

ALGIRDAS LANDSBERGIS:
A LITHUANIAN PLAYWRIGHT IN EXILE

by
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ABSTRACT

In this thesis three plays, Five Posts in a Market Place, The School for Love, and The Last Picnic, by Algirdas Landsbergis are studied in terms of the author's own statement that the playwright in exile carries within himself two irreconcilable realities: one being the native and the inherited culture and tradition, the other being the alien and the adopted. The conclusion which is drawn is that while the three plays effectively illuminate the variance between the two cultures and the two traditions they also demonstrate that the attempts to resolve the conflict constitute the main source of Landsbergis's creativity.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LITHUANIAN THEATRE AND DRAMA

Before examining Algirdas Landsbergis's plays it might perhaps be useful to consider at least in outline form the historical development of Lithuanian theatre and drama.¹ Traces of theatrical activity dating from the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries have been found in Lithuania, but documented sources are few (Santvaras 1968:649). In almost all cases the early efforts were either never recorded properly or, if recorded, have disappeared.

For the more tangible origins of Lithuanian theatre and drama one must turn to the liturgy of the church. Most European drama and theatre evolved from the services of the church and Lithuanian drama is no exception. The celebration of the Mass was a highly dramatic and colorful spectacle. Ceremony, ritual, and antiphonal singing were a part of many long and elaborate religious celebrations. The festival of Corpus Christi, the services of Easter,

1. This brief historical discussion intentionally makes only a few references to the theatre and drama in Soviet Lithuania. Related as it is to the Lithuanian drama in the West, if discussed, would lead us away from our direct interest, which concerns the Lithuanian playwright in exile.

Lent, Christmas and other important holidays were celebrated in similar grand and sumptuous fashion. Latin was used in all formal religious ceremonies, while at a later time interludes and miracle and morality plays were presented in the vernacular. Such may have been the case, for example, when the ploughmen, members of the St. Isidore's Brotherhood (šv. Izidoriaus Artojų Brolija), established in the sixteenth century, held their annual folk festival. This type of celebration was probably similar to the Plough Monday of English folk festivals, held the Monday after Twelfth Night.

More properly, perhaps, the history of Lithuanian drama and theatre begins with the establishment of the Society of Jesus in 1569, in Vilnius (Santvaras 1968:649). The following year, complying with the wishes of Bishop Protasevičius, the Jesuits founded the College of Vilnius. Before long, schools opened in Naugardukas, Nesvyžius, Kražiai, Gardinas, and Kaunas (Jakštas 1969:87).

The Jesuits were not concerned primarily with the furthering of dramatic writings or advancing the art and craft of the theatre in Lithuania. They used well-established and proven medieval theatre tradition as one of the means of spreading Catholicism and resisting and counterattacking the ideas of the Reformation. Dramatized stories from the Bible were a means to teach the uneducated and the illiterate.

Young scholars participated in plays, dramatic debates, and processions. To enhance the studies of Latin and theology they were expected to be proficient in deportment, declamation, and gesture. Rectors saw to it that a sufficient number of plays and debates were available. These works were usually based on stories taken from the Old Testament, from the lives of martyrs and saints, and from the life of Christ. Most of the plays were serious, ludi solemnes, consisting of five acts and generally following the classical tradition. To a more limited category belonged shorter plays, ludi priores, which were presented at schools, carnivals, and at other appropriate occasions. Finally, there were special performances of plays and panegyrics in connection with a royal visit or princely festivity. In 1636, plays and debates in which students and teachers participated were presented in Vilnius before Grand Duke Ladislav and in 1705 before Peter the Great (Santvaras 1968:650). The students who performed at the court, during a royal visit, carnival, or other festivity had considerable influence on those who watched these presentations, particularly on the students from other schools. Upon returning, these students, as well as groups of men other than students, put on similar plays in their own schools and towns. The movement spread, for in many towns presentations became a tradition. Eventually the students and other non-student groups which consistently presented

productions throughout Lithuania developed considerable dramaturgical as well as technical skills. These skills were the early seeds of Lithuanian drama and theatre (Santvaras 1968:650).

Gradually plays and interludes based on regional history and traditions were written. Produced in the vernacular, such plays were permitted on condition that no comedy, buffoonery, or satire be included. The authorities approved this relaxation, hoping to attract mass audiences. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the religious nature of presentations became more and more secular. The lofty themes soon began to intermix with vulgar ones, and it was not long before satire and even burlesque found their way into the theatrical fare of the day. In 1684, the Jesuits reformed the theatre in Lithuania, forbidding the presentation of all plays except those that were produced in Latin and dealt with religious subject matter. All comedy, burlesque, and satire were forbidden. Despite the censorship, short plays honoring the nobles of the day were written and presented at the courts and in the castles. At times court ladies acted in these presentations.

A comprehensive study of Jesuit influence on the development of Lithuanian drama and theatre is difficult. Most of the plays and interludes were never published. Before the performances the audiences were provided with programs containing a scenario which, in addition to

summarizing the plot, indicated the divisions of the play into acts and scenes. At times the names of the actors were listed on a separate sheet. Stasys Santvaras (1968: 651) mentions 24 Jesuitendramen der litauischen Ordenprovinz. This collection from the Jesuit college in Rešlius (Rössel) contains twenty-three published and one unpublished scenarios of plays which were performed from 1669 to 1710 in Vilnius, Warsaw, Braunsberg, Rešlius, Kražiai, Vitebsk, Nesvyžius, Pinsk, Lomža, and Pultuskas. Interludes eventually developed a form that was characteristically regional and national. Most frequently they were written in Latin, but there were also interludes, debates, and orations written in other languages. For example, in 1589, when Sigismund of Sweden, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, entered the city of Vilnius, the students presented him with orations in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Spanish, Italian, French, German, Polish, and Lithuanian. Again, in 1648, Grand Duke Ladislav IV was greeted by the Jesuit students of Vilnius in eighteen languages (Santvaras 1968: 651).

In the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries interludes increased in length. They were no longer given only during the pauses of other entertainments but were presented by themselves as secularized morality plays. This type of advanced interlude was less didactic. It appealed

more to the intellect of the audiences and gradually prepared the way not only for comedy, but for all genres of secular drama.

Although Jesuit drama in Lithuania continued well into the eighteenth century, its influence and effectiveness began to diminish much earlier. Public and private theatres, supported by townships, guilds, or by the courts, began to appear. Opera and ballet made their way into Lithuanian courts from Italy. Grand Duke Ladislav IV, an enthusiast of theatre and opera, often brought with him accomplished singers, actors, and musicians from Italy. Il Ratto d'Elena (The Abduction of Helen) was produced in 1636 and L'Andromeda (Andromeda) in 1664 at the court in Vilnius. Both operas were written by Virgilio Puccitelli, a resident court writer at the time. Masques, comedies, and tragedies were regularly produced at court before Ladislav IV and his aristocratic audiences. It is probable that plays by Shakespeare and Molière may also have been presented (Santvaras 1968:652).

By the middle of the eighteenth century, following the example of the Grand Duke of Vilnius, noblemen began to organize and support theatres at their own courts. In 1764, for example, a court theatre was formed by the Radvilas family in Nesvyžius. Later, other aristocratic families followed suit. The plays, masques, and operas, modeled after the Italian and French examples, in which

courtiers, their children, and at times the educated commoners participated, were often written by the members of the family. Although these works, written in Polish and not in Lithuanian, demonstrated little originality, they affected the cultural and the intellectual life at the court and exemplified the tradition of Polish influence on Lithuania, its institutions, and its nobility which had begun four centuries before.

The Polish influence on Lithuania dates back to the fourteenth century when, in 1386, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila (Jagello) accepted Roman Catholicism for himself and the Lithuanian people, married the twelve-year-old Polish crown princess Hedwig, and became the King of Lithuania and Poland as Ladislav II. Although Jogaila, who was of Lithuanian stock, ruled the newly formed federation, Lithuania gradually came under the control of Polish aristocracy. Christianity, as well as western and Polish culture and institutions, was introduced, Lithuanian and Polish nobility intermarried, and the Lithuanian peasantry was reduced to serfdom. Nevertheless, Lithuania maintained a measure of independence until 1569, when, threatened by Russians under the Tsar Ivan the Terrible, Lithuanians and Poles signed a treaty at Lublin. The result of the treaty was a creation of the Polish-Lithuanian state, a commonwealth. Catholicism triumphed over Reformation in Lithuania, as it had in Poland, and Lithuania was drawn

even further into the Polish orbit. Continuous political difficulties, lack of unity, and the dissatisfaction with the Polish domination over Lithuania gradually weakened the Polish-Lithuanian state. Destroyed from within, the commonwealth was divided among Russia, Prussia, and Austria by the three partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795. Lithuania was annexed by Russia and ceased to exist as a political entity.

Despite the policy of Russification which extended to every domain of public life, including suppression of all printing in the Lithuanian language from 1864 to 1904, Lithuanian national awareness grew. Influenced by the "new freedoms" and the nationalistic ideas of the French Revolution, the people remained faithful to their ancient language and their national traditions. Rebellions began to flare up. Two major ones occurred in 1831 and in 1863. As each new uprising grew in intensity and scope it brought more severe reprisals. Finally, after the first Russian Revolution in 1905, the foundations of the Russian Empire began to shake. The Revolution brought about the easing of tensions in Russia and in Lithuania. When the ban on printing in the Lithuanian language was lifted in 1904, new magazines and newspapers began to appear in addition to those published secretly in Prussia since 1883. The free press played a significant part in stimulating the cultural renaissance which was taking place in the country.

The demands for Lithuania's autonomy increased. World War I and the downfall of Russia brought Lithuania its long awaited independence. The Lithuanian Council, formed September, 1917, issued a declaration of independence at Vilnius on the 16th of February, 1918, and on the 11th of November formed the government.

Under the Russian tsarist rule Lithuanian theatre was almost nonexistent. With the exception of the small Lithuanian amateur groups working more or less secretly, the Russian theatres dominated the theatrical life in Lithuania. In addition to the Russian productions a number of Italian, French, German, and Polish theatre and opera companies were permitted to perform in occupied Lithuania.

A significant contribution to the development of Lithuanian theatre was made by the Lithuanians living in St. Petersburg. Despite the censorship, the laws prohibiting the Lithuanian press and cultural activities were less severe in St. Petersburg than in Lithuanian cities. Taking advantage of the more favorable conditions, the community (approximately twenty-five thousand people) frequently presented concerts, playwriting contests, and literary evenings. The first public productions of a Lithuanian play in St. Petersburg, Žentas dėl parodos (Son-in-Law for Display) by J. Blizinskas, took place March 31, 1895. St. Petersburg's Lithuanian theatre, first organized by Russian-trained professional actor and director Kastantas

Glinskis (see Appendix A), during the 1895-1918 period, produced over one hundred plays. The organization, which later included studios for training actors and directors and which was founded by Juozas Vaičkus (see Appendix A), continued until 1918 when most of its writers, actors and directors returned to now independent Lithuania and formed the nucleus of the Lithuanian theatre (Santvaras 1968: 653-60).

In 1918, as the country slowly began to regain its political, economic, and cultural awareness, the demand for the theatre increased. The first years were difficult. There was a shortage of funds, of proper facilities, and of trained personnel. In 1919, People's Theatre (Tautos Teatras), a precursor to the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama, was formed in Kaunas. With actors who were essentially well-meaning amateurs, director Antanas Sutkus (see Appendix A), for the new company's premiere, presented Gedimino sapnas (The Dream of Gediminas) by V. Bičiūnas. The production was not well received. Almost equally unsuccessful was V. Vydūnas's Žvaigždžių taku (Along the Path of the Stars) (Santvaras 1968:663). People's Theatre continued producing almost exclusively native plays, some with success, until 1926 when Sutkus was appointed the director of Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama. The same year People's Theatre ceased its operations.

Lithuanian plays written before and soon after World War I were based on history, folklore, or contemporary life. Though often popular, they were rough dramatic entertainments which lacked originality and scope. The works had a minimum of literary invention and often resembled folk festivals rather than dramatic presentations. The outstanding writer of this early period was Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius (1882-1954). His plays Šarūnas (1911) and Skirgaila (1925) are considered by many to be among the most significant works in Lithuanian dramaturgy.

Notwithstanding the limitations and difficulties, the theatre movement grew rapidly because there was a need not only for the entertainment but, what is more important, for the expression of national pride. On December 19, 1920, Hermann Südermann's Joninės (Johannisfeuer), directed by Juozas Vaičkus, opened in Kaunas. This date marks the beginning of the Lithuanian professional theatre company to be known as Lietuvos Valstybinis Dramos Teatras (Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama). By 1922, the new organization had grown considerably, its financial status had improved, and it now was capable of producing a wide range of plays. Perhaps the determining factor which assured the stability and natural growth of the company occurred in 1922 when the federal government took the company under its auspices. Between 1920 and 1944, Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama was served by fifteen directors (Pilka 1945:9). Of this

group Juozas Vaičkus, Kastantas Glinskis, Borisas Dauguvietis, and Antanas Sutkus were the most energetic and influential directors (see Appendix A).

The organization reached perhaps its highest level of accomplishment when in 1930 Andrius Oleka-Žilinskas (1893-1948) became its director. To paraphrase Santvaras (1968:664-65), Oleka-Žilinskas believed that the theatre was akin to a temple; that the stage required one's deepest respect because it was the place where creative impulse and imagination found their embodiment. A former student of K. S. Stanislavski and a member of the Second Moscow Art Theatre, Oleka-Žilinskas brought the Stanislavski system to the Lithuanian theatre. He exposed the younger as well as older members of the company to the complex but often rewarding procedures of "psychological realism," improved and systematized the technique of acting by means of exercises and études, and erased an outlived attitude towards major and minor roles. Under his tutelage the acting company became an ensemble unit in which each actor felt responsible not only for his role but also for the playwright's main idea expressed in the play as a whole. To enhance the actors' awareness of the new principles, Oleka-Žilinskas invited Michael Chekhov, the renowned actor and director, to work with the company. In addition to training actors Chekhov directed Hamlet, in which Oleka-Žilinskas played the title role, Twelfth Night, and

Gogol's The Inspector General. All three were memorable productions of the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama. Among the notable productions that Oleka-Žilinskas directed were A. Berger's Tvanas (The Flood), V. Krėvė-Mickevičius's Šarūnas, Dickens's Varpai (The Bells), and Shakespeare's King Lear and Macbeth. In 1933, Oleka-Žilinskas left the National Theatre and eventually settled in New York where he worked as an actor and a teacher until his death in 1948. Oleka-Žilinskas's departure marks an end of a significant period in the development of Lithuanian theatre.

In 1933, the leadership of the National Theatre passed into the hands of government administrators. The organization continued producing plays, but the productions directed by the younger and less experienced directors lacked the incisive perception and the "touch" of Oleka-Žilinskas. In addition to artistic difficulties, the National Theatre, its audiences, and, indeed, the country itself were adversely affected by the political and economic conditions of the 1930's. By spring, 1939, the question of Klaipėda (Memel) had been settled, unfavorably for Lithuania. Hitler had forced the seizure of this area through which went 75% of Lithuanian trade and 25% of its industry. About 21,000 Lithuanians lost their property there, and when they fled to Lithuania proper they created a severe refugee problem (Pakštas 1947:28). Notwithstanding the politico-economical crisis in the country and the

financial and administrative difficulties in the National Theatre, a number of fine productions were presented. O'Neill's Marko milijonai (Marko Millions), directed by Algirdas Jakševičius in 1938, and Hauptmann's Prieš saulėtekį (Before Sunrise), directed by Romualdas Juknevičius in 1939, were perhaps most indicative of the work done by the younger directors (see Appendix B). Both directors were former students of Oleka-Žilinskas. Further activities of the theatre were suddenly interrupted by World War II in 1939.

Between 1920 and 1939 the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama produced a diversified repertoire of plays. The works of Shakespeare, Sophocles, Schiller, Molière, Ibsen, Shaw, Chekhov, Twain, Hauptmann, Čapek, Beaumarchais, Wilde, Pirandello (see Appendix B), as well as the plays of native playwrights, were produced. As indicated earlier, the National Theatre and its leaders, Borisas Dauguvietis and Antanas Sutkus among others, encouraged and supported the works of native dramatists. The task was not always an easy one. Up to the 1920's Lithuanian writers were essentially writing poetry, short stories, or novels, and there were few theatres or audiences for which to write. During the early period of professional theatre in Kaunas, audiences were at times reluctant to attend plays by Lithuanian authors, and only as the quality of plays

improved did they learn to like and appreciate plays by native dramatists (see Appendix B).

Comedies of manners and historical plays were most popular during this period. Petras Vaičiūnas, one of the most prolific writers of this time, wrote over twenty plays and made the largest contribution of original works to the repertoire. Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius and Balys Sruoga were two of the most significant writers of historical plays. In addition to demonstrating considerable ability in depicting believable, tragic, and often psychologically complex characters, both writers, especially Sruoga, showed a substantial dexterity in the use of technical devices such as scenery, sound effects, and costumes (Vaškėlis 1967:6-8).

