

**Bertolt Brecht's**

The Merchant - Paul E. Richards

Adapted by Eric Bentley

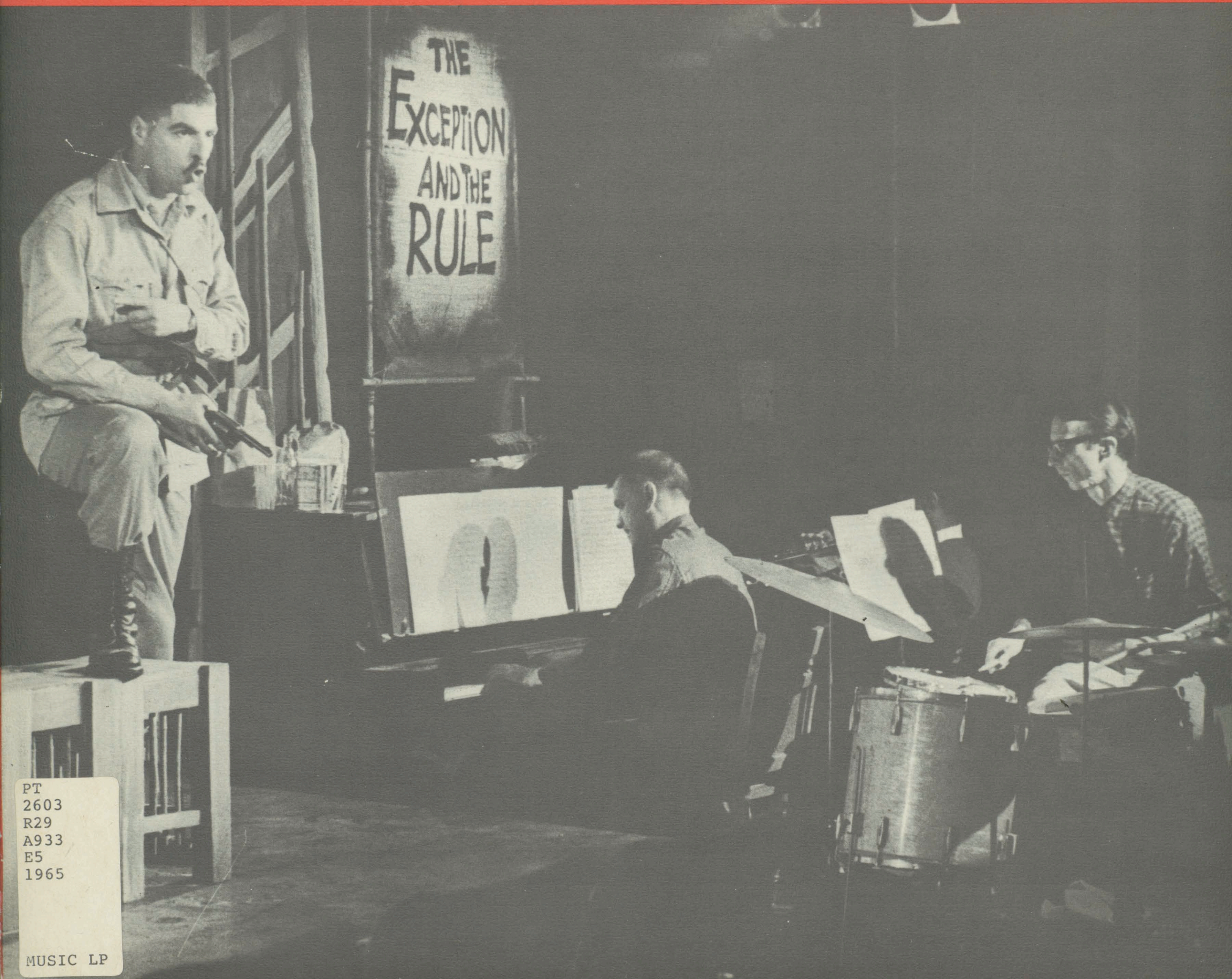
Directed by Isaiah Sheffer

Music by Stefan Wolpe

Musical direction by Arnold Black

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9849

# THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE



PT  
2603  
R29  
A933  
E5  
1965

MUSIC LP



PAUL E. RICHARDS . . . . . As The Merchant  
 JOSEPH CHAIKIN . . . . . As The Coolie  
 SAM GREENE . . . . . As The Guide  
 FRANK GROSECLOSE . . . . . As The Judge  
 JEANETTE HODGE . . . . . As The Widow  
 WILLARD BOND . . . . . As The Associate Judge  
 WILLIAM SHORR . . . . . As The Leader Of The Caravan  
 CHARLES SULLIVAN . . . . . As The Policeman  
 RON VAAD . . . . . As The Inkeeper  
 Piano: . . . . . FRANK GROSECLOSE  
 Trumpet: . . . . . CHARLES SULLIVAN  
 Percussion: . . . . . WILLARD BOND  
 and  
 ERIC BENTLEY . . . . . As Narrator

Based on the Stella Holt - Beverly Landau - Henrietta Stein Production at  
 The Greenwich Mews Theatre, New York City. Premiere: May 20, 1965.  
 Recorded and Edited by Mel Kaiser.

## Bertolt Brecht's

# THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY BERT ANDREWS

DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



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**Bertolt Brecht's . . .**

## **THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE**

**Adapted by Eric Bentley**  
**Directed by Isaiah Sheffer**  
**The Merchant - Paul E. Richards**

**Music by Stefan Wolpe**  
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BERTOLT BRECHT wrote THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE in 1930. It was published in 1937. It is not known to have been produced until 1948 when Jean-Marie Serreau directed it with two groups of actors, one French, one German, and performances were given in one language or the other in various parts of France and Germany. The French text appeared in Sartre's magazine, Les Temps Modernes. In 1950, the play was translated into Italian by Vito Pandolfi, and was directed in that language by Eric Bentley for the National Festival of the Drama at Bologna. Mr. Bentley's production was toured through the cities of Northern Italy.

