack there's a king but no land.

Secondly, in a flower vase there is earth but no sand.

Thirdly, a snail's shell is a house with no dish.  
 And fourthly, my tears make much water but no fish.

#### SIDE I, Band 2: Und endlich stirbt... (undated)

Peter Altenberg

Und endlich stirbt die Sehnsucht doch  
 Wie Blüten sterben im Kellerloch  
 Die täglich auf ein bisschen Sonne warten.  
 Wie Tiere sterben die man lieblos hält  
 Und alles Unbetreute in der Welt.  
 Man fragt nicht mehr, wo wird sie sein?  
 Ruhig erwacht man, ruhig schläft man ein.  
 Wie in verwehte Jugentage blickst du zurück  
 Und irgend jemand sagt dir leise: 's ist dein Glück.  
 Da denkt man, dass es vielleicht wirklich so ist.  
 Wundert sich still, dass man doch nicht froh ist.

(Literal translation: -

And finally yearning does die all the same, as flowers die down in the cellar when waiting daily for a little sun, as animals die when kept without love, and everything uncared for in the world. One no longer asks where it may be. One wakes calmly, calmly one goes to sleep. You look back as at bygone days of youth, and someone whispers to you: it is your good fortune. And one concludes that this is perhaps really the case. Yet in silence one is surprised that, even so, one is not happy.)

Peter Altenberg was a well-known figure in the Vienna of half a century ago. He was a Wildean wit and wrote somewhat Wildean *fin de siècle* verses.

#### SIDE I, Band 3: THE LOVE MARKET (1934)

At seventeen I went to market  
 The market where what's sold is love  
 They told me it was good experience  
 Much was bad, God knows, but that's the way it goes.  
 Sometimes I told'em where they could get off.

God be praised, it all will soon be over,  
 Love included and the heartache and fear.  
 Where are the tears of Friday evening?  
 Where are the snows of yesteryear?

Yes, you learn to play that market  
 With increased facility  
 Selling your embraces wholesale  
 Though your failings may slowly fade away  
 If you hand'em out too generously.  
 God be praised, etc.

Study, as you may, that market  
 Haggle as you also may,  
 Selling kisses, and for peanuts,  
 Easy, that it ain't, still I've no complaint,  
 Though we don't get younger day by day.  
 God be praised, etc.

This is "Nanna's Song" from Brecht's play ROUND HEADS, PEAK HEADS OR RICH AND RICH MAKE GOOD COMPANY, A THRILLER, which appeared in English in International Literature, Moscow, May 1937.

#### SIDE I, Band 4: FAILURE IN LOVING (undated)

Heinrich Heine

Sometimes I think when secret longing  
 Is like a ferment in your eyes  
 I know what your misfortune is:  
 Failure in living, failure in loving.



You look so sad nor am I giving  
You your childhood and youth again.  
**There is no cure for your heart's pain:**  
**Failure in loving, failure in living.**

This little song is grouped by Eisler along with the Altenberg and the two songs from **ROUND HEADS, PEAK HEADS** and a couple of songs not in this album under the collective title: **SEVEN SONGS ABOUT LOVE.**

**SIDE I, Band 5: THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE MONEY (1934)**

They say the sight of moonlight on the water  
Makes the maiden heart go pit-a-pat  
And they talk about a man's appearance  
Knocking women flat. Don't give me that:  
For a girl's knee only sags  
At the sight of money bags.  
If Jack never spends a penny  
Then how can Jill love Jack?  
But if Jack spends lots on Jill then  
How can Jill not love him back?  
For there's nothing quite like money  
As an aphrodisiac.

You'll love the sight of moonlight on the water  
When you've got some money in your purse.  
What's the use of man's or woman's beauty  
If you're mean and simply won't disburse?  
For a girl's knee only sags  
At the sight of money bags.  
Full of young love's ecstasy  
How should Jill and how should Jack  
Make love on empty stomachs?  
It cannot be done, alack.  
Food's our central heat and money  
Is our aphrodisiac.