In 1940, Soviet Russia occupied Lithuania, and immediately its officials and Lithuanian Communist party administrators began to reorganize the theatre and its repertoire along the well-established patterns of "socialist realism" as practiced in the Soviet Union. No play could be performed without the approval of the official Communist party censors. In lieu of the rejected plays the officials insisted that Soviet propaganda plays be produced. The sovietization process of the arts as well as the entire country came to an abrupt halt when, on June 22, 1941, Nazi Germany began its blitzkrieg against the Soviet Union.

The burden of German occupation on Lithuania was just as heavy as the Soviet. The Gestapo worked slowly,

deliberately, and carefully. The German military and civilian officials refused to permit the revival of political parties or organizations suspended or liquidated by the Russians (Gerutis 1969:292). The press was under strict German surveillance, and the people were deprived of any opportunity for self-expression. Stubborn resistance to the orders of the new masters and refusal to join the "Work Service" (Arbeitsdienst) in Germany or to carry out other subservient and dehumanizing acts against one's country and neighbor forced the Germans to take reprisals. Arrests, deportations to concentration camps, and executions soon became the order of the day. Under such difficult circumstances very few people thought of the theatre.

In 1944, as the second Soviet occupation drew nearer, many thousands of Lithuanians, remembering the unforgettable experiences of the first Soviet occupation, fled to the West and exile. For the purpose of this study the meaning of the term "exile" will be used as defined in the Random House Dictionary of the English Language (1966:500), "prolonged separation from one's country or home, as by stress of circumstances: war time exile."

The people of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia during the period of 1940-1941 experienced a full year of the Soviet life. Laborers, farmers and office-workers found out what it was to receive the Soviet standard of wages, to exist on Soviet rations, and to tremble with fear under the constant scrutiny of NKVD agents. Thousands were thrown into prisons where unprecedented cruelty was the official rule; tens of thousands became slaves in the far-flung

concentration camps of Soviet Russia, while six million people were converted into starving, poverty-stricken serfs, robbed of everything they had ever had and of every human freedom (Pakštas 1947:52).

Among the 80,000 Lithuanians who left were approximately 75% of the nation's professionals and intellectuals.

The playwrights who fled their country to escape the second Soviet occupation, after several years temporary stay in displaced persons camps, settled in various parts of the world. Many came to the United States. During the early 1950's, very few dramatic works by Lithuanians were written. Playwrights were taken up with the gradual recovery from the devastating experiences of the War, with the adjustment to a new environment and culture. Some gave up writing altogether. Others reacted to exile in a sentimental, naive way and continued writing in the conventional manner. Memories of the past, the tragic loss of home and loved ones dominated the work of these playwrights. Their plays appealed to the sentiments of the uprooted immigrants and were quite popular.

Those who survived the tragedy of the War, many of them younger writers, artists, and intellectuals, who were able to put fresh roots in the soil of the new continent, soon discovered that they were unable to go on with their work as before. The War had changed the face of the world and the spirit of man.

Rimvydas Šilbajoris describes the Lithuanian writers-in-exile in this manner:

. . . writers turned away from memories of the past toward the present, and for them the experience of exile acquired another quality--that of alienation. These were mostly younger people who were not bound by the requirements of native literary tradition, because they had little experience at writing within the context of Lithuanian reality. They were open to all the sensory impressions of the new and alien lands, as well as to the most recent literary trends in the West. As it happened, the postwar reality in Western Europe was full of ruins, death and fear, while its literature began to reflect the cosmic hopelessness which always accompanies the collapse of a civilization. In such circumstances, these young writers were able to grasp another meaning of exile. It was for them not a meaningless, abnormal thing, but the natural state of man in the universe. Not they alone, but humanity as a whole became for them a homeless tribe, lost in an alien world (Šilbajoris 1972:46-47).

Algirdas Landsbergis belongs in this category. His more serious writing coincided with leaving Lithuania in 1944 and with exile. He was twenty and, as he describes in an interview, suddenly he discovered he was in a strange and new situation.

We were hungry; we were starved because during the War we were shut out from everything. The Soviet occupation, the Nazi occupation. . . and so many questions to ask. Everything that we believed in was put into questions: the meaningfulness of the world, Europe, our religion, patriotism--everything. The concentration camps were opened. Europe was a sort of lunar landscape at that time. One had to question everything. We had to reconstruct the world, in a sense, from nothingness. . . (Landsbergis 1972b:16).

The first part of this study has been a brief consideration of the historical development of Lithuanian

theatre and drama from medieval times to the present. World War II and the three occupations, Soviet (1940-1941), German (1941-1944), and, again, Soviet (1944-), split the development of the Lithuanian theatre into two separate directions: the Soviet controlled theatre in currently occupied Lithuania and the Lithuanian drama in the West. This study concerns the Lithuanian playwright in exile, most particularly, Algirdas Landsbergis.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURAL INFLUENCES IN THE DRAMATIC WRITINGS OF ALGIRDAS LANDSBERGIS

Algirdas Landsbergis was born June 23, 1924, in Kybartai, Lithuania, and attended high school in the provisional capital Kaunas. In 1941, he enrolled in the university of Kaunas to study literature and history. After Lithuania was overrun by the German Army in 1941, Landsbergis did a stint at forced labor in a German factory alongside French prisoners and Dutch deportees. The years between 1945 and 1949 were spent in displaced persons camps in Wiesbaden and Kassel, Germany. While awaiting emigration opportunities, Landsbergis attended the University of Mainz, studied acting, taught high school, and wrote poetry and stories. In 1949, he arrived with his parents, brother, and sister in the United States and settled in New York. In 1951, he married Joan Jacobi, and since then they have raised two sons. Landsbergis received his B.A. from Brooklyn College in 1951 and his M.A. in comparative literature from Columbia University in 1960. From 1956, he was a writer and researcher for the Assembly of Captive European Nations in New York. During 1962-1966, Landsbergis was on the editorial board of Arena (London), a

multilingual literary magazine, and he is an associate editor of Cinema-TV-Digest (Newberry, N.C.). Since 1965, he has been teaching at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, where he is an Associate Professor of history. Landsbergis has frequently traveled to various parts of the United States lecturing on Eastern European literature and history.

Most of Landsbergis's books are in Lithuanian. They include Kelionė (The Journey), a novel set among foreign workers in a German wartime factory; Ilgoji naktis (The Long Night), a collection of short stories; the plays Meilės mokykla (The School for Love), Gluosniai vėjuje (The Willows in the Wind), and others. Penki stulpai turgaus aikštėj (Five Posts in a Market Place), Landsbergis's first play in English, was successfully produced off-Broadway in 1961 and has been regularly performed in the United States and Canada. Together with Clark Mills, Landsbergis was an editor of two anthologies of Lithuanian poetry and folk-songs called The Green Oak and The Green Linden. Landsbergis's stories can be found in The Lithuanian Quartet. Awaiting publication in English are The School for Love, a comedy; Everyboy, a version of the medieval Everyman; and The Last Picnic, a "melotragicomedie." Presently Landsbergis is working on The Chinese Passion, a play set in sixteenth century Peking, and a picaresque novel about post-World War II Germany.

Landsbergis has written many articles, as well as film reviews and radio and television scripts. The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama and Mid-Century Authors contain 200 entries by Landsbergis. He is also a contributor to the Encyclopedia Lituanica.

Landsbergis intends to continue writing in both English and Lithuanian. He is attracted to English because of its richness, multiple literary echoes, and the immense challenge to mastery it provides. As for his native tongue, Lithuanian gives body to the memory of childhood, and, while ancient, it remains young and fresh, to be explored and shaped into literature. To forsake his native tongue would mean self-impoveryishment (Landsbergis 1972a).

This study of Algirdas Landsbergis's work cannot be definitive. Since he is in the prime of his creative life, a final statement assessing his work would be premature. Nevertheless, it is high time for a critical assessment of Landsbergis's achievement up to this time. Beyond one serious analysis in English by Rimvydas Šilbajoris and scattered press reviews in this country and abroad, little has been written thus far on Landsbergis or his work. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will encourage subsequent critical investigation.

Before World War II, most Lithuanian dramatists followed the spirit and the principles of realism. In comedy as well as in drama the structural pattern of the

plays used a cause-effect arrangement. Despite the changes in subject matter, the plays of the dramatists in independent Lithuania were dominated by clear exposition, unexpected but logical reversals, mounting suspense, resolution, and other characteristics of the well-made play. Šilbajoris (1970:136) points out that

To the established Lithuanian writers before the war, reality seemed solid enough to be regarded as something given, as a reliable framework within which to depict imaginary people whose lives would embody the author's ideas. The problems of structure seldom extended beyond the requirements of plot; the only important question was how best to arrange the thoughts and actions of characters according to generally understood and accepted notions of reality.

Landsbergis began his writing career away from Lithuania, in exile. His talent, unlike that of older Lithuanian writers, matured during and after World War II, away from the security of the native environment. He saw the war turn many European cities into piles of rubble and felt the disruption of moral, aesthetic, and philosophical systems. After he staggered out of the remains of a German city and rubbed the smoke and dust out of his eyes, he was no longer convinced that God existed or, if He existed, that He was omnipotent. The world no longer revealed a coherent, meaningful and "real" design (Landsbergis 1972b: 16).

Šilbajoris (1970:22) describes the "basic situation" confronting Lithuanian writers-in-exile in the following manner:

The most important, overwhelming fact to which every writer must in some way respond is the fact of exile itself. It represents a traumatic experience of tremendous magnitude not only in personal terms but also in terms of literary work, because a writer cannot escape the knowledge that he no longer stands on his own soil, where he would belong in a historical continuum with what had been accomplished before. He knows he is working in a context in which the written Lithuanian word is, in an important sense, an irrelevance. His readers are his fellow exiles; as they die off or become absorbed into the foreign culture, the whole body of expatriate literature begins to disintegrate, for literature is actually not so much a poem, novel, or story, but communication--that which happens when the minds of the author and the reader meet.

On the other hand, if the writer is willing to fling the act of creation, like a challenge, into the very teeth of oblivion, the experience of exile may well contribute new dimensions to his art. There is a resemblance between home and prison; they both surround a person with four walls, encouraging the illusion that the world ends where they do. The holocaust of war blew down the walls of home, making us both naked and free. It was a tragic liberation, but it did open new horizons, new countries, new civilizations, new ways of perceiving and understanding things.

Landsbergis is one of the Lithuanian writers to whom the experience of exile, in Šilbajoris's words, opened new horizons. However, the "tragic liberation" and the "new ways of perceiving things" did not diminish the influence of his native heritage on Landsbergis's writings (Landsbergis 1972b:22). His works indicate both the "old" and the "new" cultural traditions. The elements of several

theatre movements further enrich the texture of Landsbergis's dramatic writings. His plays contain as many Absurdist as religious connotations. Brechtian "Epic Theatre" devices and indigenous Lithuanian folklore combine and shape the content, form, and structure of Landsbergis's plays. One new way of "understanding things" was Existentialism, a philosophical forerunner of the Theatre of the Absurd, to which Landsbergis was exposed during the early years of dispossession (the mid 1940's).

In the mid 1940's, Landsbergis's writings were dominated by homesickness, his recent experiences of the war, and its massive destruction. The introspection of the "lament years" in Germany was soon followed by a more positive, inquiring, and searching attitude (Landsbergis 1972b: 15). Ethical and aesthetic problems of the human condition after the war, problems which were debated by Sartre, Camus, and other existentialists, had considerable effect on Landsbergis.

. . . When I look back now I see how important the existentialists' [ideas were]. . . . Here was Sartre speaking [and writing] about . . . the meaninglessness of the world, Europe, our religion, patriotism, everything. . . . Then came Camus . . . whose thinking was somehow much closer. . . . It seems they [Sartre and Camus] came at a very appropriate moment, because [of] the questions we were asking in our much more primitive voices at that time. . . . They, . . . especially Sartre, . . . [seemed] to put them in [a much more meaningful way]. . . . [Sartre] was able to phrase so many [ideas] that we were sort of groping around for semiconsciously . . . (Landsbergis 1972b:16).

Landsbergis found the newly reopened theatre of post-war Germany to be a vital source of contact with the existentialism of Camus and Sartre as it was expressed in their dramatic works. "The German stage opened up, too. . . . The Germans, limited under Hitler . . . were now wildly producing Sartre, Anouilh, Camus," and others. One of the "vividly important experiences," Landsbergis (1972b:16) continues, was the reading of Sartre's The Flies and then seeing the production of this play on the German stage.

Even though Landsbergis dislikes the label of Existentialist, Absurdist, avant-garde, "Epic," or any other "school" attached to his works, he readily recognizes that some of his plays, notably Five Posts in a Market Place and The School for Love, were influenced by the above theatre traditions (Landsbergis 1972b:16, 18).

Absurdist writers believe that the world is indifferent, that events in themselves do not have meaning, and that existence is an inane set of circumstances terminated by death. Since God is dead, only man can assign meaning to human experience, but he must always understand that one set of values is as absurd as another. The Absurdist, in short, believe that man is adrift in a world devoid of all purpose. This position is too extreme for Landsbergis.

While he, like the Absurdist, recognizes that the universe is chaos, formlessness, lack of order and certainty, he nevertheless expresses the hope in his plays that

endurance, patient search, even resignation are positive values which not only justify and give meaning to man's life, but may ultimately lead man to God. Landsbergis's characters actively search for Eldorado. They do not sit as Beckett's tramps and wait for Godot. As Šilbajoris (1959:108) points out, Landsbergis does not believe

. . . that there is no God and no hope of finding ultimate justice and meaning. The people in his works do not live in ash cans--life is not an End-game but rather an intense search. In this respect he perhaps belongs among the more civilized members of our generation--those who recognize that the process of constant search, discovery and error in itself gives cohesion to human history and purpose to individual lives.

Avant-garde theatre contributed another new dimension to the form and style of Landsbergis's plays. This movement, which had its beginning with Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874-1942) after the Russian Revolution of 1917 and gained prominence in France through the efforts of Antonin Artraud (1896-1948), sought to break with the past and to create new theatre forms. The general tradition of avant-garde theatre is intimately linked to Landsbergis's dramatic thought. In a key statement he has addressed himself to this artistic link between the avant-garde and the condition of the exile. In an introduction to Arena, written in 1963, Landsbergis noted the similarity between the avant-garde dramatist and the playwright in exile. Both cannot accept realism.

. . . When the curtain opens on a contemporary avant-garde play, the spectator often sees a world refracted by the prism of extreme exile: the "polis" as an alien conglomeration, the historical continuum torn, the revelation lost. Today the spirit of exile pervades drama to an unparalleled degree, and some of the best modern playwrights create in adopted languages. The exile of Beckett or Ionesco, Arrabal or Schehade may have been more or less voluntary, but they cannot help carrying in their hearts landscapes and words other than French.

Impossibility of communication is one of the basic themes of today's avant-garde drama, and some of its most eloquent moments occur, paradoxically, when language fails completely, as in the "speeches" of the Orator in "Les Chaises" or of Lucky in "Waiting for Godot." This failure of language is an essential part of an exile's experience. To be exiled means to see one's native language, a blend of meaning and power, reduced to insignificance and its place usurped by a foreign tongue, an instrument of alien power, rootless and incapable of engendering true communication.

The distance which today's avant-garde playwright maintains toward the world he depicts, has a parallel exile attitude. Both do not accept the "self-evident" or the "matter of course" of their present communities which they frequently regard as capricious collages, often absurd and always to be questioned. An exile playwright carries within himself two irreconcilable realities, and realism can rarely satisfy him, for he has seen people reduced to absolute ciphers and nations vanish from the map overnight. Not for him is the stage set with "real" parlor walls framing solid "flesh-and-blood" people--behind each wall and each skull nothingness lurks. How can he observe the purity of the genres, when the tragic and the comic are inextricably meshed in his life path? With the continuity of his experience broken, the plot of his life severed from once meaningful ritual, is it surprising that the exile playwright's plots embrace incoherence and violent twists? Reason is held in distrust by both the exile and the avant-garde playwright--for both it has proven ephemeral (Landsbergis 1963a:1-3).

To give artistic expression to the incoherence and the twisted vision of reality, Landsbergis has adopted "an

open and free style" (Landsbergis 1972b:4). He sees each play as an "adventure" and believes "that the stylistic approach should differ with each play [and] each new challenge . . . I believe in having it [the play] develop, to use that now terribly misused word, organically . . ." (Landsbergis 1972b:31).

The "open and free style" of some of the plays, Landsbergis readily acknowledges (1965a:8), has been influenced by the eclectic and experimental "Laterna Magika" technique of the Czechoslovakian designer, Josef Svoboda (1920-) and by the theatricality of Brecht's "Epic Theatre."