Soon thereafter Eric Bentley translated the play into English. It was first published in the magazine Chrysalis in 1954, and has been since reprinted by New Directions and by Grove Press. Isaiah Sheffer staged the play at Columbia University in 1961 and it was for that production that Stefan Wolpe composed his score. (Previous productions in all languages had had a score by Paul Dessau).

Today, the English text of the play is most readily available in The Jewish Wife and Other Short Plays by Bertolt Brecht, English versions by Eric Bentley, Grove Press, New York 1965.

The production which opened on May 20, 1965, at the Greenwich Mews Theatre, and which is recorded in the present disc, was its first professional presentation in the United States.

The play consists of eight scenes, entitled as follows:

### **SIDE A: PROLOGUE**

#### **SCENES:**

- Band 1 One: The Race Through The Desert  
Two: The End of a Much-Travelled Road
- Band 2 Three: The Dismissal of the Guide at Station Han
- Band 3 Four: A Conversation in Dangerous Territory
- Band 4 Five: At the Rushing River

### **SIDE B**

- Band 1 Six: The Bivouac
- Band 2 Seven: A) The End of All Roads  
Seven: B) The Shared Water  
Seven: C) The Exception and The Rule
- Band 3 Eight: The Song of the Tribunals
- Band 4 The Tribunal
- EPILOGUE**

### **Voices, in order of appearance**

Narrator	Eric Bentley
The Merchant	Paul E. Richards
The Guide	Sam Greene
The Coolie	Joseph Chaikin
The Leader of the 2nd Caravan	William Shorr
The Guide of the 2nd Caravan	Ron Vaad
First Policeman	Willard Bond
Second Policeman	Charles Sullivan
Inkeeper	Ron Vaad
The Judge	Frank Groseclose
The Coolie's Widow	Jeanette Hodge
The Associate Judge	Willard Bond
Piano:	Frank Groseclose
Percussion:	Willard Bond
Trumpet:	Charles Sullivan

## THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE

### SYNOPSIS

The Merchant Karl Langmann and his employees, the Guide, and The Coolie, are racing across the Mongolian desert to reach Urga to close a deal on an oil concession. Not far behind them is a second, competing caravan. The Merchant berates the Guide for not using force to make the Coolie go faster. The Guide beats the Coolie. The Merchant sings "As I did not sleep, I soon took the lead..." They march on.

