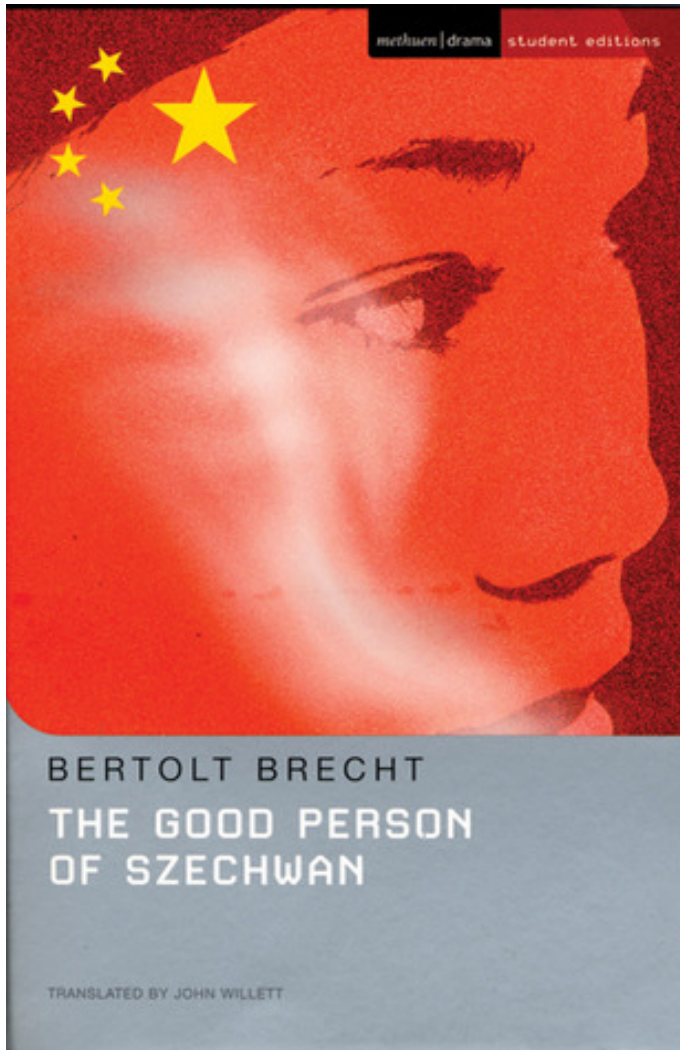

Bertolt Brecht

The Good Person of Szechwan



Title: The Good Person of Szechwan

Author: Bertolt Brecht

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Description

'Brecht's dark, dazzling world-view...makes an absolutely devastating impact. The play is fuelled by the brilliant perception that everyone requires such a dual or split personality to survive.'
Evening Standard.

Three gods come to earth hoping to discover one really good person. No one can be found until they meet Shen Te, a prostitute with a heart of gold. Rewarded by the gods, she gives up her profession and buys a tobacco shop but finds it is impossible to survive as a good person in a corrupt world without the support of her ruthless alter ego Shui Ta.

Brecht's parable of good and evil was first performed in 1943 and remains one of his most popular and frequently produced plays worldwide.

This Student Edition features an extensive introduction and commentary that includes a plot summary, discussion of the context, themes, characters, style and language as well as questions for further study and notes on words and phrases in the text. It is the perfect edition for students of theatre and literature.

Insightful reviews

Laura Collins: This was a very strange play, but I'm looking forward to studying Brechtian theatre!

This play started off really good but it just got worse and worse...
Don't really have too much to say, Amy and I will review it fully in our October Wrap Up though!

Lina Akkerman: I think The Good Woman of Setzuan was very well written. It brings up issues about being good and can it really be done in society, if it is ok to turn a blind eye to immorality when business is involved. Even though this was written in the late 30's - early 40's, it is still very relevant today.

I am very into philosophy so this book really made me think and I like the fact that Brecht does not give you the answers, he leaves everything open for interpretation and discussion to get your mind to wake up. The characters were engaging and although at the root of the play are serious social issues, it was still entertaining on a base level.

Reading this has definitely made me more interested in reading more of Brecht.

Saburi: Great concept. Not so great writing. It did not leave me thinking. but it did give me an idea of sufferings, and how one who offers help is never helped in turn. I don't think Brecht knew exactly how to put across his point. I did not really enjoy this book. I completed it firstly, because it's in my course, and secondly because I was hoping to find something more in it. I really like the concept, the story is fine, plot moves at a good pace, but there is no new ideology or nothing that you find. You just read and read. So, it was ok.

Vanessa: first play that i have ever learn in full. unsure the way it occurred on my bookshelf, and feature combined emotions and intuitions approximately the way it received there. definitely it was once planted there, by way of an ex-partner who was once both, surprised and pissed off through my optimism and wish for others. indeed, i on the topic of the most character, Shen Te, and located myself (unusually) fearful and dashing to get to the end. i wished to know: how do/can issues figure out for Shen Te? i will not wreck the story. i used to be amused with the opposite actors' variety of perceptions of the character, Shui Ta. moreover, i favored that he used to be written as a detailed comparability to Shen Ta, yet with wider (if accepted) social implications. the narrowness of focus, i think, offers an issue contradicting those that remind us to check oranges to oranges. in my view, Shen Ta and Shui Ta are either culmination in a salad with nuts :)

Miss Spookyverse [-°-°]-: needed to learn it at school in thirteenth grade and really learn it. It used to be really humorous in an undesirable manner i feel (some formulations). initially effortless to learn yet because it went on it bought extra complicated end result of the many various characters and what they truly sought after and purely pretended to want. Plus we have now referred to in class for roughly 20 weeks too long, it simply acquired annoying. Brecht himself is sort of an attractive subject though.

Phillip: i do not like this play up to i admire mom Courage, however it is a superb play. even supposing the message of the play is ostensibly that it truly is tricky if now not very unlikely to be strong and to be financially secure, i am extra drawn to the implicit message that undermines the Epilogue's plea for a replaced world. The gods time and again bitch that Shen Te is the one strong individual they could find, which implicitly ability (especially for Brecht, who sought after audiences to work out their very own social/political/economic international represented within the play) that the very humans tho whom the plan is beautiful are the undesirable people. and what is unusual in regards to the ultimate judgment is that no matter if Shen Te ha performed undesirable issues as Shui Ta, she nonetheless is still good. In different words, goodness is a top quality that inheres in Shui Ta despite what she really does, suggesting that badness is a personality trait that inheres within the different characters despite their activities (somewhat like how predestination works in a few Protestant sects, the place you'll be stored or damned despite your deeds), and people different characters are the folks we're alleged to see our faults mirrored in. So whilst Brecht is telling us to be strong and create a greater world, he's exhibiting us that goodness does not come from our actions, yet just because we're strong inherently. The opposite direction to learn the Shui Ta/Shen Te dichotomy is as a failed identification performance, within the feel that (according to Judith Butler) whilst acting one's identification there's no subjectivity at the back of the functionality consciously picking to accomplish a definite way, yet Shui Ta does consciously decide to practice as Shen Te. And from time to time we see the Shen Te masks slip and exhibit Shui Ta. So i feel it truly is difficult even to make a contrast among the 2 as separate identities if we needed to learn the play in any such approach as to maintain Shui Ta's goodness by means of contemplating Shen Te as an truly separate person.

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