I became acquainted with Brecht partly [through] Eric Bentley's pioneering efforts. I read Brecht in German and wrote my master's thesis about him. . . . What attracted me to Brecht . . . was his use of the medieval theatre, the Jesuit monk plays . . . the Asian theatre. . . . What endeared him to me was his use of so many styles and techniques to create his own (Landsbergis 1972b:18).

In The School for Love, for example, the distorted line of action retains only fragments of psychological realism. Exaggerated shapes of people and objects, illogical and bizarre situations, synthesis of projected film, stereophonic sound, live actors, and music are some of the devices Landsbergis uses to lead the audience beyond the surface of appearance. The fragmented world of Five Posts in a Market Place is shown through the eyes of the Commentator whose view alters the emphasis and imposes a

thoughtful, meditative atmosphere upon otherwise "realistic" events in the play. Landsbergis, like Brecht, uses the alienation effect (verfremdungseffekt) to prevent the audience from confusing the stage action with real life. The "open and free style," the episodic arrangement of scenes, and the mixing of narrative and dramatic techniques in Landsbergis's plays is similar to Brecht's "Epic Theatre." One essential difference between Brecht's "Epic Theatre" and Landsbergis's theatricality is that Landsbergis, unlike Brecht, does not have one central idea or argument in his plays. Landsbergis shuns Brecht's didacticism (Landsbergis 1972b:19).

Not all contributions to the development of Landsbergis's art are "new," i.e., acquired in exile. There are elements in Landsbergis's plays which stem from his cultural heritage and native tradition. His religious upbringing and early Jesuit schooling perhaps explain the frequent religious motif (Landsbergis 1972b:56). All three plays to be considered in this study, Five Posts in a Market Place, The School for Love, and The Last Picnic, have religious associations. Landsbergis compares his agnosticism with that of James Joyce. "We know from Joyce's career that he became an agnostic, and an atheist, yet he remained 'Jesuitical' in his aesthetics and symbolism." In a similar manner Landsbergis continues, "I am not a believer as I was in my teens. I may be very critical of the

established religion," but the Christian mysticism and the religious symbols "move me deeply." A further indication that the religious element is important in Landsbergis's writings is "the fact that two of [his unfinished] plays, [one called The Priest, the other still untitled], have religious themes" (Landsbergis 1972b:56). Landsbergis sums up by stating that his religious attitude may be compared to "a savage who passionately prays to an idol [but] is more religious than a so-called Christian who yawns in church. . . . I am groping, . . . I am searching. . . . In that sense I am an exile, too. . . . Now where in the hell am I, or where in the heaven am I" (Landsbergis 1972b:56)? Frequent religious references in Landsbergis's plays create not a feeling of Christian devotion, but rather a longing for an ultimate resolution of man's suffering.

Indigenous Lithuanian folksongs and verse constitute another significant element in Landsbergis's plays which was not acquired in exile. Writing about the influence of folklore on Lithuanian dramatists Aldona Liobytė, Kazys Saja, and others, Landsbergis points out that in their plays "elements of folklore are combined with those of modern drama" (1973b:690).

Since both plays [Kuršiukas (The Lad from Courland) by Aldona Liobytė, and Klemensas (Clement) by Kazys Saja] are derived from folktales, it would be natural to expect in them a dominance of action, to find the plot as the soul of drama. Instead, significantly, the folksong predominates, the lyrical mode has the primacy over the narrative and the dramatic. The

folksong holds dominion not only through the texts of songs dispersed throughout the play, but also by imposing its own melody and rhythm on the overall structure and movement of the play. What matters is not, as in most folktales, the victorious overcoming of increasingly difficult obstacles, climaxing in a happy ending, but the lyrical resignation and acceptance typical of Lithuanian folksongs, a meditative peace as at the conclusion of Klemensas: "To listen quietly, to meditate--to comprehend something untouchable." The concluding "melody" of both plays makes Liobytė's hullabaloo and Saja's surface realism somehow unreal. Their conclusion is strangely quietistic, a distillate akin in spirit to that elusive Japanese concept of yūgen ("the sense of mysterious quiescence beyond all things") or to the Indian rasa of spiritual peace and sublime tranquillity.

In its encounter with folklore the Lithuanian drama tends to become suffused with lyricism and to accept the traditional folksong as the quintessential form and meaning of life, even to elevate it to the innermost core of art. Whether this domination of lyricism, non-dramatic according to textbook classification, can yield outstanding drama, the future will show. It has already invested some Lithuanian plays with an aura unmistakably their own (Landsbergis 1973b:694).

In a similar manner most of Landsbergis's plays seem to be suffused with lyricism. The folksong and verse motif, carefully integrated into the structure of the plays, is particularly noticeable in Five Posts in a Market Place and in The Last Picnic. In the former the songs give the play not only an atmosphere of lyricism, but also a resigned determination to endure the heavy burden of oppression. Skillfully adapted folksongs and verse metaphorically express the sorrow not only of the Lithuanians, but of all people who are oppressed. The songs also summarize the action of the play, highlight the climactic scenes, provide

a poetic contrast to the bitterly real world of the play, and lift the events of the stage into the realm of aesthetic experience.

In The Last Picnic the folksongs not only elevate the realistic action of the stage to the level of lyrical resignation and meditative peace, but they also suggest the basic theme of the play, which is the search for Acadia, a land up north. In this play Landsbergis seems to imply that only in Acadia may the new melody, i.e., the harmony between the old and the new Lithuanian tradition, be found.

In The School for Love Landsbergis constantly contrasts the bizarre, cacophonous, and loud segments of the play with subdued lyrical scenes. The conscious theatrical "fortissimo" alternates with "piano" as it does in a symphony, culminating not with a victorious and thundering "fortissimo," but rather with a lyrical and poetic "pianissimo" of the concluding scene. Landsbergis compares the ending of The School for Love with that of a medieval or renaissance play in which the (historical) action is often concluded with a poetic-moralistic summation (Landsbergis 1963c).

As the foregoing discussion has made clear, the sources of Landsbergis's creative energy fall basically into two categories, i.e., the old and the new. Some

contributions to the development of Landsbergis's art stem from his cultural heritage and the native tradition; others are acquired in exile. In all three plays--Five Posts in a Market Place, The School for Love, and The Last Picnic--Landsbergis effectively combines the elements of indigenous tradition with those of the modern drama to create his own style.

CHAPTER 3

FIVE POSTS IN A MARKET PLACE

Five Posts in a Market Place was produced on March 5, 1961, by the Gate Repertory Company in New York. The production was directed by Sidney Walters with Philip Abbott playing the role of Antanas. The play was also produced by the Chicago Community Theatre in 1961 and by the Canadian Theatre, Toronto, in 1966, and was televised in Chicago in 1961. In 1968, Five Posts in a Market Place was published by Manyland Books.

Five Posts in a Market Place tells the story of a group of freedom fighters in a small country overrun by a totalitarian power. Although neither the time nor the place of action is specifically identified in the English version of the play, the Lithuanian version leaves little doubt that the action takes place during the mid-1950's in Lithuania and "the totalitarian conqueror" is the NKVD and the masters of the Kremlin (see Appendix C).

When the play begins, Antanas, Jonas, and Leonas, the remaining members of a guerrilla detachment of forty men, prepare for their last assignment: the assassination of the Prosecutor who erected five posts in the market place where the bodies of captured guerrillas were

displayed as a warning to the population. Aldona, a guerilla undercover agent and the Prosecutor's secretary, has devised a plot. The Prosecutor and his associates are invited to her wedding with Antanas during which ceremony Antanas is to kill him. Before the liquidation takes place, however, Aldona secretly hopes to persuade Antanas to give up his fight. If she succeeds the slaying will become unnecessary and the wedding can be real rather than just a device to trap the Prosecutor. Due to plot complications, including the intellectual persuasiveness of the Prosecutor, the shooting is delayed when Antanas finds himself on the point of giving up the plan. But the Prosecutor becomes aware of the plan and for his own reasons wants to die. He provokes Antanas during the wedding festivities and thereby causes his own death and those of Antanas and Jonas, his executioners.

The subject of freedom fighters dying heroically in the desperate and final struggle for their country is not uncommon in Lithuanian history and literature. Through folksongs, poems, novels, and plays, Lithuanians for centuries expressed the heroism of a small nation in a battle for survival against formidable opponents. The traditional idea of heroism was accepted without serious questioning. Few Lithuanians doubted that man's ultimate responsibility was to die defending one's country. The hero could exist in the world before World War II, the world in which honor,

duty, and courage were virtues rarely doubted. Friend or foe the positions were clear. The hero lived in an idyllic world where fellow Lithuanians spoke their native language, followed their culture and traditions, and worshipped their God. Life progressed naturally. Traditional heroism was meaningful because at that time, Landsbergis (1972c:71) observes, "The universe, the world was meaningful, life was meaningful."

The war shattered traditional moral, aesthetic, and philosophical concepts. The idyllic world and its values, the world of Landsbergis's youth in Lithuania before the war, is now only a memory. Landsbergis lives in exile in an alienated world where God is dead, where values are crumbling and changing, and where, except for a different outer appearance which hides the complexities of the unconscious, the conqueror and the conquered are often alike. For Landsbergis traditional heroism has lost its meaning.

In Five Posts in a Market Place Landsbergis does not attempt to redefine the meaning of heroism. He knows that in our time no clear and precise definition is possible. Instead, he seeks to look at the complex issue of freedom fighters as a whole. More than that, Landsbergis uses the plot of the play as a metaphor for man's search for meaningful existence and as a theatrical demonstration of the directions which man's yearning for "truth" may

take. Šilbajoris (1968:20-21) points out that Landsbergis offers no solutions in the play, takes no sides, and claims no special knowledge. He attempts only to present the freedom fighters' struggle with its contradictions, ambivalences, often unanswerable questions, and unsolvable problems. A single, specific point of view would be subjective at best and propagandistic at worst. Only history and time, according to Šilbajoris, will eventually clarify whether the freedom fighters were the best and the most noble that the country ever produced, or whether they were only tragically confused and misled, a part of the nation which died without purpose in a futile struggle. The play makes one request. It asks only that we do not forget the freedom fighters and the time (1940 through the mid 1950's) in which they lived. Too often one wishes to forget that which is too painful and too difficult to comprehend.

. . . It seems the author's intention [is] to leave these five poles in our memory as a fearful monument to man's dilemma in this age of absolute, insanely logical, ideologies, demanding total commitment from humanity which is by nature relativistic and illogical (Šilbajoris 1967:376).

If we accept that Five Posts in a Market Place is more than an attempt to look at the complex issue of the freedom fighters, if we allow that Landsbergis is not concerned only with the plot and the external action, then we perhaps can believe that the simple and at times melodramatic plot is a pretext for a metaphorical exploration

of man and his determined search for "spiritual peace." The play then becomes an inquiry into the meaning of existence and into a process of discovery and not an excuse to arrive at a definitive resolution. Five Posts in a Market Place then ceases to be only a historical story or a dramatized tragedy. The play becomes Landsbergis's intense and truthful attempt to express man's twisted vision and his search for "truth."

Šilbajoris (1959:108) points out:

The scientists, in their special field of endeavor, recognize perhaps better than most others that in their particular search they will find not "truths" but working hypotheses, to which they must not become too deeply attached since they may turn out to be incomplete or downright false. But they ask special and limited questions, and they can afford to remain personally uncommitted to any temporary explanations of the laws of the universe they may find. In religion and philosophy, however, as well as in that kind of literature which seriously strives to give artistic expression to the human yearning for truth, one must commit himself fully to the insights achieved, for the questions asked concern ultimate values, and it is impossible to be temporarily in favor of one or another Statement of Faith.

Šilbajoris then continues by asking how Landsbergis resolves the contradiction between the "two basic human needs--to search constantly and to believe unconditionally --in his portrayal of his heroes" and concludes by stating (1959:108-109):

In part [Landsbergis] simply presents the contradiction, leaving it to his characters to arrive at some resolution, after which he again simply presents what happens to them once they have made their decisions. In part, too, he establishes the point that no matter how incomplete or faulty an

individual's vision may seem when viewed from some higher point of reference--that of God or a representative of another time or another civilization --that individual must commit himself fully to his vision, sacrifice himself to it.

The people in Five Posts in a Market Place are "figures of truth." They are not realistic "flesh-and-blood" characters. Each figure represents a different resolution, a perspective, or a point of view which Landsbergis sees as a possible course of action for man in his pursuit of "truth" and meaning.

The fragmented world of the play is seen through the rational, distant, at times condescending, and even contemptuous eyes of the Commentator. He, more than any "figure of truth" in the play, represents the "higher point of view." He towers over the events and the people and attempts to examine the convictions and the "statements of faith" of other figures with detachment and objectivity. The Commentator knows, as does the playwright, that even the most logical and thorough philosophic systems and even the most "scientific" findings may be incomplete, contradictory, or "downright false." He is aware that their discoveries represent only "working hypotheses," not a clear and indisputable definition of "truth."

The Commentator is the most Brechtian and theatrical figure in Five Posts in a Market Place. He presents the play and remains on stage much of the time, commenting on the action and serving as a sort of master of

ceremonies. It is his play. He is the host. In addition to the more direct duties he ties together the different elements of the action and asks questions that the author and the audience want asked, assumes different characters, and at times even acts out their inner conflicts during "the freeze." For example, the action of the play stops shortly before the assassination to give the "tempter" (the Commentator) a final opportunity to change the Prosecutor's mind. The Commentator is also theatrically effective when, as in Oriental theatre, he acts as a property man helping actors with their costume changes or changing his own costume before the audience.

The Commentator is also the spokesman for the playwright. He presents the play to the audience as a demonstration in which the "stage . . . become[s] a scholastic blackboard. . . (Landsbergis 1958:I.4). The Commentator explains, "It is the year that saw the end of armed resistance in a small country against a mighty totalitarian conqueror" (1968:I.11).

The bloody guerrilla war which had been going on for seven years could have taken place in any part of the world. By not specifying the area of the conflict and by placing the concrete historical reality in an unrealistic and theatrical environment, the Commentator, speaking for the playwright, suggests the universal intent of the play. The structure of the play is designed to persuade the

audience not to eavesdrop through the imaginary fourth wall on real situations taking place in realistic locale, but rather to watch a demonstration or a performance in a theatre and on a stage. The narrative mode of the Commentator diminishes the emotional impact of the play and encourages thoughtful meditation. As the figures recreate for the Commentator and for the audience the events that have led to the assassination of the Prosecutor and the deaths of the fighters, they rarely act out the incidents in a realistic manner, but rather describe and demonstrate them. Such Brechtian alienation (verfremdungseffekt) technique exemplifies the attitude of the actor as a demonstrator rather than a portrayer of the role. The Commentator's, as well as Landsbergis's intent, is to engage the audience, not, as in Brecht's case, to make decisions, but rather to listen quietly, to meditate, and to comprehend the "spiritual peace" beyond all things. Through the Commentator, Landsbergis demonstrates that he (Landsbergis), unlike Brecht, has no intention of stirring the emotions of the audience in favor of one or another point of view and presents a belief that humanity is best understood in contemplation, not only during, but also after the performance.

The Commentator's intense, but essentially rational, determination to seek truth makes him assume several roles, each one offering a different perspective. At

the beginning the empty stage, illuminated only by a night lamp, sets an ominous and forbidding atmosphere (see Appendix D). Appropriate music and brighter lights bring the Commentator on the stage. In a manner reminiscent of a magician, the Commentator "flips his white headpiece backstage and puts on a grey cap instead" (1958:I.4). When he turns to address the audience his manner changes. His disposition becomes authoritative, similar to that of a presiding judge in an inquest, of a surgeon about to perform an operation, or of a Grand Inquisitor. ". . . May this stage, once a nurse to chaos, become a scholastic blackboard. May reason write on it, with the severe chastity of chalk, the geometrical figures of truth" (1958:I.4). As the lights change again to reveal the interior of a pillbox of the freedom fighters, he turns away from the audience and begins his "inquest." Most of the lines which the Commentator directs to the freedom fighters are questions.

. . . (The COMMENTATOR approaches Jonas from behind.)
 What do you think of the plan, Jonas? . . .

And you, Leonas, how do you feel about the plan? . . .

So much afraid of death? . . .

And you, as leader of the group? . . .

What doubts? . . .

Why don't you tell your men everything you know? . . .
 (1968:I.11-13).

At the conclusion of the first set of questions to which there are no clear answers the Commentator again turns to

the audience. By means of a folksong, almost in the manner of a Greek chorus, he then expresses the sorrow and the resignation, not only of the Lithuanian freedom fighters, but, metaphorically, also of all people who long to free themselves from oppression. The song, accompanied by a concertina, also becomes a lyrical contrast to the realistic events on the stage.

Nightingale, dear nightingale,
Hasten homeward through the seas.
Songs have never been so sad,
There were never times like these.

Once you see your native land,
You will wonder where all went...
And the branch where once you sang,
And the tree--all is lament... (1968:14).