Like "The Love Market" this song is from **ROUND HEADS, PEAK HEADS**. It is sung by Madame Cornamontis, owner of a "cafe."

**SIDE I, Band 6: CHANGE THE WORLD IT NEEDS IT (1930)**

With whom would the right-minded man not sit  
down  
To help the right?  
And what medicine would be too bad  
To a dying man?  
And what baseness would you not commit  
Could you rid the earth of all baseness?  
And if in the end you change the whole world  
For what task are you too good?

Sink down in the slime  
Embrace the butcher  
But change the world  
It needs it.

Who are you?

Copyright (c) 1956, 1960, by Eric Bentley

Sung by the Chorus in Brecht's **THE MEASURES TAKEN**, the text of which is to be found in Eric Bentley's *The Modern Theatre* (Doubleday Anchor), Volume Six.

**SIDE I, Band 7. SUPPLY AND DEMAND (1930)**

There is rice down the river.  
In the provinces up the river  
The people need rice.  
If we leave the rice in the warehouse  
It will cost them more.  
Those who pull the rice barge  
Will then get much less rice.  
For me the rice will then be even cheaper.  
What is rice, actually?

Do I know, do you know,  
What's this thing called rice?  
God only knows what rice is  
I only know its price.

When winter comes the coolies all need clothing.  
One must buy all the cotton and then keep  
A firm hold on it.  
When the cold weather comes then  
Clothing will cost more.  
These cotton-spinning mills  
Pay too high wages.  
There's far too much cotton anyway.  
What is cotton, actually?

Do I know, do you know,  
What's this thing called cotton?  
God only knows what cotton is  
I only know its price.

Men take too much feeding.  
That's why they are so expensive.  
For the making of food  
Men are needed.  
The cooks made the food cheaper  
But those eat it  
Make it expensive.  
There are too few men around anyway.  
What is a man, actually?

Do I know, do you know,  
What's this thing called a man?  
God only knows what a man is  
I only know his price.

Copyright (c) 1956, 1960, by Eric Bentley

Also from **THE MEASURES TAKEN**. Sung by  
The Trader.

**SIDE I, Band 8: On the Sprinkling of Gardens (1942)**

O springling of gardens!  
O sprinkling to encourage green!  
Watering the thirsty bushes  
Give more than enough!

And do not forget the shrubbery  
Even it bears no fruit and is worn out!  
Do not forget, between the flowers, the weeds  
For they too feel thirst!

Now you may water just the freshest lawns  
Or just what's very scorched  
And the naked ground -- refresh the naked  
ground!

Not all the Brecht-Eisler lyrics are about Hitler!

**SIDE I, Band 9: ON SUICIDE (1939)**

In such a country and at such a time  
There should be no melancholy evenings.



Even high bridges over the rivers  
And the hours between the night and morning  
And the long, long wintertime.  
All these are dangerous,  
For in view of all the misery  
People just throw their unbearable lives away.

Copyright (c) 1947, 1948, 1961, by Eric Bentley.

The lyric is from Brecht's play THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN, of which the text is found in PARABLES FOR THE THEATRE (Evergreen Books). The singer is Shen Te, the heroine.

SIDE I, Band 10: THE WISE WOMAN AND  
THE SOLDIER (1928)

A shotgun will shoot and a jackknife will knife  
If you waded in the water 'twill drown you  
Keep away from the ice if you want my advice  
Said the wise woman to the soldier.

But the young soldier, he loaded his gun  
And he reached for his knife and he started to run  
For marching never could hurt him.  
From the north to the south we will march through  
the land  
With knife at side and gun in hand  
That's what the soldiers told the woman.

Woe to him who defies the advice of the wise  
If you waded in the water 'twill drown you  
Don't ignore what I say or you'll rue it one day  
Said the wise woman to the soldier.

But the young soldier his knife at his side  
And his gun in his hand, he steps into the tide  
For water never could hurt him.  
When the new moon is shining on shingle roofs white  
We are all coming back, go and pray for that night  
That's what the soldiers told the woman.