In front of Station Han, the Merchant is informed by the Policemen that this is the last outpost before the uninhabited Jahi desert.

In the courtyard of the Inn at Station Han, the Merchant attempts to be friendly with the Guide and to warn him against the "dangerous" Coolie. The Guide refuses to sit or smoke with the Merchant. Later, the Merchant observes the Guide sitting and smoking with the Coolie. The Merchant decides the Guide is a dangerous enemy and concocts an excuse to dismiss him. He leaves a note with the Inkeeper stating that he is going out into the desert alone with his Coolie. He sings "Sick men die, but strong men fight..." The Merchant and Coolie march off into the desert. The Guide wonders whether the Coolie has actually understood the route through the wilderness.

As they march, the Merchant is on guard against bandits; the Coolie sings "Urga, Urga, I am on my way to Urga..." The Merchant grows suspicious of the Coolie's behavior. When he sees the Coolie wiping out their footprints in the sand to keep bandits from their trail, he accuses the Coolie of leading him into a trap.

The Merchant and Coolie arrive at the bank of the Myr River which is in flood. The Coolie is afraid to cross the torrent with his heavy pack. The Merchant tries to persuade the Coolie to cross. The Coolie sings The Song of the River. The Merchant forces the Coolie at gunpoint to attempt the crossing. The Coolie, making his way across the stream, is hit by a ram-paging log and falls onto the opposite bank. The Merchant crosses safely and sings "This is how man masters the desert and the rushing river..."

As they bivouac for the night the Merchant grows more and more afraid that the Coolie, whose arm has been broken in the river crossing, will try to take revenge on his tormentor. The Coolie is afraid that his injury will mean the loss of his job. The Merchant sings "That's How It Should Be." The Merchant recounts all the Coolie's reasons for attacking him. The Coolie goes peacefully to sleep. The Merchant sits awake, on guard.

On the march again, the two men come to the end of the marked trail. The Coolie is forced to admit that he does not remember the way through the desert. The enraged Merchant beats the Coolie, then regrets this rash action. They become completely lost and grow weaker and weaker from thirst.

The Merchant tells the coolie that their flask is empty and all the water is gone. He then proceeds to

drink from another flask he has kept secret. The Coolie takes out a hidden flask which the Guide had given him back at Station Han. He is afraid to be found with the flask in his possession and the Merchant dying of thirst. He approaches the Merchant to give him the flask. The Merchant hears footsteps, whirls about in fear that the Coolie has seen him drinking from the hidden flask, and mistakes the Coolie's flask for a stone with which the Coolie means to kill him. The Merchant shoots the Coolie dead.

The actors who play the Merchant, The Guide, and The Coolie sing The Song of the Tribunals, as the stage is set for the Tribunal.

At the Tribunal, the Coolie's Widow demands damages and the punishment of the Merchant. The Merchant admits shooting the Coolie in self defense. At first the Merchant claims ignorance of any reason for the Coolie's supposed attack. Then, under the Judge's prompting, he begins to prove that the Coolie did hate him. At the climax of the trial the Guide produces the supposed murder weapon, the flask taken from the dead Coolie's hand. The Guide argues that the Coolie was performing a human act, offering water to his thirsty master. The Merchant and Judge argue that even if it was a flask in his hand and not a stone, the Coolie could be expected to hate the Merchant and attack him. (The audience knows, of course, that the Coolie acted neither out of humanity nor out of hatred, but simply out of fear.) The Merchant is acquitted.

For further details on the life and the work of Bertolt Brecht, see Folkways' other Brecht albums and the booklets enclosed therewith.



### THE MUSIC

Stefan Wolpe (Composer) one of the foremost contemporary composers, whose Symphony Number One was given its world premiere by the New York Philharmonic, was an active participant with Bertolt Brecht in the extraordinary theatre life of pre-war Berlin.