In still another segment of the play the Commentator continues his search by assuming the role of a blind beggar. In the scene with the boy, the "figure of truth" demonstrates not only his inquisitiveness and his enigmatic nature, but also his reluctance to commit himself to the "primitive" struggle of the people. The "representative of another time and another civilization" is not a fearless man.

COMMENTATOR: My child, you aren't one of those who place flowers on the posts, are you?

BOY: Me?! No! And what if I did? It's not for you to understand.

COMMENTATOR: Why shouldn't I understand, Child? I know life. Don't be too bold--you'll soon be cold. Who has might, has right.

BOY: Aw, what can you know--you're much too old.

COMMENTATOR: And therefore very wise.

BOY: Did you ever put flowers on a place that's very dear to you, when it was not allowed?

COMMENTATOR: No. To be honest, I never did. Who knows, maybe I missed something.

BOY: I'm sure you did.

COMMENTATOR: Could be, could be. . . . (1968:I.30).

Unable or unwilling to discuss with the young and trembling inquisitor his own possible loss of "something" the Commentator changes the course of the debate. As he continues to test the boy's desire "to be somebody," the Commentator becomes gently sardonic and humorous.

COMMENTATOR: . . . Just sit here and imagine--what a thrill it will be to grow up: to wear long pants, to shave, to kiss a girl, to get drunk. And then, to become somebody.

BOY: Like what?

COMMENTATOR: The people--they are all somebody. Even a beggar is somebody.

BOY: I'll be just a boy. Why should I be somebody? Nobody likes the policeman. The grocer is always grumbling. Even my father is unhappy.

COMMENTATOR: You should be the government--that's the best somebody. You know, the men who slide by in black cars, stuffed with good food, in imported underwear.

BOY: People spit on the sidewalk when these cars go away.

COMMENTATOR: Psst, quiet! I hear two pairs of feet (1968:I.30).

In the scene with Jonas the Commentator continues his investigation by assuming the role of a "tempter."

Jonas is a simple, often blunt man whose courage seems to stem from frustration and envy of Leonas, not from a strong conviction. Jonas is self-consciously aware of his humble background and appears to be determined to prove to Antanas and the world that he is a better man than Leonas. "So it's only you who can stick it out until the end. We're for lighter chores, no? I'll show both of you that I can hold out as long as you can, or even longer!" (1968:I.17).

Jonas is more than an impulsive, brusque, but loyal comrade of Antanas, the leader of the group. A closer look at Jonas reveals that his battle with Leonas is only an outer manifestation of the inner, deeper, and more intense struggle. Jonas is just as self-aware and introspective as Antanas, the Prosecutor, and other more developed characters, but unlike them, he is less sophisticated and less articulate. In times of stress, whenever possible, Jonas reaches for his concertina. "I love the concertina. . . . the concertina touches my deepest heart. As soon as I hear it, I can't help dreaming" (1968:III.63). The Commentator "guesses" Jonas's dreams and attempts to persuade him not to go on with the suicidal assassination plan. "I understand you very well. . . . I shall try to guess your dreams. God--you are dreaming--if all this . . . fighting could end someday. I don't ask for much. A little house with some lilac trees around" (1968:III.63). Jonas begins

to give in: "Yes, yes--Inside, a woman's voice speaks of good things: bread and milk, sun and rain. . . ." (1968: III.64). The Commentator continues becoming almost the embodiment of Jonas's will to live:

And in the bath, voices of children are splashing as the loving force of the mother's hands slides along their soft skin. . . . Have you seen [the] new offer of amnesty? . . . If you'd give up now, you'd get away with some three years of prison. . . . You realize that otherwise, you may not live to see this coming night. . . . (1968:III.64).

After a prolonged inner struggle Jonas rejects the idea of amnesty because "without freedom, my woman would forget how to laugh, I'd be afraid of my own children; and my lilacs . . . would smell like old fish" (1964:III.64). The Commentator makes a final attempt to save Jonas by telling him that "the greatest brains of your era are still arguing about what it [freedom] is; if it exists at all" (1968:III.64). But the Commentator's efforts are to no avail. Jonas is determined to go on with the plan and follow his destiny because the acceptance of amnesty would mean living under oppression, would mean that his comrades had died in vain and that the struggle itself was a tragic mistake. He must act according to what he believes is the proper course of action, even if the action in the end may appear meaningless. He has discovered his "truth" and has no choice but to commit himself to it, fully and completely.

The Commentator's search, on the other hand, led him to no resolution and no discovery of "truth." The Commentator seems to be saying that the process of discovery itself, the act of doing and searching itself, and not the resolution, as in Jonas's case, justifies and gives meaning to man's existence. Thus, the Commentator and Jonas represent the two significant and contradictory views or themes in Five Posts in a Market Place. The former relentlessly seeks for "truth" without committing himself too deeply to any findings; the latter follows his vision with a total commitment even if it leads to death.

Antanas's striving for purposeful existence and spiritual peace is similar to that of Jonas. He, too, like Jonas eventually commits himself to his vision fully and completely. However, the process of discovery and resolution which culminates Antanas's search is more complex in Antanas's case, because Antanas, unlike Jonas, is a more fully developed and complex character. His inner and outer conflicts, as well as those of the Prosecutor and Aldona, constitute not only one of the basic themes but also form the structural design which supports the rest of the play. As has been indicated earlier the action concerns the final hours of armed conflict which will not determine who is right, but rather who is left, unless, of course, one chooses to accept the fact that might is right. The central event of the outer action, which is to

assassinate the Prosecutor, reaches its climactic point during the wedding festivities in town. At this point, as at other points, the action crosses several symbolic planes of meaning. The wedding, which is meant to join Aldona and Antanas, is ironical because it actually disjoins them. The platonic relationship of seven years is brutally cut asunder by a bullet and, as Leonas prophesied in the beginning of the play, the wedding turns out to be "a death trap covered with a bridal veil" (1968:I.12). The "new order," represented by older men (the Prosecutor and his colleagues), finally confronts the "old order," represented by younger men (Antanas and his comrades), and this "wedding" symbolically marks the official end of the guerrilla struggle and the beginning of the "new era." In order to reveal the inner ironic conflict and to sustain the audience's interest Landsbergis keeps the outer action visually striking and simple. Antanas and his friends are determined to achieve their mission even if they have to die. The Prosecutor and his associates are equally determined to achieve their purpose, which is not only to overcome but to erase every vestige of resistance.

The inner conflict within Antanas is more involved. Antanas, originally a sculptor, an artist, had to suppress his true nature when he became a guerrilla leader. He is not a man who can be both an artist and a soldier. One gives life; the other takes life. One breaths life into an

inanimate object; the other often causes a man to become a lifeless object, a corpse. Landsbergis indicates Antanas's transformation from the sculptor to the soldier and the resulting paradoxical state of his being by a symbol. For example, in the beginning of the play, as Šilbajoris (1970: 155-56) points out:

[The Commentator tests] the determination of Antanas and his men by means of an objective symbol, a knife, which he offers to each man in turn as he asks them what they think of the order. It is the same knife Antanas uses to carve little wooden sculptures, pitiful remnants of his creative gift from the earlier times when he was shaping figures of grace and nobility. In this way the knife connects both periods of his life, changing from tool to weapon during the seven years in which Antanas diminishes as a sculptor to the degree that he grows as a guerrilla leader. The painful irony is that he would have never taken up arms except to defend the principle of free creative striving.

The sculptor in him still seeks light and life and there are days and hours when he looks beyond tomorrow and into the distant future. At such times he feels strong enough to put the past aside and go on. He feels confident to exclaim that the spark he once helped to ignite in Leonas can be preserved and that ". . . one day [he and Leonas will] carry it out into the sunlight, like a jewel in [their] hands" (1968:I.15).

But the act of becoming a soldier and of self-denial has had far-reaching consequences. In seven years Antanas has not only failed to choke his conscience and artistic inclination, but, as the epidemic insanity of

combat intensified, taking many of his comrades' lives, he failed to come to terms with the doubts and the shadows of those who were no longer alive.

ANTANAS: How many children have grown up during these years: What will they be like? What will become of them? What do they think about us?

JONAS (Still not listening to ANTANAS): Antanas, do you remember the blacksmith and the brown-haired teacher? How those two used to sing: no bounds and no end.

ANTANAS: No end . . . until two stray bullets.

JONAS: And the captain's two-fingered hand, and how he used to roll cigarettes. . . Every night when I climb into bed, I touch the dried out patches of his blood.

ANTANAS: Slowly, so slowly they separated themselves from us; joint after joint, hemorrhage after hemorrhage. Even now they aren't completely gone (1968:I.25).

It is possible, therefore, that such considerations make Antanas say to a young girl in the damp stillness of a bunker, "We in the forests are meant for death! The living should keep away from us. The farther, the better" (1968:I.22).

The Prosecutor is another complex character. "The Sword of Justice," as he is known to many, has ruled this region by fear and terror. As Jonas says, "He mocked those he condemned. It cheered him when families were torn apart" (1968:I.12). It did not start that way. Years earlier, when the new order was just beginning to form, the Prosecutor, then an enthusiastic ideologist of the new

system, wrote a book in which he described the fundamental principles and laws which were to govern the new man and his society. However, many stood in history's path and practical implementation and realization of utopia became a different matter. Caught in the sweep of revolutions, the idealist soon became a prosecutor, a despised man, and finally, a target for assassination. In essence the Prosecutor and Antanas face similar predicaments. Both find it equally difficult to accept the roles they have created for themselves. They both search for meaning in a world that seems to have lost its sense of moral and ethical values and that is close to absurdity. Perhaps the greatest mistake the Prosecutor made was not only to write, but also to believe that ". . . a man of reason does not try to stop the glacier and risk being crushed. He rather adapts himself to the glacier, in the form of a crystalline icycle, and travels with it" (1968:II.51). He cannot live by this conviction any longer. With the end of the guerrilla war, the Prosecutor finds himself surrounded by emptiness and the shadows of the last seven years. In the first act he admits to Aldona, "Silent, persistent and inhumanly patient, they circle me, and they stare" (1968:I.27). She hears him out and answers by saying "that people who carry terror in their breasts are the most helpless and the most to be pitied. They do not deserve fear--they are fear themselves"

(1968:I.28). Aldona cannot--she does not know how to--forgive him.

Aldona represents the pragmatic search and struggle for happiness which is the third significant theme of the play. The elaborate stratagem to coax Antanas from the forest and the constant threat of death is part of her personal and desperate war to save her fiancé and their future together. The irony is that she fights for a man who no longer exists. Aldona soon discovers that the years in the forest "managed to turn part of [Antanas] to stone; what was once warm skin, blood, thought, feeling--now grey stone, as grey as the enemy" (1968:II.44). "I hoped that seeing life beyond the pillboxes would save you from turning completely to stone. On that hope I built everything" (1968:II.45)! After seven years of separation they hardly recognize each other. The lovers cannot be reunited because the search for spiritual peace under a different set of circumstances has led them to two separate and irreconcilable conclusions. Each represents a different working hypothesis. Aldona believes that "there are things more difficult than open combat" (1968:II.46), that "we must try to stay alive, to sneak into official posts, to sustain our culture, to keep our children ours, and--slowly--to improve things" (1968:II.45). Antanas, as Jonas, cannot betray the memory of his friends, abandon his convictions, and leave the battlefield because he believes that ". . . there is no

peace! . . . D'you think that any power--God included-- could ever erase that hissing when the foam of last words mingles with blood in a friend's mouth; or the cracking of the universe of a skull under a heavy boot? These sounds shall reverberate through all time and make peace impossible" (1968:II.43):

Antanas cannot accept the chance to survive offered by Aldona because as Šilbajoris (1970:153-54) has pointed out:

[Antanas] is a man marked for death. . . . Surviving would mean choosing not only her, whom he no longer loves, but also the principle of surrender, of compromise. The cry, "Give me liberty or give me death!" may sound hollow and rhetorical in a civilization calling itself realistic and sophisticated, but in Landsbergis' play we are not dealing with such a society or with reality in the ordinary sense only. The little country, although not named in the play, is actually Lithuania; on the level where Antanas professes his faith and makes his decisions, however, it is any place that has ever suffered oppression on earth. In this sense it is a symbolic country that exists only in the tragic dreams of poets, and as such it cannot represent any but absolute values. A poem either is or is not. The same is true of the realm of myth, where the dreams of ordinary people walk about like giants in the earth. [Aldona], by offering compromise, becomes small and real. She lives only in the actual world and can no longer reach Antanas across the barrier separating reality from poetic truth.

Through dramatic conflict in each scene, suggestive set, remarkable characters, and other means, Landsbergis succeeds in structuring a play that is dramatic despite its narrative and episodic nature. For example, in the beginning of the play the playwright uses the Commentator not

only to introduce the "story" but also to establish the initial rhythm.

. . . I envision him [the Commentator] as a rapidly talking, slightly nervous man who introduces a sort of staccato rhythm. The play begins on a tense, nervous note and it advances rapidly with certain slower, lyrical islands but on the whole it is tense. It is fast, nervous. Perhaps in the rhythm which Kazan would impose on Tennessee Williams's plays. People gnashing their teeth; snapping shutters; freezing suddenly (Landsbergis 1972b:6-7).

Structurally, many scenes in the play are built in a conventional way--for example, the scene between the Prosecutor and Aldona in act one. The Prosecutor is the protagonist. His objective is to confess, to seek understanding, sympathy, and perhaps even forgiveness from Aldona. The obstacle to his action is Aldona's love for Antanas and her knowledge and abhorrence of the Prosecutor's deeds. The climax occurs with Aldona's kind but firm resolution to hear him out, but not forgive him, because she cannot. The resolution shows the Prosecutor's disappointment, linked with his determination to try again. The next morning he promises to stop by Aldona's apartment to give her a wedding gift. At the same time he hopes to have one more opportunity to speak with Aldona, to gain her sympathy, and thus to quiet his guilt ridden conscience.

I . . . like to be near you, to hear your voice, to read the story of my life in your beautifully listening eyes. I am very selfish--I need you (1968:I.28).

The first scene of act two between Antanas and Aldona has a similar structural pattern. In this segment

of the play Antanas, instead of the Prosecutor, is the protagonist. Antanas's intention is to discover if the assassination plan is proceeding without complications and to tell Aldona that he no longer loves her. The obstacle to his purpose or action is Aldona's evasiveness, discomfort, and attention seeking. The climax occurs with Aldona's earnest attempt to dissuade Antanas from going through with the assassination. The resolution takes place with Antanas's anger and his acceptance of Aldona's challenge to meet and to kill the Prosecutor in Aldona's apartment. The scene in a structural sense ends at this point and another begins with the entrance of the Commentator. The wedding scene, which is also the climax of the play, is similarly constructed.

The scenes, which tend to be discursive rather than dramatic, are not only contrasted with other more lyrical passages, but are also enlivened by symbolic imagery, poetic dialogue, and other devices. The mood, the content, and the form of the play are often refined and enhanced by such devices as music (which is not merely used as background, but as an integral part of the structure of the play), songs, concertina, a knife, sculptor's hammer and chisel, the sound of soldiers' boots, women wailing in the distance, the song of the nightingale, and others. Even the title of the play itself allegorically suggests the lack of life in the freedom fighters. As posts are to the

tree, so the fighters are, in Landsbergis's view, to the men they once were. The market place in a similar manner alludes not to an honored resting place for the fallen heroes, but rather to an undignified and demeaning termination of their struggle in an open space in town where horse manure mingles with the snow (1968:I.25), where people meet to sell, to buy, and to barter. A stage property used in an imaginative and symbolic way is a bunch of lilacs which reappears throughout the play, acquiring several implications of meaning culminating in a final symbolic value which Gražina, the girl of Antanas's dreams, gives the flowers as she prepares to join Antanas at the five posts. ". . . Now I'm leaving for my wedding. (She takes the flowers from the Commentator.) My flowers, you are from the land of dreams; you'll fit my hands at the altar" (1968:III.75).

As the play goes into a more obvious subjectivity, the effects often "physicalize" the state of the character's mind. For example, Gražina's wedding in the land of dreams, or her union with Antanas, who was killed a while ago, is exemplified by the emergence of posts and Antanas's sculptures visible behind them. At the end of the play Gražina, as a bride holding flowers walks slowly past the Commentator to meet her fate and her lover. The total result is a play which, through the actions of its

characters and its bold theatricality, engages the emotions as well as the intellect of the audience.

The dialogue in Five Posts in a Market Place flows quite effortlessly due to a large part to the constantly shifting conflict and mood within the scenes. The verbal exchanges are, of course, in many cases heightened speech, that is, more eloquent than these conversations would be in life. For the most part the audience accepts the dialogue as realistic speech partly because of theatrical convention and partly because it is the playwright's natural stylistic propensity. The realistic stage business reinforces the significance of the dialogue. Landsbergis's dialogue is carefully written to characterize the speaker and to fulfill the exposition, conflict, atmosphere, and other dramaturgical requirements. The speeches are often poetic in their rhythm and symbolic imagery.

The device of dramatic irony is often employed.