Then the wise woman spoke: You will vanish like  
smoke  
And his glorious deeds will not warm me  
And just watch the smoke fly! O God don't let him  
die!  
Said the wise woman to the soldier.

But the young soldier his knife at his side  
And his gun in his hand is swept out by the tide  
He waded in the water and it drowned him.  
And the lad who defied the wise woman's advice  
When the new moon shone floated down with the ice.  
So what could the soldiers tell the woman?

The wise woman spoke: he has vanished like smoke  
And his glorious deeds did not warm you  
You ignored what I say and you rue it today  
Said the wise woman to all the soldiers.

Copyright (c) 1955, 1961, 1962, 1963, by Eric Bentley

The lyric appeared in a book of Brecht's poems in 1927 but is more familiarly known nowadays as a song in MOTHER COURAGE.

SIDE I, Band 11: THE SONG OF THE MOLDAU  
(1956)

On the bed of the Moldau the pebbles are stirring  
In Prague three Emperors lie dead

The big will not stay big, the little won't stay  
little  
The night has twelve hours, the red dawn is red.

The world's always changing, however enormous  
The plans of the mighty when dawn comes are through.  
And though they run wild like hens with no heads on  
The world's always changing: there's nothing they can  
do.

On the bed of the Moldau the pebbles are stirring  
In Prague three Emperors lie dead  
The big will not stay big, the little won't stay  
little  
The night has twelve hours, the red dawn is red.

This is from Brecht's play SCHWEYK IN WORLD WAR II. In fact Eisler called it the "leitmotiv" of that play. Brecht's SCHWEYK has not yet (1964) been published in English but there is a copy of Alfred Kreymborg's unpublished translation in the Columbia University Library. By way of accompaniment, what Eisler had in mind was a juke-box or electric piano. His score is for two pianos with thumb-tacks on the hammers. Here this is "reduced" to a single piano without thumb-tacks on the hammers.

SIDE I, Band 12: AND WHAT DID SHE GET,  
THAT SOLDIER'S WIFE (1956)

And what did she get, that soldier's wife  
From the ancient city Prague?  
From Prague she got the button shoes  
Lots of good news and button shoes  
And that is what she got from Prague.

And what did she get, that soldier's wife  
From Paris, city of light?  
She got the gown with the silken sheen  
The girls turned green at the silken sheen  
And that is what she got from Paris.

And what did she get, that soldier's wife  
She got the gown with the silken sheen  
The girls turned green at the silken sheen  
And that is what she got from Paris.

And what did she get, that soldier's wife  
From the wilds of Russia?  
From Russia she got the widow's veil  
The widow's veil for his funeral  
That's what she got from Russia.

Also from Brecht's SCHWEYK, although the lyric had been written earlier. The German and H. R. Hays' translation appear in Brecht's SELECTED POEMS (Evergreen Books). The song has been set also by several other composers, including Paul Dessau and Mischa Spoliansky.

SIDE I, Band 13: SOLIDARITÄTSLIED (1930)

Vorwärts, und nicht vergessen  
Worin unsere Stärke besteht!  
Beim Hungern und beim Essen:  
Die Solidarität!

Auf, ihr Völker dieser Erde  
Einigt euch in diesem Sinn:  
Dass sie jetzt die eure werde  
Und die grosse Nährerin.

Vorwärts, usw



Unsere Herrn, wer sie auch seien  
Sehen unsre Zwietracht gern  
Denn solange sie uns entzweien  
Bleiben sie doch unsre Herrn.

Vorwärts und nie vergessen  
Und die Frage konkret gestellt  
Beim Hungern und beim Essen:  
Wessen Morgen ist der Morgen?  
Wessen Welt ist die Welt?