Arnold Black (Music director) is a violinist for outstanding chamber and symphonic organizations in New York. He has written and directed the music for Broadway and off-Broadway productions, notable among which were THE GIRL ON THE VIA FLAMINIA and ULYSSES IN NIGHTTOWN.

Charles Sullivan (Policeman; Trumpet) is a student of The Manhattan School of Music. He made his stage debut at The Greenwich Mews Theatre in THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE.





ERIC BENTLEY  
(Photo by Kenny Wolf)

Eric Bentley (adaptor, narrator) has adapted more than a dozen Brecht works which have been produced all over the English speaking world. He is also General Editor of the Grove Press Edition of Brecht (ten volumes so far), and has made the following Brecht record albums for Folkways: Bentley on Brecht (FH 5434), Songs of Hanns Eisler (FH 5433), and Brecht Before the Unamerican Activities Committee (FH 5531). Spoken Arts has issued the original cast album of the Brecht-Bentley A Man's A Man (SA 870).

Isaiah Sheffer (Director) was translator, director, and performer in the 1964 season's THE THEATRE OF PERETZ. In 1961 he staged the American premiere of Michel de Ghelderode's BARABBAS. He is drama critic for Radio Station WBAI and a faculty member at Columbia University where he first staged THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE.



ISAIAH SHEFFER



PAUL E. RICHARDS

Paul E. Richards (The Merchant) made his Broadway debut in the critically acclaimed END AS A MAN by Calder Willingham in 1953. His other Broadway appearances include A HATFUL OF RAIN, ONCE MORE WITH FEELING, VIVA MADISON AVENUE, IN THE COUNTING HOUSE, and, most recently, A THOUSAND CLOWNS. He was featured in the motion picture THE STRANGE ONE and is a member of The Actors Studio.

Joseph Chaikin (The Coolie) won an Obie award for his performance in this play, adding it to the award he received in 1963 for his performance as Galy Gay in the Living Theatre production of MAN IS MAN by Bertolt Brecht. He has appeared at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis and on the Writers Stage in New York in Ionesco's plays VICTIMS OF DUTY and THE NEW TENANT. He is a director of The Open Theatre.



JOSEPH CHAIKIN



SAM GREENE

Sam Greene (The Guide) was last seen on Broadway in the title role substituting for Robert Preston in BEN FRANKLIN IN PARIS. Other Broadway credits include A FAMILY AFFAIR, GOLDILOCKS, and DAMN YANKEES. Off-Broadway, he has appeared in STREETS OF NEW YORK, THE FANTASTICKS, THE CRUCIBLE and A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY. He has also appeared on most major television networks.

Frank Groseclose (the Judge; Piano) made his New York debut in Moliere's THE MISANTHROPE directed by Stephen Porter in 1956. He was also in Paul Shyre's production of O'Casey's COCK-A-DOODLE DANDY and Chekhov's THE THREE SISTERS produced by David Ross. He has been a member of The New York Shakespeare Festival Company for the past three years, most recently appearing as The Dauphin in HENRY V.



FRANK GROSECLOSE



JEANETTE HODGE

Jeanette Hodge (The Coolie's Widow) was featured as The Mother in Langston Hughes' THE PRODIGAL SON which shared a double bill with THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE at The Greenwich Mews. She has appeared on television and in summer theatres and is a graduate of The American Theatre Wing. She has danced with the Jose Limon and the Talley Beatty-Syvilla Fort dance groups.

Ron Vaad (Inkeeper) was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and gained much of his training and experience at The Omaha Playhouse, then went on to work in theatres in California and Minneapolis. His off-Broadway credits include THE BLOOD KNOT. He has also appeared on some of the major New York television programs.



RON VAAD



WILLIAM SHORR

William Shorr (Leader of the Second Caravan) is a graduate of Columbia University. He joined the company of THE EXCEPTION AND THE RULE after spending five months with the Association of Producing Artists repertory troupe.

Willard Bond (Associate Judge; Percussion) is an accomplished actor, musician, and set designer for several children's theatre productions. He is also a well known ceramic mural artist whose works include the facade of the Eugene O'Neill Theatre.



WILLARD BOND  
(Photo by Joseph Diamond Photography)

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