In act one the Prosecutor says to Aldona:

PROSECUTOR: I shall never forgive your future husband. He cuts the dialogue which I hoped would continue much longer. For at least one more year. I won't live more than that.

ALDONA: You can't be serious. Your health is excellent. A year has passed already without any attempt on your life. The headquarters of the bandits have been destroyed, the entire guerrilla movement crushed.

PROSECUTOR: A couple managed to escape.

ALDONA: You will come to our wedding party--it was a promise.

PROSECUTOR: When I had to hide myself at home; when the guerrillas reigned over the forests and villages, even then I wouldn't have missed your wedding. Why should I miss it now (1968:I.27)?

Why, indeed? The lines are full of irony. Here for a change the mouse is playing with the cat, and the audience, of course, is in on it. The audience, as well as Aldona, knows that the Prosecutor himself is responsible for cutting the dialogue, which now he hopes will continue much longer. The audience knows to what kind of "wedding" the Prosecutor is being invited and so forth. The device ends some time later when the Commentator appears (1968:I.28).

(He fishes out the copybook from his pocket and finds the page.)

COMMENTATOR: How weak is man, how frail and small,
The greatest kingdoms once will fall
Like ant-hills, and shall pass away
On Judgement Day, on Judgement Day.

Another example of dramatic irony occurs in the opening of act two where in a dream sequence Gražina marries Antanas and, immediately after, as Antanas wakes, Aldona, his real fiancée, refers to him as her bridegroom. This sequence also foreshadows Antanas's death and Gražina's final speech at the end of the play as she awaits her wedding. Perhaps the highest irony in the play occurs when Antanas unknowingly seeks to destroy the man he once respected most.

Landsbergis's Five Posts in a Market Place is more than the dramatization of Lithuanian freedom fighters' struggle against oppression. The play is more than a

wreath at the unknown freedom fighters' tomb. The historical story or the plot serves Landsbergis as a means to investigate man's search and his yearning for spiritual peace and meaning in a world that is, in Landsbergis's view, close to insanity.

To suggest the universal intent of Five Posts in a Market Place Landsbergis places the historical reality, the ambivalent and contradictory world of the play, and the process of human error and discovery in an unrealistic and theatrical surroundings. The narrative, rather than dramatic manner of presentation, subdues the emotional impact of the play and encourages instead a thoughtful consideration of the events.

The play offers no resolution, proclaims no discovery, but rather demonstrates in theatrical form the directions man's search may take. The "figures of truth" and their striving for meaningful life may be divided into three categories. Some, like Jonas, Antanas, or the Prosecutor, after lengthy and intense search in order to give meaning to their lives, commit themselves to their findings completely and unconditionally. Others, like Aldona, accept oppression with quiet resignation, believing that compromise is the only way to survival and that only patience and endurance will eventually bring about the end of suffering and the promise of happiness. Still others, like the Commentator, are reluctant to accept any moral or

ethical system as complete and definitive. The Commentator believes that humanity is a work in progress, that even the most intense and sincere findings or discoveries are incomplete, and that no final conclusions regarding "truth" and the purpose of man's existence are possible. The Commentator, who more than any other "figure of Truth" represents the playwright's point of view in Five Posts in a Market Place, seems to say that the search itself justifies and gives meaning to man's life.

CHAPTER 4

THE SCHOOL FOR LOVE

The School for Love was published in 1965 in Lithuanian. Due to the large cast, complex sets, and complicated special effects the play has not been produced in its entirety. Segments of the work have been staged by the Lithuanian Theatre of Chicago and other theatre organizations.

The School for Love, unlike Five Posts in a Market Place, is a comedy. The action of the play, as Landsbergis points out, takes place in a "New York, not so much of stone and glass as of dreams of those who watched its lights at night before disembarking for the first time" (1963b:ii). The time of the action, again in the author's words (1963b:ii), is "a hot summer after the war (let us call it World War II), when crowds of immigrants went ashore and rubbed their eyes at America."

The central figure in the play is Leo Leviathan, a former post-World War II black market operator, who came to America to build his "empire." He is a grotesque personification of avarice and gluttony. His inner disfigurement, which manifests itself by uncontrolled greed and arrogance and his obsessive determination to succeed and to

make up for lost time are further made obvious by his physical appearance. As the first act curtain rises,

. . . LEO LEVIATHAN sprawls in a large soft chair, which HE dwarfs anyway. His obesity has not much muscle but there is nothing flabby about it--it is charged with energy. By jingo!--HE resembles a nineteenth-century colonial empire, by reaching to absorb new lands, gay with greed, bursting with the lust to grab. His large appetites are written on his face--a grunt turned flesh (1963b:I.i).

Leviathan has two cohorts to assist him in his avaricious design. Gabriel is a young, penniless displaced person, ambitious, confident, and aware. Although Gabriel is, above all else, an idealist, his character contains elements of the wilful, the practical, and the sardonic. Leviathan's second associate, an obvious contrast to Gabriel, is named The Angel, or rather, The Evil Angel, who represents revenge and who secretly plans to destroy Leviathan. The Angel cannot forget that during the black market days in Europe Leviathan caused the destruction of a rare collection of postage stamps which The Angel had accumulated over a thirty-year period working as a post office clerk.

The collection which The Angel planned to sell represented not the capital to be invested to make profit, but rather "a little house, three meals a day, [and] no worry--in America" (1963b:I.19). In order to carry out his evil purpose The Angel follows Leviathan to America and becomes his advisor and "guardian Angel" in an enterprise

called the School for Love. The school, which originated from an idea of Gabriel, is organized along the patterns of schools for dancing, wrestling, or riding. Almost overnight the school miraculously becomes a great success. The Angel attempts to sabotage the project, but his plan backfires and not only fails to destroy Leviathan, but, on the contrary, catapults him to greater success. As in a fairy tale soon the undertaking becomes tremendously successful not only in America but in Europe as well. The unexpected burgeoning of Leviathan's school into an international, impersonal, and automated giant of commerce and power becomes an ironically grotesque and painful parody of Gabriel's idealistic vision, his search for happiness in the New World. Convinced that his dream from the very beginning was irreconcilable with Leviathan's, Gabriel decides to leave.

Diana, Leviathan's secretary, equally disappointed, is also resolved not to remain with Leviathan any longer. Originally a Pennsylvania coal miner's daughter, Diana came to New York to succeed, to make something of her life, to find the luxury liner which would take her to the wide and fulfilling seas of life as far away from Pennsylvania mines as possible. ". . . When I saw Mr. Leviathan, I had a sudden feeling--mystical-like--that here, outer space may open. I said to myself--if you want to go far, attach

yourself to a rocket, not to a firecracker. And so I did" (1963b:I.7-8). She taught Leviathan to speak English and served as his private secretary and, later, his business associate. When Gabriel points out to her in the second act that "the School has no windows to the harbor" (1963b:II.28) Diana agrees and explains her dream and her search for happiness by telling him a story.

Once upon a time, back in Pennsylvania, a little girl saw a postcard of a luxury liner--a gold-trimmed cloud of a ship. A former neighbor, who had struck it rich, mailed it to her family, to make them envious. The little girl couldn't pull her eyes away from the ship. Her father pressed the postcard with his miner's fingers, and his thumb-print remained on the white hull, indelible. It was then that the little girl vowed to herself she'd leave the mining town and get on that ship. And she's been carrying the postcard with her ever since. . . . The ship sank, like soggy gingerbread. She took out her postcard. (DIANA takes out a postcard from her 1919-dress pocket.) She tore off the luxury liner. (SHE tears off most of the postcard, leaving only a small piece of it.) And she will keep the only real part of it--an old miner's fingerprint (1963b:II.28).

At the climactic point as Gabriel and Diana prepare to leave Gabriel reveals the true identity of The Angel.

(The CROWD outside bursts out in a roar. GABRIEL flings the balcony door open. Another roar, and multicolored confetti, in dusk, covers the horizon outside the balcony, like a sudden snow-storm)

ANGEL: (HE stares at the confetti, as if hypnotized, and whispers automatically and absent-mindedly) It's not true. . . . It's not. . . . They look like stamps. . . . My stamps. . . . My world! (His control collapses. HE turns to LEVIATHAN with a violent motion, hate screaming from his entire body.) It's true!! Yes--true, true, true!! The hooligan [Gabriel] is right! There is no Angel, Leviathan! You killed my stamps, my life! I'll tear your life like you tore my stamps!

LEVIATHAN: (Softly.) The world's gone crazy. . . .
(1963b:III.31).

As the crowds of followers seeking to make Leviathan their new leader roar outside, the audience realizes that Leviathan's empire will soon collapse. At the end of the play after Leviathan's outcry of despair the fairy tale world and its people thin out to black silhouette and remain motionless as if frozen until the end of the play. The fantastic vision eventually disappears in almost total darkness leaving Gabriel and Diana, like a new Adam and Eve, to find their happiness. They are cold and quite alone. As Gabriel takes off his jacket and puts it around her shoulders they summarize the main idea of the play.

DIANA: My feet are swollen. . . . (With a sudden outburst of doubt and despair.) Gabriel, will we do better than they? Doesn't everybody learn hate, grow old, and die?!

GABRIEL: Just keep repeating to yourself--we will, we will get there.

DIANA: Where?

GABRIEL: Seven more mountain ranges. And then--a valley ringed with the proudest of trees; the beat of angels' wings; and words as chaste and new as newborn honeybees.

DIANA: Eldorado?

GABRIEL: Yes.

DIANA: America?

GABRIEL: America (1963b:III.36-37).

More than any other play Landsbergis has written to date, The School for Love is autobiographical. In an interview (1972b) the dramatist made it quite clear that in this play he tried to recreate his first impressions, feelings, and thoughts about New York City and America. In the introduction to Arena, which was written approximately at the same time as The School for Love, Landsbergis (1963a:3) points out that "anxiety and fear of non-being" are of particular and fundamental concern to an exile in America. In exile the refugee soon realizes what "non-being" means. Suddenly and unexpectedly wrenched out of his home, his culture, and his traditions, a refugee, after initial numbness, in a sense dies. Everything familiar and native that confirmed the continuity of his life, existence, and being is gone. No one understands him and he understands no one. In an alien land he becomes a mute. Most familiar objects, sounds--indeed most of the milestones which confirmed his being--are suddenly gone. Instead of the reassuring and comforting security of the old country suddenly he is confronted by the cold indifference of a new reality. As he stares at an alien, exotic, and, to him, even fantastic landscape he wonders how he can prove to himself and to others that he exists. Unknowingly, perhaps, he becomes an existentialist. Alienated from his culture, the exile believes that the universe is absurd and that only individual effort can determine and define one's existence. To

mollify the anguish of exile, the refugee seeks tangible, visible proofs of his being. Obsessed by an intense, even ferocious, determination to prove his existence, and to find meaning in a chaotic world he creates families, often lives frugally, acquires property, educates his children, and strives for fulfillment in other ways. A refugee seeks security not for its own sake, but rather to cover his nakedness, to minimize the dizziness of alienation, and to reassure himself. He strives to demonstrate to others that his life is normal once again, that he is no longer a rootless nomad or an odd-looking vagabond but rather a responsible and respected citizen of the New World. The immigrant's frantic activity or his agonizing search, in Landsbergis's view, often becomes a comical or grotesque tableau in which the alternating tragic and comic events are different manifestations of the same despair.

In his correspondence with Stasys Pilka, a director, contemplating the production of The School for Love, Landsbergis (1964b; 1965b) repeatedly pointed out that the central theme or idea, the common purpose which all characters in the play share, is "the search for America." In letters written to the same director Landsbergis (1964a) also made clear that "America" is to be understood to mean Eldorado, Utopia, or paradise. In Five Posts in a Market Place Landsbergis attempts to express the dilemma of freedom fighters in Lithuania and their search for "truth." In

The School for Love he demonstrates the predicament of the immigrant in the new country and his striving for "America." At first glance the two plays appear quite different. The former is a tragic story, while the latter is a comedy. The plots, the characters, time and place of action also do not seem to suggest an apparent kinship between the two plays. And yet a closer look at both works reveals that the two different stories in two different plays have a similar metaphorical meaning. The plot of Five Posts in a Market Place demonstrates not only the Lithuanian freedom fighter's plight and his search for "truth," but also suggests modern man's yearning for spiritual peace. The story of The School for Love exemplifies not only the immigrant's search for "America," but also suggests any alienated man's striving for purposeful life or any modern Everyman's search for paradise. In comedic terms Landsbergis demonstrates the lines of action the seeking for Eldorado may take. The School for Love, like Five Posts in a Market Place, offers no resolution. Clearly Landsbergis is aware that in our time a utopia, a state of ideal perfection, is difficult, if not impossible, to find. Both plays ultimately are the embodiment of modern man's personal disintegration in a world that is, in Landsbergis's view, an illogical and absurd spectacle.

The School for Love, unlike Five Posts in a Market Place, is not only a comedy but also a fantasy. The play

is a bizarre embodiment of the immigrant's search for security and fulfillment in the New World. The play's form is "epic," nonrealistic, and mixed, because Landsbergis believes that, to a refugee, the reality of the new country is in itself "fantastic" or unreal. Landsbergis is convinced that "theatre of illusion" is often too confining for his purposes. A well-made play generally implies a real and orderly world in which the relentless course of fate cannot be influenced or changed by human initiative. The exile cannot accept America as "real," complete in itself, fixed, harmonious, and meaningful. Furthermore, Landsbergis believes that the refugee is comical, perhaps especially to the native (1972b). Similar considerations of the exile's predicament lead Landsbergis to comic exaggeration, satire, farce, and parody.

The School for Love is, therefore, a dark comedy written in the free spirit of the Brechtian "Epic Theatre." Exaggerations, distortions, and the mixing of styles enable Landsbergis to present the fantastic reality more effectively. The audience sees the events and the people as if through a magnifying glass. Unlike the well-made realistic play in which the simple action has one purpose and almost every line pushes the action forward and discloses character, The School for Love, in addition to the main plot, has a subplot and the play's characters advance in several directions. In order to enrich the texture and to widen

the scope of the play, Landsbergis highlights and emphasizes the theme of the search for "America" with a number of less significant, but structurally and thematically important ideas which crisscross the pattern of the play, intertwine with the central theme, and create a total kaleidoscopic effect. Among such subordinate ideas one can readily observe the following: the perverted love of things, of objects, is irreconcilable with love of human beings; greed and arrogance, hubris, eventually bring the downfall of man; and an attempt to mechanize and to automate the essential feelings in human beings results in catastrophe. The School for Love is also epic in the Brechtian sense in that Landsbergis attempts to unify the plots, styles, separate episodes, and presentational elements of the play into one dramatic, dynamic, and exact whole.

One of the ways in which Landsbergis's indebtedness to epic theatre and also his dark, deceptively playful, and entertaining disposition are revealed is through the script's detailed descriptions of the set. In The School for Love Landsbergis creates not the tragic lives and struggles of heroic figures, but rather the dreams, illusions, and ambitions of ordinary people. The action of the play takes place not against a background of five posts but rather against an exaggerated suggestion of skyscrapers. The set as well as characters also indicates Landsbergis's

use of a comic form for a serious purpose. The School for Love, Leviathan's offices, and all the numerous automated studios where instructors teach love by means of sterile and inanimate objects suggest not only the comic vision of the human condition but also evoke the sadness of the human situation in a materialistic and automated environment. In the world of the play things often function as characters and characters acquire qualities of things.

The curtain opens on Leo Leviathan's office, a pocket mirror of his soul. It is crowded to the bursting point and reeks with opulence alleviated by confusion. The door stage-left leads to the foyer, while the door stage-right opens on the stairs leading to the second floor. A house-plant shoots up and disappears, stage-left, into infinity, through a hole made especially for it in the ceiling. A solid safe, bought second-hand, stands beside the plant--a little fort in the shade of a palm tree. A folding advertising sign (to be carried on one's shoulders) leans against the safe. A huge painting dominates the wall and shows, in a popular turn-of-the-century manner, a life-size lady with a larger-than-life bosom, clad in a garment that might be a nightgown or an evening dress; the lady is embracing a (live) horse's head. File cabinets, ledgers, are piled on a table and spill over onto the floor. A butterfly net is leaning against one of the chairs (1963b:I.1).

In addition to creating a "fantastic," at times farcical, and satirical atmosphere the set, the objects, the automata, and other visual elements are intended to express Leviathan's vision of reality, rather than to reflect photographic reality. The appearances are distorted to suggest or to emphasize the relative importance of the play's ideas, to demonstrate the distortion of emotion, and to create a general dark atmosphere. The set and its

appurtenances attempt to express not only the mechanized feelings and activities of Leviathan but also the subjugation of the human spirit by a materialistic society.

In Waiting for Godot Beckett strips his tramps of most possessions and leaves only a tree, a leafless weeping willow, on the stage to suggest man's lonely despair and an apparently static universe. A single tree with a lone branch symbolizes not only the void or the emptiness of the universe, but also the imperceptible but eroding speed of time. Beckett simplifies the set and often restricts or contracts the actions of the actors in order to express his vision of the world.