(Literal translation: Forward, and don't forget where our strength lies, whether we are hungry or full: Solidarity. Rise up, ye peoples of this earth, unite in this sense: that the earth now become yours and the great provider. Forward, etc. Our masters, whoever they may be, see our disunity with pleasure, for so long as they divide us they remain after all our masters. Forward and never forget, with the question posed concretely, whether we are hungry or full: whose tomorrow is tomorrow, whose world is the world?)

In 1931 this song was sung in the film KUHLE WAMPE (called in America WHITHER GERMANY?). It was also quite widely sung among left-wingers later in the Thirties. Much was accordingly made of it in the hearings of Eisler and Brecht before the House Unamerican Affairs Committee in 1947. (See the Folkways album: BRECHT BEFORE THE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE.)

SIDE I, Band 14: OF THE WORLD'S KINDNESS  
(1955)

To this earth whereon the winds are wild  
Each of you came as a naked child.  
Owning nothing, your body froze  
When a woman gave you swaddling clothes.

No one called you. You were not besought.  
In no handsome carriage were you brought.  
On this earth you were quite unknown  
When a man placed his hand in your own.

And to you the world can nothing owe.  
If you want to, you can always go.  
Though to you the many turned deaf ears,  
Many too on your account shed tears.

From this earth whereon the winds are wild  
You depart with scurf and scab defiled.  
Almost all men, almost all, rejoice at their own  
birth  
Long before they get their handful of earth.

Copyright (c) 1956, 1963 by Eric Bentley

This is an early Brecht poem.

SIDE II, Band 1: BERLIN 1919 (undated)

Anonymous

In January at dead of night  
A Spartacist stood guard that night  
All through the fight.  
He stood with pride. The pride was real.  
The fight was for a new ideal  
For a new right.  
And with his shotgun in his hand  
He stood where bales of papers of stand.  
The bullets flew, the bullets hissed,  
But bullets could not scare that Spartacist.  
Just listen to the artillery!  
And we have only infantry.

Grenades are flying: hear them whine!  
And Noske's bastards are storming Blüxenstein!  
Thou Athens on the Spree, Berlin,  
O how much blood thy streets have seen!

The leftwing socialists who tried to make a revolution in Germany after World War I took up the name of Spartacus and called themselves Spartacists. They were put down with great savagery. Noske was rightwing socialist Minister of the Interior, responsible for not a little of this savagery. The Spree is, of course, the little river that flows through Berlin.

SIDE II, Band 2. DAS LIED VOM TROCKENBROT  
(1929)

Walter Mehring

Wer arbeit' muss auch essen, und weil er essen  
muss  
Das macht das Essen so teuer dass er mehr  
arbeiten muss.  
Und wenn er dann mehr arbeit' ist's mit der Arbeit  
Schluss  
Dann kriegt er keine Arbeit, so dass er wieder  
hungern muss.

Rechten, linken,  
Trockenbrot und Wassertrinken,  
Das ist unsere Welt.  
Kein Ende und kein Anfang,  
Immer an der Wand lang  
Dahinter liegt das Geld.

Wer nicht arbeit' braucht nicht essen, wer nicht  
isst, er hat kein Brot.  
Brot gibt's nicht ohne Arbeit, kein Brot ist  
Hungersnot.  
Und Hungern, das tut Wunder, das ist eine  
Himmelsmacht,  
Drum rasch mal wieder an die Arbeit, dass das  
Brot dir entgegen lacht.

Rechten, linken, usw.

(Literal translation: -

Who works must also eat. And because he must eat, that makes food so expensive, and so he must work some more. And when he then works some more, the work gives out, and he gets no work, so that he must go hungry again. Left, right, dry bread and water to drink, that is our world. No end and no beginning, forever along the wall -- behind it is the money. Who does not work needn't expect to eat, who does not eat has no bread. There is no bread without work. No bread means starvation. And starvation performs miracles, it is a truly heavenly power: so back to work and fast, so that bread will laugh again in your direction. Right, left, etc.)