In The School for Love Landsbergis attempts to suggest man's despair and the horror of materialism by opposite means. Leviathan, the most imposing figure of the play, is more a part of the set or the big cogwheel in an intricate machine than a member of the human race. False ideals have distorted his spirit and transformed him into a creature reminiscent of an automated object. As he sits on his enormous chair, which seems to be a part of him, puffing and pressing the buttons of the buzzing consoles, he seems to grow with every breath. As he bustles around the stage, shouting instructions and orders, he reminds the audience more of a robot than a human being. Leviathan lacks self-knowledge. He is comical because he exemplifies the ludicrous depravity of man. His fantastic conceit

finds expression in his oversimplified reasoning and becomes an extravagant exaggeration not only of an immigrant but of any avaricious man. Leviathan is not a consistently comic character because his depravity and ludicrousness is fundamentally an outer expression of an inner despair. His exterior appearance and his manner may provoke disgust, his difficulties with English may elicit laughter, but as his anguish becomes known to the audience Leviathan appears less comical. His ridiculous behavior is not a social mask which can be easily removed. His twisted vision of the world stems from his basic nature, which is pathetic. In the first act Leviathan explains to Diana and Gabriel why he eats a herring each day.

Listen before you leave, I give you a lesson for all life--free. When man stands on top of the mountain, his mountain is higher if he remembers how it was in the valley. Fifteen years ago I stood in my lowest valley--in an East European town the size of a midget's belch. I was wrapping herrings in newspapers and bowing and saying "Thank you," and "Please," and "Come again." And I could see the photographs of kings, receiving ambassadors, and ambassadors ogling at women with bosoms like heaps of snow, and busty women divorcing millionaires, and millionaires giving them heaps of money which they stuffed down their bosoms. And I said to myself--one day, one day I'll jam my belly at the very top, next to the kings and bosoms and millionaires--and I'm getting there, I can almost touch it. And each day here in America I have a herring wrapped in a newspaper, and it gives me one hell of a lot of joy when I touch the herring and sink my teeth into it because my every pore can still smell that other town--and, oh, how I wish all the town's people could see me now: the store owner, and the parish priest, and all these jokers who teased me about my weight, and the girls who refused to dance with me because my hands smelt of herring.
. . . (1963b:I.12).

Even in the old country Leviathan was an outsider. He did not "belong." In the New World Leviathan gorges himself with things to assuage the pain of alienation. In the process he becomes a thing himself. The feverish activity and the accumulation of objects achieve the opposite result. Lost among the buttons of the intercom boards and grandiose and sophisticated machinery, Leviathan succeeds in becoming only a dizzy robot or a grotesque parody of a human being devoid of feeling or spirit. The stage and its machinery thus represent not only the twisted and perverted vision of Leviathan's search for "America" but also metaphorically indicate the often negative results of man's striving. Leviathan's School for Love becomes an ironic symbol of a vast bureaucracy, of a machine of coercion, or of an all-powerful state exercising totalitarian control over its citizens and in which only the love of things is encouraged. Landsbergis, unlike Beckett, furnishes his central character with possessions and expands the set to the point where it no longer seems to fit the stage. By using Laterna Magika techniques, by exaggerating appearances, and by often speeding up the action of the actors and of automata, Landsbergis creates Leviathan's vision of the world. Leviathan's world, spinning at a dizzying speed like a top, not only provides an ironic contrast to Gabriel's idealistic vision of America and his search for love but

paradoxically suggests man's despair and the static condition of the universe.

(ANGEL dashes out stage-right. Then pandemonium erupts. Several musical scores blare out, trying to drown each other. Petals of flowers flutter down gently, interrupted by bursts of confetti. A violinist descends from the ceiling, serious and engrossed in his music. Doves glide by; cows moo and rumble across the stage; shadows of love students flit by in panic; bicycles-built-for-two collide and fall apart; little cupids ascend and descend together with signs proclaiming the slogans of the School for Love) (1963b:II.34).

Frequent and often detailed stage directions and descriptions of effects which indicate the theatricality of the play also demonstrate how false ideals have distorted man's spirit and transformed him into an automaton. Bergsonian laughter--evoked by mechanical rigidity of human beings--is hollow because it ultimately expresses not only the ridiculous depravity of man but also his anguish. In the last part of act one the audience learns that the newly established School for Love has forced most of its competitors out of business and is well on its way to becoming a prosperous enterprise. The vaudeville scene which, like a subtle danse macabre, culminates the action of act one gives the audience a panoramic picture of the School and its people at the frenzied moment of their success. At the beginning of this scene the frozen people in the tableau look almost like colorful cut-outs or painted figures. Suddenly they come to life. The transformation from still picture to a fast moving one--like the stop and go action

on the movie screen--startles the audience and creates the illusion that the people in the scene are mechanical contraptions or marionettes devoid of feeling, individuality or human dignity. Landsbergis describes the atmosphere and the actors' behavior in the scene.

(As noise and the anthem rush to a crescendo, the stage bursts into light. There they all stand in exactly the same poses as before the blackout, but everything about them radiates smashing success--their beaming faces (except the ANGEL's, exuding misery), top-hats on everybody's head, GABRIEL's new dark pants; a new golden glow suffusing the stage.

When the anthem expires, the noise of typewriters and ticker tapes changes into a background symphony of drills and hammers, punctuated with fanfares. They all stand frozen in the same pose for some 15 seconds and then suddenly erupt into excited movement. Almost to the end of the First Act they speak and move at a staccato speed, portraying a rush of events and days in the manner of a single vaudeville act) (1963b:I.25-26).

Leviathan's dehumanized nature reveals itself through caricature as if to underscore his unfeeling efficiency, as in the following excerpt:

BUTLER: Telegram, Miss.

(DIANA takes the telegram, but suddenly screams and drops it, pointing to the ceiling. A pair of women's slacks descends from above and stops, hanging in the air. A large knife is stuck in them. The stage becomes a little darker. A quivering shaft of light appears above the slacks.)

VOICE OF THE TOP WOMEN'S SLACKS MANUFACTURER:
(Ghostly.) Mr. Leviathan, you killed women's slacks!

LEVIATHAN: Serves them right!

VOICE: You're a murderer!

LEVIATHAN: May I see your admission ticket.

VOICE: I'm a ghost, Mr. Leviathan, a ghost of what has been the top women's slacks manufacturer in this city--in the world.

LEVIATHAN: (Contemptuously.) Women in slacks!

VOICE: Are you deaf to my tragedy?

LEVIATHAN: Sorry, Mac, but order means tragedy to disorder. Now go home! Hey, Angel, can't you turn him off--he's down your alley.

ANGEL: Mark this, Leviathan, it's not easy to turn off a ghost bent on revenge.

VOICE: (Gleefully and maliciously.) You bet! D'you hear that noise? (Distant shouts back-stage.) There they come, the commandos of women's slacks manufacturers. Give them one more hour and they'll be storming your palace walls. It's war, Leviathan!

LEVIATHAN: War? I love war! (To GABRIEL.) We two know why war's good. Because of war, Germans grabbed us for work. And thanks to war, a black market came after the war, and everybody could make money. Without wars the rich would stay rich and the poor would stay beggars. Hooray for war!

(A MANUFACTURER OF KITCHEN APPLIANCES appears in the door.)

MANUFACTURER OF KITCHEN APPLIANCES: Hooray! (His back to the audience, HE is fencing with an invisible enemy back stage. HE is wearing a tin pot on his head for a helmet and brandishing a pot cover as a shield. HE speaks to LEVIATHAN between thrusts.) Don't worry about them slacks merchants!--Touché!--Glub!--We makers of kitchen appliances, we'll repel them.--Wham!--We love you, Mr. Leviathan, honest we do!--En garde!--Glub!--Our sales are booming because the women have come back to the kitchens--thanks to your School for Love!--Yikes!--We repelled the commandos of them slack merchants this morning.--Touché!--Ugh! Our men are around your school now, armed with pots and pans.--Zoom!--We'll repel them again and again!

SEVERAL VOICES OUTSIDE THE WINDOW: AND AGAIN!

(Din and rattle of pots and pans in support.)

LEVIATHAN: I appreciate it, pal. Could you do me a favor and kick out one of these slack big shots, who snuck in here like a ghost.

MANUFACTURER OF KITCHEN APPLIANCES: Ghost? Nothing easier. (Still fencing, HE pulls out of his back pocket a pressurized spray can and hands it to LEVIATHAN.) A squirt or two, just wipe it off afterwards! GET RID OF GHOSTS AT NO EXTRA COST!

LEVIATHAN: Gee, thanks!

ANGEL: Watch out, Leviathan! Don't monkey with the transcendental.

LEVIATHAN: Don't worry, angel--I won't spray it on you.

VOICE OF THE TOP WOMEN'S SLACKS MANUFACTURER: I'll haunt you till your dying day, I'll. . .per. . . (LEVIATHAN squirts at the quivering light above the pants. VOICE stops abruptly, emits a faint scream, and is silent. Confetti-like white fluff flutters down. Lights go back to normal. SERVANT efficiently sweeps up the remains of the ghost) (1963b:I.28-30).

Landsbergis employs two contrasting approaches in depicting the immigrant's anxiety, his fear of non-being, and his search for America. First, through the story of Leviathan which takes up the major portion of The School for Love he seeks to demonstrate the negative and the misguided aspects of the refugee's striving for happiness. The story of Gabriel and Diana represents the second, equally significant, perspective of the immigrant's yearning for fulfillment. Even though these two characters are less fully realized and perhaps less entertaining, they

are, nevertheless, the technical hero and heroine of the play. At the conclusion of The School for Love the young lovers leave Leviathan's disintegrating world, but the future they face is far from certain. Love of human beings wins over the love of things, but their story does not suggest a resolution or an immediate restoration of an orderly and secure world. The future and the ideals represented by Gabriel and Diana are not defined or clearly formulated. The romantic story in Landsbergis's play only indicates a kind of moral norm, a process of searching and of living, and perhaps ultimately a promise of Arcadia and the discovery of God. The mood of the final scene is subdued and thoughtful rather than unreservedly optimistic and triumphantly festive. The play ends, Leviathan's empire collapses, but the story and the lives of Gabriel and Diana and their search for America has only begun. The story of Leviathan demonstrates man's anxiety or his alienation in a brash, twisted, and fantastic manner. The plot of Gabriel and Diana, like the leitmotif in a symphony, restates the play's basic theme of desperation in a romantically lyric key.

The people in The School for Love are moral types or personified abstractions drawn with few broad and sweeping strokes. Their actions are not realistic but rather symbolic. The incidents or the events in which they participate are related to each other logically as

personifications of different moral stances or different lines of action which basically fall into two categories: the "good" and the "bad" or the "evil." The behavior and the dialogue of the people reveal their vision, their dream of fulfillment, but their actions do not demonstrate the complexities and the contradictions of individual minds.

The School for Love is not only a dark comedy but also a kind of modern Morality play. Even though Landsbergis bases the theme and the characters on the Christian mysticism and religious symbols the world of the play is essentially non-Christian. The modern Christian, Landsbergis seems to be saying, believes that the world shows little sense of direction and the purpose or reason for existence, if there is one, is obscured by disorder and lack of moral and ethical principles. The modern Christian is no longer certain that God exists. Under these circumstances, Landsbergis also seems to say, existence often appears to be a tragic farce both terrifying and absurd. Left face to face with a preposterous and meaningless world, in his despair the modern Christian often diverts his worship of God to Mammon. His paradise becomes not the transcendental and final abode of the righteous after death, but rather a temporal world, a materialistic society, in which Christian values become replaced by cynical opportunism. The School for Love is a modern Morality play in which Landsbergis demonstrates not the spiritual struggle

between Good and Evil Angels for man's soul, nor presents a didactic lesson to illustrate that life is a preparation for eternity. Rather by means of Christian symbols he presents the alienated man's striving for meaningful existence in a world without God.

Leviathan's name quite obviously represents something more than himself. The word "leviathan" means a sea monster. In the Old Testament and Christian literature leviathan often symbolizes evil. As has been pointed out, Landsbergis's Leviathan is a grotesque and painful embodiment of the immigrant's misdirected striving for America and, metaphorically, a modern man's search for fulfillment and meaning in an alienated world. Leo Leviathan is also the antithesis of the Christian. He is a ludicrously sad and ironic personification of modern Everyman's search for paradise. Leo Leviathan is convinced that material order comprises the whole of existence. His paradise, therefore, is an earthly one in which love, justice and honor, from his point of view, are only worn out phrases. The journey of his life is not a preparation for eternal life but rather a progression from a herring salesman in the old country to a leviathan of power and, finally, after his empire collapses, to a desperately lonely and pathetic man in the New World.

Leviathan's antagonist, The Angel, is an effective dramatic character because he is a villainous seducer of

Leviathan. However, The Angel is not a devil in disguise, he is not a Mephistophiles sent by Lucifer to trap Leviathan's soul, and he has no supernatural interest in Landsbergis's play. The Angel, a personified abstraction based on the Morality play tradition, is simply a misanthropic postal clerk, a symbol of envy and revenge. He secretly hates Leviathan because the monstrous materialist destroyed his rare collection of stamps which represented his security in America and also because Leviathan quickly gained wealth and power in the New World. In the first act The Angel declares his intention to which he remains consistent all through the play.

. . . I wanted your [Leviathan's] life, because you had taken away my world! Revenge--I said--you'll be my America (1963b:I.19)!

The Angel's machinations set the action of the play in motion and provide a contrast to Gabriel's action. At the end of the play Gabriel exposes The Angel for what he really is, an envious and revengeful man.

Gabriel, the archangel, in Landsbergis's play is not a divine messenger or bearer of good news as his name implies. He does not appeal to Leviathan to repent and call upon the mercy of God. He does not beckon the great sinner to the Last Judgment. The call of this Gabriel's trumpet is a subdued and poetic summons, almost an invocation, not upon the deity but rather upon the human spirit, or the elemental force of nature to rise from the shambles

of Leviathan's empire and to seek the true America. He seems to be aware of a mysterious mission which he cannot communicate clearly to Diana and the audience because it is only an intuitive poetic vision, a vision not only of America, but also perhaps of the ultimate mystery of God.

At the end of the play the young lovers stand alone on an empty stage in no man's land between the chaotic world of Leviathan and the implied remoteness of America. The starkness and the simplicity of the surroundings of the last scene focus the audience's attention on Gabriel's and Diana's individuality, their desperation, and their lonely and resigned existence. The lyric passivity of the scene provides a striking contrast to the rest of the play and demonstrates the essential isolation of the immigrant and also of any alienated man. As Gabriel and Diana tear themselves away from Leviathan to their own idealistic vision they take the first step toward the discovery of America which counterbalances their sense of despair and suffuses the last scene and the whole play with a dignified atmosphere. Gabriel and Diana are the alienated people, two literal and figurative exiles for whom "tomorrow [is] another name for a dream" (1963b:III.36).

The School for Love, like Five Posts in a Market Place, offers no resolution. Landsbergis holds the materialistic and the idealistic elements of the play together, and maintains the constant interplay between the hedonistic

world of Leviathan and the utopian vision of Gabriel based on Christian symbolism by means of epic theatricalism and the techniques of the Theatre of the Absurd. Thus he presents a dual perspective of the theme of the play which is the immigrant's search for America as well as any modern Everyman's yearning for fulfillment. America may be unreachable, but man must seek happiness even if his search may at the end be futile. The striving itself, Landsbergis seems to say, gives meaning to man's existence.

CHAPTER 5

THE LAST PICNIC

From November 25 through 28, 1971, the Lithuanian community of Chicago sponsored a Lithuanian theatre festival. The festival, during which a contest of original dramatic works was held, commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Lithuanian National Theatre. Several Lithuanian theatre organizations participated in the contest by presenting original works by Lithuanian dramatists. Landsbergis's The Last Picnic, presented by the Los Angeles Lithuanian theatre group on November 28, 1971, won the first prize. The play has been translated by the author, but, to date, it has not been produced in English.

The Last Picnic, according to Landsbergis, is a "melotragicomedy." The action of the play takes place in "the rectory of a melting [aging and disintegrating] Lithuanian parish in a New England town" and in "a spacious meadow ringed by old trees" nearby (Landsbergis 1973a:i). The time is the 1960's. The play opens on the eve of a picnic which has been a parish tradition for over twenty years.

Father Clement, the old pastor of the parish, now dead, encouraged the festivals during his lifetime. The

summer gatherings offered an opportunity for émigré pensioners mostly from factories and shutdown mills of Boston, Hartford, Worcester, and other New England cities to meet, to speak Lithuanian, and to enjoy themselves in pleasant surroundings. The picnics were also financially beneficial to the parish.

Bartholomew is the leader and the symbolic representative of these older people. For many years he had been in charge of this annual celebration as well as of most picnics for miles around and amusingly became known as the "Generalissimo of Picnics." The usually festive atmosphere of the picnic and Bartholomew's plans for merrymaking this summer are darkened not only by the recent death of Father Clement, but also by yet another event. The Bishop of Boston has appointed a young priest of Lithuanian descent to be the new pastor of the parish. When the idealistic and young reformer from Boston arrives to take over the parish, he finds the parish grounds converted into an amusement park, a carnival--a sight he hardly expected. In the meadow by the rectory he observes a fortune wheel, rows of crude picnic tables, and booths with such items as lottery prizes, miniature bottles of "Four Roses," plastic figures of Jesus in cellophane wrappers, Tammy dolls, lipsticks, gilded nutcrackers with John F. Kennedy's head, toe beautifiers, and similar articles gloriously displayed, ready for the grand opening. When a "scratchy old-fashioned

waltz suddenly erupts from the loudspeaker" (1973a:I.5) the young priest's indignation and righteous anger become almost uncontrollable. Martha, the parish housekeeper, attempts to subdue the new pastor's anger but her efforts are to no avail. The young priest is determined to put an end to the picnic and to chase the merchants, the drunkards, and the pleasure seekers out of the temple and its holy grounds.

More than in any other year Bartholomew looked forward to this summer's celebration not only because the number of picnics all over New England was decreasing and his services were less and less needed, but also, because for the first time he was able to talk his son, Bart Jr., into coming with him and taking part in the festivities. Bart Jr. and his friends, Rooney and Mr. Spock, members of a guitar trio, who are on their way to Acadia Park in Canada to participate in a young people's music festival, agree to stop by and to entertain the people at the picnic. During the free hours the young men plan to complete the new song they are preparing for the Canadian festival. As Bartholomew proudly introduces his son and his son's friends to Martha and her young niece, Meta, the loudspeaker suddenly stops. Instinctively sensing that something is wrong Bartholomew quickly crosses himself.

Soon the priest enters and informs Bartholomew that "the picnics are finished" (1973a:I.17). Bartholomew is

stunned. He demands to know why the priest has decided to abolish the traditional gatherings which for years benefited not only the people, but also, the parish. In no uncertain terms the priest explains that the times and the church are changing and that old ways must give way to new. After a prolonged and emotional argument with Bartholomew, the priest exits. Fearing that the old man may have a heart attack, Martha tries to calm him. "An icy hand" (1973a:I.11) grabs Bartholomew's heart when he thinks of summers without picnics, because not only do the meadow, its trees, and its people remind him of Lithuania, the great festival of St. John, and his youth, but also, because this year's celebration is his opportunity, perhaps the last one, to find a way to be reunited with his long-haired and guitar-playing son.

The conflict between the pastor and Bartholomew reaches its climax later the same night when, in the second act, Bartholomew and his friends, Vince and Matthew, having had a few drinks, decide to punish the priest. Bart Jr., Rooney, and Mr. Spock, who join the older men's drinking party in a spirit of camaraderie, concur that "an image, an unforgettable image must be engraved in his [the priest's] mind" (1973a:II.41), because he ruined their holiday and stamped out the sacred flame of the festival for all time. After a heated discussion and a few more drinks the men finally accept Rooney's plan. Bartholomew will pretend

that he has had a stroke and is paralyzed because the priest's unreasonable and unjustifiable decision to shut down the picnic was too much for an old man to bear. The men set up an elaborate, almost farcical, deathbed scene and send out Rooney to tell the priest that Bartholomew is near death and needs the last rites. Soon the priest arrives in slippers, black raincoat over his pajamas, with the prayer book and holy oils in his hand.

The comic scene reaches a surprisingly serious climax when the contrite priest, believing that he is the cause of Bartholomew's paralysis, explains how he became a church reformer, why he decided to free the parish from medieval traditions, and why he had no choice but to abolish the picnics. The tragicomic scene comes to an end when Annie, Bartholomew's lady friend, believing that the old sinner is dying, in her "eulogy" begins to list Bartholomew's virtues.

Did you, did anybody, think he was a grade-A sinner, ready for hell. To tell you the truth, his sins of the flesh were only words. . . . A pinch, a slap. . . . Otherwise, hot air. . . . He couldn't do much any-more (1973a:II.55).

Suddenly Bartholomew "sits up, as if stung by a bee" and starts passionately to deny Annie's allegations. The priest and Annie realize that they have been tricked.

The conflict between the pastor and Bartholomew is resolved in the third act when Vince, a former teacher as well as a friend of Bartholomew, convinces the young priest

that to the old man the meadow is an enchanted, almost holy place. He reminds the young Savonarola of his speeches of the previous night concerning the new Christianity, church reforms, and the folk mass, and goes on to say that Bartholomew and the people of the older generation "have been celebrating folk masses here for the past twenty years Their prayers, their drinking, their embracing, their annual sacred dance on the magic meadow" (1973a: III.63) were nothing but another kind of folk mass. The priest relents. He realizes that he was too severe, that Bartholomew's yearning for an ideal mental and emotional state which the old man cannot define and his own vision of the new Christianity may be linked anew in the enchanted meadow.

The play ends as the final preparations are being made for the last picnic. Bart Jr., Rooney, and Mr. Spock complete the new song based on an old Lithuanian folk melody and invite Bartholomew to come with them to Canada and to become their manager.

America is made up of people from almost every nation of the world. Most Americans are aware that their country, their culture, and their traditions are to a large extent a product of succeeding waves of immigration. The immigrants' achievements and their failings constitute the story of the New Nation's birth, growth, and development, and perhaps even foreshadow what it will be tomorrow.

American civilization is the result of continuous interaction between the foreign heritage which the immigrants brought with them, and the indigenous culture and natural surroundings which they found here. From the immigrants who came to Jamestown and Plymouth in the early seventeenth century to the refugees who fled from various countries of Europe to America after World War II, the history of the New World reveals the immense accomplishments and disheartening failings of the immigrants and the nation. History records the joys and sorrows not only of the immigrants but of the New World as a whole.

During the early years of dispossession the immigrant in his pursuit of contentment in the New World soon discovered that the vast and indifferent cities, the crowded tenements, and the noisy factories would never replace the world he left behind. To soften the shock of alienation he sought material security as well as the company of fellow immigrants. A stranger in the immediate world which surrounded him the refugee was acutely aware of his loneliness. He knew that alone he was doomed. To find comfort in the alien land he created a variety of formal and informal institutions. He built cultural centers and churches, organized communities and parishes, established schools and theatres. He constructed philanthropic institutions and benevolent societies, published newspapers and books, and by various other means sought to diminish

the loneliness of his condition. By creating new models of fellowship he acquired a sense of security against his complete isolation.

As the years went by the immigrant gradually realized that he could not hold on to the remnants of his past. He could not control the course of events and the ever changing conditions of his existence. Though he clung with tenacious determination to the vestiges of home, of culture, and of the old traditions which the immigrant community and its institutions provided and urged his growing children to hold together he realized that the dream of maintaining the old ways indefinitely and of keeping the family together were in many instances only a dream. He could not control the flow of time and the inevitable changes the new circumstances brought about. As the years passed and the immigrant grew older the number of communities and the scope of their activities decreased. He could envision the day when there would be few remnants of his culture left, when his children and his children's children would perhaps lose even the memory of their immigrant heritage.

The dissimilarity of experiences between the older and the younger generations widened with time. As the children ventured out from home into the mainstream of American life where challenging opportunities awaited them and subjected themselves to the social, economic, and

cultural influences of the New World the link between the generations weakened. Life at the American educational institutions and the inevitable social and cultural contacts increased the separation between the parents and their offspring. The sons and the daughters of the immigrants were gradually discovering new ways of living which promised to bring to realization their need for self-fulfillment and their longing for individuality.

The younger generation of the immigrants learned that the process of acclimatization and acculturation, though in many cases less difficult than that of their parents, was not effortless or simple. Some were infants or in their teens when they left their homes. Their early childhood passed not within the secure environment and culture of the native country, but rather, within the air raid shelters, within the bombed out ruins of foreign cities, and, later, under the unsettled conditions of the refugee camps scattered in various parts of war torn Europe. They did not have the opportunity to acquire the proper and normal ways of home and to experience the comforting security of the native land and culture.

The eventual exposure to American traditions and educational institutions further confused the younger immigrant generation. Often they did not know where they belonged. They were awkward and uncomfortable in the ways of the old country as well as of the new. As they learned

English, they began to forget the language of their parents. Eventually many of the younger immigrants became reasonably skilled in both languages, but in most cases the mastery of either language, not to mention of both, remained outside their reach. Their names, accents, appearance, and manners indicated the origin of their birth and made acculturation difficult, if not impossible. As time went on once vivid memories of the old country, unnurtured by the native environment and unguided by the systematic educational process, faded into the distant horizon. However, most immigrants of the younger generation retained a nostalgically haunting sensation of undefined loyalty to the home of their childhood. Thus, many younger immigrants, perhaps no less than the old ones, felt that they belonged neither to the Old World nor to the New. They were strangers in both.

The difficulties of acculturation did not cease with the next or the youngest generation. These children were born into their culture and their environment. They had never known the old country, had not experienced the horrors of war, and had not felt the anguish of dispossession. They were the natural citizens of the New World. And yet, in time, the immigrants' children became aware that the disturbing uncertainty which troubled the lives of their parents was also a part of their own existence. Perhaps the first time these children felt the irreconcilable

sense of divided loyalty, the lack of identity, and of belonging most clearly was when they faced the classmates and the teacher at school (Handlin 1973:179,203-53). As Handlin points out (1973:218):

If it did nothing else to the child, the school introduced into his life a rival source of authority. The day the little boy hesitantly made his way into the classroom, the image of the teacher began to compete with that of the father. The one like the other laid down a rigid code of behavior, demanded absolute obedience, and stood ready to punish infractions with swift severity. The day the youngster came back to criticize his home (They say in school that . . .) his parents knew they would have to struggle for his loyalty.

The youngsters, as their elders, were caught between the two worlds. The parents represented the Old World and the teacher the New. The parents attempted to shape the character of their children along the moral, ethical, and cultural principles they knew and understood. On the other hand, outside the immediate family circle, the teacher, often unintentionally, insisted on the reasonable, practical, factual, but frequently contradictory rules of action and of conduct. What the children were told by their parents at home and what they heard from the teacher at school not only divided their loyalty, but also brought about the painful awareness of estrangement. The children could not fully accept either system of values. They were strangers in the Old as well as the New Worlds.

Numerous works have been written in the social sciences and other disciplines which deal with the specific

phases of the immigrants' saga in America and investigate the process and the result of the interplay between the past and present traditions, the old and the new cultures. Fictional treatments of their story have often dealt with certain typical themes: the search for security in the New World, assimilation and its effects on the older and the younger generations, changing systems of values, or the shifting cultural patterns of the country. The special craft and artistry of the immigrant dramatist is to set forth these themes through the characters who exemplify them and through the conflicts which bring out their full implications.

In The School for Love Landsbergis attempts to recreate his first impressions about America and to demonstrate the immigrant's initial anxiety, his fear of non-being, and his often frantic search for America. Metaphorically, he also suggests any alienated man's striving for meaningful life. The Last Picnic shows the immigrant's feelings, his thoughts, and his dreams approximately twenty years later. The play is not a sequel to The School for Love but rather a restatement, reevaluation, and continuation of the immigrant's search for America theme from the perspective of time. The place, the time of action, the characters, and the style of the two plays are different, but the theme of the immigrant's yearning for spiritual

peace and his fear of non-being occupies Landsbergis's mind in The Last Picnic as it did in The School for Love.

In The Last Picnic, unlike in The School for Love, the immigrant's dizziness of alienation is more subdued. The estrangement from the native land and its culture has been assuaged by time and by accomplishment. Unlike in The School for Love, the people in The Last Picnic are reasonably secure and for the most part lead normal lives. Some have become active, responsible, and respected members of the immigrant as well as of the non-immigrant communities and institutions. Many have raised and educated their children, acquired property, and saved enough money to retire comfortably. The anguish of alienation of many immigrants has settled down to a resigned determination to endure, to dream, and to strive for happiness in the adopted culture.

Can a man feel really happy living away from where he was born? Perhaps in some instances he can. However, in many cases the immigrant's life, his failures, and frequently his successes and achievements even after many years of living and working in the New World remain essentially the agonizing manifestations of his continuous striving for contentment and for identity. By recreating some of the tangible signs of his past in the New World and by reaching into his memories the immigrant retained a link with his homeland and thus was able to maintain a

sense of belonging. But with the passing of years, the link has grown weaker; the roots in the New World are now deep and strong enough to nourish his body but in many instances not his spirit. The pain of estrangement remains.

The Last Picnic, a "melotragicomedie," shows the influence of two artistic movements: realism and symbolism. The style, the form, and the characterization of the play compared with Five Posts in a Market Place or The School for Love are distinctly more realistic. Of the three plays discussed in this study The Last Picnic comes closest to being a well-made play. The scope of the play is more restricted. The tone is calmer. The irony is milder and less bitter. The time of the action is contemporary. The characters, plot, exposition, preparation for the future events, reversals, believable resolution, and other rules which are characteristic of the realistic play are more consistently followed in this play than in any other Landsbergis has written to date.

In an interview, Landsbergis (1972b:34) stated:

. . . I enjoyed writing The Last Picnic because here I was working in that [realistic] mold. I was testing myself, seeing if I could do it. . . . I enjoyed it as a challenge but I don't believe in being anchored [to any one style].

Landsbergis (1972c:81) believes that if there are weaknesses in the play they stem not from his choice of a realistic theme or the ethnic subject matter but rather from

the failure of his craft and his artistic vision. He is aware of the limitations of a strictly realistic play (1972c:76). He knows that the tenets of realism are often too confining and that the rules of a well-made play inhibit his aesthetic perception and natural inclination (1972b:33,34).

. . . I think my attitude is flexible. . . . I am very tempted to quote Emerson, "Consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," but of course this would be a very misleading quote--self-indulgent--and also not quite correct. I do believe in consistency, but perhaps the larger consistency--one may have consistency in a play with mixed styles--the larger, overall consistency.

The Last Picnic, therefore, was an experiment and, in Landsbergis's own phrase, "a new adventure" (1972b:20,31).

Unlike The School for Love, The Last Picnic represents not a bizarre dream, but rather an attitude toward life under stress. In order to examine the conflict between the younger and the older immigrant generations and to suggest a resolution Landsbergis conceives The Last Picnic without unnecessary embellishments, exaggerations, and theatrical tricks. He tells his story simply, without artificial devices, and leaves the audience with a recognizable experience which is real and believable.

The action of The Last Picnic takes place not against the expressionistic setting of the five posts or the backdrop of jagged skyscrapers, but rather against the serene background of the sky and the rectory "nestled close

to a spacious meadow, ringed by old trees" (Landsbergis 1973a:i). The set creates a dreamy and romantic mood. However, the pastoral environment in which most of the action of the play takes place is not without a symbolic meaning. The meadow, the old trees, and the rectory are symbols of a way of life and of worship. Just as the play as a whole encompasses the range of Lithuanian immigrant social groups from the older to the younger generations so the set is the embodiment of the security of the homeland, of youth, of happiness, and of their passing. More than that, metaphorically, the pastoral setting suggests man's need to return to nature. The wheel of fortune symbolizes not only the unpredictable and the changing condition of human existence, but also the ironic intrusion of artificiality and materialism on the originally unaffected order of nature. The symbolism is not a loose sentimentality or lyricism for its own sake, but a representation of a once harmonious and natural world which is in a state of disharmony and transition.

In The Last Picnic Landsbergis's heroes though infused with symbolic significance are essentially natural, straightforward, ordinary people caught in the vicissitudes of living. The dialogue is not stark or gloomy, but rather poetic and often humorous. Even though the play is committed to verisimilitude Landsbergis's "slice of life" is neither depressingly real nor unduly pessimistic. The play

is a thoughtful and balanced blend of serious and comical episodes which exemplify the immigrant's striving to find a way to retain his identity and his sense of belonging in a world that is unintentionally unfriendly and indifferent to him. The Last Picnic is not an indictment of society or a call to revolution, but rather a sympathetic and yet objective depiction of the immigrant's fear of "non-being" and his restless search for contentment and for meaningful life.

The basic action of the play is the movement of two views or beliefs toward revelation and eventual resolution. One view is represented by Bartholomew, the other by the young pastor. At various points in the play the two views clash. At the end Vince, speaking for the dramatist, attempts to reconcile and to synthesize the two conflicting attitudes and to suggest a third which is the modification and the linking of both. The union of both views which at the end of the play becomes the search for Acadia is represented by the young musicians. The search for Acadia constitutes the resolution and the "message" of the play.

Bartholomew is a brash, coarse, and at times vulgar retired steel factory worker. Despite his coarse manner he is a sympathetic character. The rough exterior hides the soul of a dreamer. His "craggy face is alert, his voice resonant, his strength belies his gray-haired age" (1973a: I.6). For over twenty years Bartholomew has been held in

affection by most people around him. He is an efficient and likable overseer of the picnics.