Among the notable writers of the Weimar Republic whose lyrics Eisler set to music were Bruno Traven, Kurt Tucholsky -- and Walter Mehring. In this "Song of the Dry Bread," Mehring says what Traven said in "The Song of The Cotton Pickers" and what Tucholsky said in "Charity." In the last-named song, dated 1928, Tucholsky has the line, "Good, that is the pfennig, but where is the mark?" which Brecht would, in "The Mother," make into: "Good, that is the patch, but where is the coat?"



SIDE II, Band 3: THE TREE AND THE BRANCHES  
(1933)

And they came to the cities wearing  
Their shirts of brown calico  
And bread and meat for bread were scarce  
And with many a shameless speech they ate till  
The cupboard was bare  
A cupboard that was bare enough before.  
And here we can live high off the hog, said they  
And here we can remain for a while, said they  
At least a thousand years.

Good! say all the branches  
But the tree trunk is still.  
More! say the guests at table  
Till the host shows them the bill.

And they shot off their big revolvers  
At every capable head  
And they swagger up and down in pairs  
And they take their money from a cupboard  
Which is now full of gold.  
They are on the up and up.  
This cupboard is forever full, said they  
And here we can live high off the hog, said they  
To the end of time.

Good! say all, etc.

1933: the date says all. How large "the bill"  
was did not become clear to the world at large  
till 1939-1945.

SIDE II, Band 4: EASTER SUNDAY (1935)

Early on this Easter Day  
An impetuous snow storm swept through the island.  
Between the budding hedges lay snow.  
My little son dragged me out  
To see a little cherry tree  
From my writing desk  
Where I was writing verse in which  
I pointed at the men who  
Were preparing a war  
Which would destroy this island and my people  
And the continent of Europe  
And my family and me.  
Silently we placed a sack  
Round the freezing tree.

Copyright (c) 1963 by Eric Bentley

In the middle Thirties, Brecht lived on a Danish  
island. The Second World War did not destroy  
his family and him, and he later changed the  
lyric to fit the facts; but since Eisler kept the old  
text, it is kept here too. (Actually, Brecht had a  
son before his first marriage. This son was  
killed in the war -- but wearing the German uni-  
form.)

SIDE II, Band 5: The Ballad of Marie Sanders,  
the Jew's Whore (1935)

In Nuremberg they made a law  
Giving women cause to weep  
Who had been sleeping with the wrong man.

The workers crouch in their tenements  
And hear the beating of drums.  
God above, could there be something wrong  
tonight?  
Listen, hear it comes!

Marie Sanders, does your boy friend  
Have raven hair?  
If so, you better had make sure  
This is the end of the affair.

The workers crouch in their tenements  
And hear the beating of drums.  
God above, could there be something wrong  
tonight?  
Listen, hear it comes!

Mother, give me the key please.  
Everything will be all right.  
The moon looks like it always did.

The workers crouch in their tenements  
And hear the beating of drums.  
God above, could there be something wrong  
tonight?  
Listen, hear it comes!

And at nine one morning she  
Drove through the city in her slip  
With a board round her neck  
Her head shaven, the crowd jeering, her eyes cold.

And thousands go down and line the streets  
For Streicher's coming! Make room!  
God above, if they only used their ears  
They would know who does what and to whom.

Copyright (c) 1963 by Eric Bentley

1935 is the year of Hitler's Nuremberg Laws, which  
created many situations such as the one described in  
the ballad. Julius Streicher was, of course, a loud-  
mouthed spokesman for anti-semitism.

SIDE II, Band 6: THE SEVENTH OF JANUARY  
(1937)

Ludwig Renn

In dem Spanischen Land  
In dem Unterstand  
Sitzen unsere Genossen.

An dem Grabenrand  
Wo der Posten stand  
Ward ein Kamerad erschossen.

Blutig sank er hin  
Doch in unserem Sinn  
Gibt und gab es nie ein Wanken.

Nach der Freude hin  
Nach der Freiheit hin  
Sitzen alle die Gedanken.

(Literal translation: -

In the land of Spain, in the dug-out, sit our Party  
comrades. Beside the trench, where the sentry  
stood, one of ours had been shot. Bloody, he  
sank down. But in our hearts there is not, there  
was not ever, any wavering. All our thoughts are  
directed toward joy, toward freedom.)

Of aristocratic background, Ludwig Renn became a  
wellknown Communist writer of the Thirties. The  
accompaniment is for harmonica, here imitated by  
the harmonium.

SIDE II, Band 7: TO THE LITTLE RADIO (1942)

O little box I carried in my flight  
So as not to break the radio tubes inside me



From house to boat, from boat to train, held tight  
 So that my enemies could still address me  
 Right where I slept and much to my dismay  
 Last thing at night and first thing every day  
 About their victories  
 (Defeats for me)  
 O please do not fall silent suddenly!

Copyright (c) 1963 by Eric Bentley

This Brecht poem describes the author's life between 1933 and his arrival in the United States in 1941. The houses, boats, and trains were in Denmark, Sweden, and Finland.

# SIDE II, Band 8 A GERMAN SOLDIER AT STALINGRAD (1942)

I shall never see again the country that I come  
 from  
 Neither Southern mountains nor the Bavarian  
 forests nor the sea  
 Nor the moors in the Marches nor the pines  
 Nor the vineyards on the Frankish river banks  
 in the grey of morning  
 Nor at midday nor yet when the evening falls  
 Nor the cities nor the town where I was born  
 Nor the workbenches nor yet the room nor the chair.  
 All this I shall never see nor shall any who went  
 with me  
 Ever see all this again, neither I nor you  
 Will ever hear the voices of wives and mothers  
 Nor the wind in the chimneys of the homeland  
 Nor yet the happiest noise of the town  
 Nor its unhappy noise.

Copyright (c) 1944 by Rocky Mountain Press.

These lines are from Brecht's poem TO THE  
 GERMANS ON THE EASTERN FRONT, which  
 was incidentally the first Brecht poem transla-  
 ted by Eric Bentley: the translation appeared in  
 The Rocky Mountain Review, Winter 1944.

# SIDE II, Band 9: THE GERMAN MISERERE (1943)

Once upon a time our leaders gave us orders  
 To go out and conquer the small town of Dantzig  
 So we invaded Poland and with our tanks and bombers  
 We conquered all of Poland in a few days.

Once upon a time our leaders gave us orders  
 To go out and conquer the large town of Paris  
 So we invaded France and with our tanks and bombers  
 We conquered all of France in a few days.

At a later date our leaders give us orders  
 To conquer the moon and the floor of the ocean  
 And it's going badly with us in Russia  
 And the foe is strong and we are far from home.

God preserve us and lead us back again home!

Copyright (c) 1963 by Eric Bentley

This song eventually found its way into the Eisler  
 score of Brecht's SCHWEYK IN WORLD WAR II.  
 In America it is often included in performances  
 of THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE MASTER RACE.

# SIDE II, Band 10: SONG OF A GERMAN MOTHER (1944)

My son, I gave you the jackboots  
 And the brown shirt came from me.  
 But had I known what I now know,  
 I'd have hanged myself from a tree.

And when I saw your arm, son,  
 Raised high in a Hitler salute,  
 I did not know all those arms, son,  
 Would wither at the root.

And then I saw you march off son,  
 Following in Hitler's train,  
 And I did not know all those marchers  
 Would never come back again.

I saw you wear your brown shirt  
 And did not complain or entreat,  
 For I did not know what I now know  
 It was your winding sheet.

Copyright (c) 1944, 1963 by Eric Bentley

This song is to be found in Brecht's THE PRIVATE  
 LIFE OF THE MASTER RACE as published in New  
 York by New Directions in 1944.

# SIDE II, Band 11: HOMECOMING (1944)

How shall I find my native town,  
 Following the swarms of bombers?  
 I get back home.  
 Do I see it now? Do I see it now?  
 Where those tremendous mountains of smoke are,  
 That's it, there! In the fire over there!  
 Native town, how will you receive me now?  
 Look at the squadrons that precede me.  
 Deadly swarms of bombers herald my return.  
 White hot furnaces announce  
 Your son.

Copyright (c) 1963 by Eric Bentley

In German, "Vaterstadt" means "father-town",  
 as "Vaterland" means "father-land", but "father-  
 town" is hardly English, and Augsburg was actual-  
 ly the town of Brecht's father, hence ("father's-  
 town" above.)

# SIDE II, Band 12: THE POPLAR TREE ON THE KARLSPLATZ (undated)

There's a poplar tree on Karlsplatz  
 In the ruined city of Berlin  
 And when people walk across the Karlsplatz  
 They all see its friendly green.

Nineteen-forty-six in winter:  
 Men were freezing, wood was very rare.  
 Many trees were cut down on the Karlsplatz  
 And that was their final year.

But the poplar tree on Karlsplatz  
 When spring comes around is green and gay.  
 It's thanks to you, inhabitants of Karlsplatz,  
 That we see it still today.

Though undated in Eisler's Lieder und Kantaten,  
 the story itself shows that this song was written  
 after 1946.



SIDE II, Band 13: KEINER ODER ALLE! (1935)

Sklave, wer wird dich befreien?  
Die in tiefster Tiefe stehen,  
Werden, Kamerad, dich sehen  
And sie werden hören dein Schreien.  
Sklaven werden dich befreien.

Keiner oder Alle! Alles oder Nichts!  
Einer kann sich da nicht retten.  
Gewehre oder Ketten!  
Keiner oder Alle! Alles oder Nichts!

Wer, Geschlagener, wird dich rächen?  
Du, dem sie den Schlag versetzten.  
Reih dich ein mit den Verletzten  
Wir, in allen unsern Schwächen  
Werden, Kamerad, dich rächen.  
Keiner, usw.

Wer, Verlorner, wird es wagen?  
Wer sein Elend nicht mehr tragen kann  
Muss sich zu jenen schlagen  
Die aus Not schon dafür surgen  
Dass es heut heisst und nicht morgen.  
Keiner, usw.

(Literal translation: -

Slave, who will set you free? Those who are  
in the deepest depth will see you, comrade,  
and they will hear your cries. Slaves will set  
you free. No one or everyone. All or nothing.  
One man cannot save himself in this situation.  
Guns or chains. No one or everyone. All or  
nothing. Who, O beaten man, will avenge you?  
You upon whom they inflicted the blow, join up  
with those who have been hurt. In all our weak-  
nesses we will avenge you. No one, etc. Who,  
O lost one, will dare it? Who cannot bear his  
misery any longer must throw in his lot with  
those, who out of their need make sure it is TODAY  
AND NOT TOMORROW. No one, etc.)

Dated 1935, this song found its way later into

Brecht's play DAYS OF THE COMMUNE. There  
is a verse translation by H. R. Hays, which how-  
ever does not fit the music, in Brecht's Selected  
Poems (Evergreen Books).

SIDE II, Band 14: PEACE SONG (1950)

Neruda-Brecht

Friede auf anserer Erde  
Friede auf unserem Feld  
Dass es auch immer gehöre  
Dem der es gut bestellt.

Peace to the house that is your house  
Peace to the house that is mine  
Peace to the peaceful neighbor  
Peace to both mine and thine.

Friede dem Roten Platze  
Und dem Lincoln Monument  
Und dem Brandenburger Tore  
Und der Fahne, die drauf brennt.

Peace to Korean children  
Peace to workers on the Ruhr  
Peace to New York truck drivers  
Peace to coolies in Singapore.

Peace to the men, to the women  
Peace to the old, to the small  
Peace to the land, to the ocean  
That they may serve us all.

(Literal translation of the German verses: -

Peace on our earth, peace on our field, that it also  
may belong always to him who takes good care of  
it. Peace to Red Square and the Lincoln Monument  
and the Brandenburg Gate and the flag that flames  
upon it.)

Very freely adapted by Brecht from a poem by  
Pablo Neruda.