Bartholomew lives in the past. He is the embodiment of the older generation of immigrants who spent the best part of their lives in the steel mills, the factories, and the slaughter houses of America. Bartholomew is determined to preserve at all cost the picnic tradition and the life it represents. The picnics offer him a sense of involvement and of belonging. They provide a coherent justification of his place in the universe.

At the beginning of the play an old-fashioned waltz playing over the loudspeaker sets the mood for the celebration which is about to begin. The loudspeaker music also suggests the once harmonious and meaningful past and ironically foreshadows the end of the picnic tradition. When the music suddenly stops Bartholomew addresses Martha:

A song torn in half--it's like an icy hand grabbing at my heart. A star falls through such silence. Things don't look so good in other parishes, Martha. Some are shutting down the picnics, others are stalling. Jelly-brains (1973a:I.11)!

Bartholomew's poetic, almost mystical, language, his countenance, and his bearing suggest a closeness or intimacy with nature. In the third act Vince points out to the young priest that "in a different civilization he [Bartholomew] would have been a magician, a shaman, a sorcerer" (III.64). During the introductory scene Bartholomew

assures the new pastor that the weather will be fine for the picnic.

Don't worry about the sun, Father. Martha, tell him how it was here three years ago. Pea-soup fog, drizzle, until--exactly three minutes of twelve!--the sun breaks through, like a shiny boot through canvas. The whole meadow lit up (I.16)!

To Bartholomew the picnics mean the return to nature. The green oasis which Vince calls the enchanted meadow for many years has been the source of Bartholomew's strength. He is at home in nature. The spontaneity with which Bartholomew relates to the flow of life on the picnic grounds is reminiscent of the easy and natural passage of life he remembers in his native land. Here on the picnic grounds as in the small town across the Atlantic the meadow and the trees are the same in substance and in essence. They look at the same familiar sky and breathe the same familiar air. They are the friends of his youth.

That's why it's so good to come here at last, where everything's clear, secure. My favorite picnic. Not for nothing I save it for the end. My meadow, broad like the sea, trees of my own age, like the men who worked shoulder to my shoulder in my young days by the giant ovens and their flames. And the echo here, nowhere more spacious. Just listen (I.11).

In a loud voice Bartholomew begins to sing an old Lithuanian folk song which epitomizes Bartholomew's closeness to nature, his nostalgic attachment to the past, to the memories of his youth, and to the longing for "spiritual peace."

The overzealous pastor denigrates the old traditions including the picnics by referring to them as

half-dead vulgar remnants of the Middle Ages. The priest is yet to discover the nature and the importance of the old traditions. He calls Bartholomew an old fraud. Bartholomew defends himself. He speaks not only for himself but also for the thousands of immigrants who at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth centuries came to America in pursuit of a new hope.

. . . I was younger than you when I came to America, bright-eyed, stronger than a bull. It was like going straight into hell on a baker's-peel--I stoked giant ovens, six days a week, twelve hours a day. Wheezing, gasping, pouring cheap beer down the gullet. I hummed, I screamed native songs through the flames, through noise. And you, you who've been spared the hell-fire, you dare to teach and preach to those who went through the flames (II.56)!

The flames of the ovens, the symbols of grief, still rage in Bartholomew's heart. Now as then the picnics, the songs, and the memories of the homeland ease the pain of harsh reality, weaken the sense of separateness, and offer a refuge from the anguish of the alien world. "A world without the meadows?! That's impossible. Without this meadow, even heavens would wither away" (I.18)!

All through the play Bartholomew tries desperately to convince the priest that certain beliefs and ways never change. They must not change. "How can everything change?! Here--the shadow of the cross, from the steeple across the meadow! Is the cross changing?!" Defensive, but firm, the young reformer answers, "The cross remains--the church is changing. We're finally unmooring ourselves from the

Middle Ages" (I.17). Bartholomew sees no way out except to hold onto the past as long as possible. He ignores the facts and the reality of inevitable change now as he had many years ago because he never knew what to do about them. "Changing, changing! What's changing? Manure, that's what changes. Won't the fall come again? Winter, spring, and summer? Without change. And men will pray and sing and drink and die" (I.17)! The ring of finality in the priest's words concludes the discussion. "There's another world, outside your meadow, and it's changing. It must change" (I.17)! The picnics are finished.

Bartholomew is a comic-pathetic portrait of an old immigrant drawn with candor and understanding. Behind him lies a fading and nostalgic tradition. But the picnics and the idyllic life they represent cannot survive unchanged in the world where change and practicality rule the day. Bartholomew faces defeat, Landsbergis seems to be saying, unless he modifies the old traditional ways and the outdated attitude toward life.

The pastor, like Bartholomew, is also an idealist. Unlike Bartholomew who lives in the past, the priest is concerned with the present. The young builder of the city of God and of man feels he must challenge Bartholomew and his world and expose the sordidness of antiquated traditions. He believes that the parish, a microcosm of traditional Catholicism, is an outdated institution which he

will reform single-handedly. Like so many idealists the young and the well-meaning priest overreaches himself and soon has to pay a price for his victory over Bartholomew and for his overzealous idealism.

Bartholomew's "paralysis" episode at the end of the second act is the farcical climax of the otherwise realistic play. Up to this point in the play the behavior of the characters has been believable and real. In the "paralysis" scene Landsbergis exaggerates and overstresses the action of the characters and thus makes their behavior not only more amusing but also more accessible to the scrutiny and the judgment of the audience. The scene also has another intent. Bartholomew's pretended illness, the priest's confession at the side of the old man's "deathbed," Annie's lament, and other farcical elements which appear loosely joined are actually carefully selected and juxtaposed to amuse as well as to demonstrate the punishment of the priest and of Bartholomew for their misguided idealism.

In the "paralysis" scene the priest is humiliated and forced to confess his "sins" not only because he caused Bartholomew's "illness," but also because he, as Matthew puts it, brought shame on his father and his mother.

PRIEST: What do you want me to confess?! My father?
All right! That I remember him huge and roaring
drunk, in an amusement park, and me a child who
was sent to look for him. Is that enough?

MATTHEW: He gave you a good thrashing, I hope.

PRIEST: Will nobody here try to understand me? Anyone? (He scans their faces with his eyes. Brief silence.) I'll tell you of my first night. . . . the first night of my priesthood. I couldn't sleep. I watched the sun rising above a Boston slum--my vineyard, the beginning of my harvest. That same morning a twelve-year old girl collapsed almost under my window. Her hair brushed against a garbage can, her maddened eyes were reaching for the fire escape--a world she, her peers, didn't create. . . . The needle marks in her arm pierced my eyes and stabbed Veronica's veil; from that morning on that was my living faith! I carried her image to my parents, my community. They turned their backs on me. The butterflies in the Old World meadows of their childhood were more real for them than today's rats in hashish corridors. I knelt before my church and laid the pierced veil at her feet. My church yawned back at me and kept staring past me into the past. I feared that my anger might consume my love and my hope. But my church didn't remain frozen--she sang out, her crust started breaking. With my hope reborn, I went into the streets to hasten the rebirth of my church! . . .

My voice, screaming in the desert, was too crude for Latin velvet ears. The bishop reprimanded me "with utmost severity and sorrow" and transferred me here, to "a sleepy backwater, to cool it, as they say now." And what did I see here on my arrival? Five and ten cent vulgarity, the fecal matter of a consumer civilization, medieval traditions. All that chains my church to the outlived past, to the rotten present . . . I wanted . . . Did I forget charity (II.49-50)?

Bartholomew is punished, too. In the same scene he is made into a pathetic clown and a fool. His reputation as a ladies' man is destroyed in a single stroke when Annie, Bartholomew's lady friend, believing that "the king of picnics" is dying, in her "eulogy" unwittingly reveals that Bartholomew was never "an arch sinner" (II.54).

Bartholomew's "sins of the flesh," Annie states, were only words and a lot of "hot air" (II.55).

In the final act Vince, speaking for the dramatist, attempts to put an end to the hostility between Bartholomew and the priest. Looking back on the last night's episode he points out to the priest that "when all was over, they [the men who arranged Bartholomew's illness episode] respected you more and understood us better than yesterday. Perhaps it was a holy farce" (III.61)? Continuing to sooth the priest's deeply hurt feelings Vince goes on to say that "all our souls were burnt" and that the time has come to apply "the healing balm" to the wounds. Vince concludes his reconciliatory plea by expressing the hope that,

your and Bartholomew's dreams, his world and yours, perhaps they'll meet and will be linked anew in the enchanted meadow? The needle wounds in the girl's skin--and Bartholomew's footprints in the meadow, the flame scars of his past years (III.64).

Vince thus expresses the theme of the play. He epitomizes the immigrant's new and rejuvenated idealism. Heeding Vince's earnest request Bartholomew and the priest meet once again but soon part more convinced than ever that they will never think the same way.

The conflict between Bartholomew and the priest is not meant to demonstrate which man is stronger, wiser, or superior, but rather to present and to illuminate the struggle between the two traditions. Landsbergis is sympathetic to both men and the beliefs they represent. He

depicts both characters with deep understanding, objectivity, and humor. At the same time he recognizes that Bartholomew as well as the priest are two self-deceiving dreamers who are unwilling or unable to see that only the reuniting of both traditions offers a hope for a meaningful future. Ultimately both unyielding men are examples of broken-hearted idealism. However, the self-deception to which Bartholomew and the priest succumb and for which they are punished does not mean that Landsbergis rejects idealism. On the contrary the theme of rejuvenated idealism which Vince first sounded in the scene with the priest Landsbergis metaphorically repeats in the song at the conclusion of the play.

In an interview Landsbergis (1972c:81) points out that The Last Picnic is "very much a play about music, among other things." The theme of the play, he states (1972c:81,82), "is the search for a melody, . . . for a song . . . [and] for Acadia." Bartholomew's song carefully integrated into the texture of the play and repeated by him at various points in different emotional as well as musical keys indicates more than the musical and the cyclical nature of the play. At the end of the play the song is heard once again in a different arrangement. The "new" composition is now performed by the young musicians. Bart Jr., Rooney, and Mr. Spock are enthusiastic about their song. They believe that the new composition will be a

great success at the music festival in Acadia. Thus like a repeated melody in a symphony or a sonata the song reiterates the theme of the play, gives a sense of unity, and lifts the world of the play to the lyrical and meditative plane.

The Last Picnic, like The School for Love, concludes with a poetic vision. The immigrant's search for America in The School for Love, in The Last Picnic becomes his search for Acadia. The picnic is finished. The festival in Acadia, an idyllic "land up north," is about to begin. The linking of the past and the present or of the younger and the older generations is implied by Bartholomew's acceptance of a managerial position with the young musicians. The music festival for which Bart Jr., Rooney, Mr. Spock, and Bartholomew prepare to leave at the end of the play metaphorically suggests the promise of the rejuvenated and harmonious life in Acadia.

The comic-pathetic world of the play and its people thus reveals Landsbergis's deep concern and understanding not only of the immigrant's but of any man's predicament in attempting to resolve the differences between the older and the younger generations and between the past and the present. In Landsbergis's view, only the rejuvenated union of both generations offers the promise of hope, of survival, and of a fulfilling future. The pastoral and the lyric elements elevate the play above the level of drab reality,

widen the scope, and add a symbolic and universal dimension to the otherwise realistic play.

The Last Picnic depicts the immigrant's search for contentment and for identity as well as any alienated man's desperate need to belong. The play suggests a context of a larger world which demands a fresh outlook toward life and challenges the imagination, the intelligence, and the capacity for action not only of the immigrants but of all people who are aware of the passing of time and the ever changing condition of human existence.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study has been to investigate the structural influences, the style, and the meaning in three dramatic works of Algirdas Landsbergis, a Lithuanian playwright in exile. Five Posts in a Market Place, The School for Love, and The Last Picnic are complex and multi-leveled works. Each play demonstrates Landsbergis's use of "an open form and mixture of genres" (Landsbergis 1972b:4). Landsbergis believes that "the stylistic approach should differ with each play" (Landsbergis 1972b:31). He thus creates his own style by combining the elements of the representational theatre, the theatre of the absurd, and the Brechtian "Epic Theatre" with those of his native cultural heritage and the rich native folklore tradition of Lithuania.

To enrich the texture and to widen the scope of the play Landsbergis employs a number of theatrical devices. He uses scenery, lighting, properties, costumes, music, sound effects, and other visual and aural resources of the theatre not only for structural and emotional but also for symbolic values. Landsbergis makes regular use of songs which serve a particularly significant function in his plays. Frequently he introduces a song in the early part

of the play and then repeats it in the same or modified form in a new context. The song thus acquires a new meaning and yet retains a part of the old one. The song also suggests the theme of the play and gives a sense of cyclical unity and wholeness.

Five Posts in a Market Place, The School for Love, and The Last Picnic depict and illuminate the exile's search for a meaningful life in a world which, in Landsbergis's view, is close to absurdity. However, Landsbergis's vision of the world is not totally pessimistic. The people in his plays are not adrift in a world devoid of all purpose. Their anxiety and fear of "non-being" are counterbalanced by hope, by resigned determination to endure, and by a vision of paradise lost. Landsbergis's characters thus actively seek to regain their sense of identity and of belonging. Metaphorically Landsbergis's plays suggest any alienated man's striving for purposeful existence and for "spiritual peace."

APPENDIX A

FOUR OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL DIRECTORS OF THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL THEATRE OF DRAMA

Information on the following four directors of the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama was obtained primarily from the written accounts of the three men who were members of the company, Stasys Pilka (1945:6-11), Antanas Gustaitis (1971:8-12), and Stasys Santvaras (1968:662-69).

Kastantas Glinskis (1886-1938) was the organizer of the Lithuanian theatre in St. Petersburg as well as the second director of the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama. Between 1920 and 1939 he directed over thirty productions. Glinskis was particularly concerned with theatrical preparation of the actor. Diction, articulation, and graceful, as well as motivated, movement and gesture were of the utmost importance. As an actor and director Glinskis possessed greatest delicacy and subtlety. Under his leadership the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama matured into an effective ensemble unit.

Juozas Vaičkus (1885-1935) is considered by many to be the founder of Lithuanian theatre. He was trained at the Imperial Drama School in St. Petersburg and later worked as an actor at the Alexandrinsky Theatre. After

World War I he returned to Kaunas and, becoming aware of the lack of trained actors, he opened the first acting school in Lithuania. Thus he was responsible for developing the first group of professional actors for the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama.

Antanas Sutkus (1892-1968), a former student of Komisarjevskaya, came to direct at the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama in 1926. His approach to directing was diametrically opposed to that of Borisas Dauguvietis (see below). Where Dauguvietis was impulsive, emotional, and at times inspiring, Sutkus was a conscientious director, a good administrator, and a pedagogue who demanded from actors not only a thorough practical, but also a theoretical awareness of the profession. Among his best remembered productions were Dickens's Kalėdu giesmė (A Christmas Carol) and Inčiūra's Vincas Kudirka (Vincas Kudirka).

Borisas Dauguvietis (1885-1949), an actor and director trained in St. Petersburg, became the director of the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama in 1923, and by 1940 he had directed over ninety productions. Dauguvietis was imaginative, impulsive, and often a controversial director. He trained many young actors and consistently encouraged and supported the development of young playwrights. It was his strong conviction that, along with the classical plays of all nations, the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama needed to produce plays by native authors.

APPENDIX B

A SELECTED LIST OF PLAYS PERFORMED BY THE LITHUANIAN NATIONAL THEATRE OF DRAMA

Between 1920 and 1939 the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama produced a diversified repertoire of plays. The plays included Shakespeare's Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, Dvyliktoji naktis (Twelfth Night), Karalius Lyras (King Lear), Žiemos pasaka (The Winter's Tale), Sophocles's Oedipus at Colonus, Schiller's Plėškai (The Robbers), Klasta ir meilė (Deception and Love), Don Carlos, Wilhelm Tell, Maria Stuart, Molière's Georges Dandin, Vestuvės per prievartą (The Forced Marriage), Tartuffe, Tariamasis ligonis (The Imaginary Invalid), Šykštuolis (The Miser), Ibsen's Helgelando kovotojai (The Vikings of Helgeland), Hedda Gabler, Visuomenės priešas (The Enemy of the People), Laukinė antis (The Wild Duck), Visuomenės šulai (The Pillars of Society), Shaw's Atskalūnas (The Philanderer), Pigmalionas (Pygmalion), Twain's Princas ir elgeta (The Prince and the Pauper), Hauptmann's Hanelė, Paskendęs varpas (The Sunken Bell), Vežėjas Henšelis (Drayman Henschel), Prieš saulėtekį (Before Sunrise), Dickens's Kalėdų giesmė (A Christmas Carol), Oliver Twist, Varpai (The Bells), Čapek's R.U.R., Chekhov's Vyšnių sodas (The Cherry Orchard),

Jubiliejus (Jubilee), Goldoni's Mirandolina (The Mistress of the Inn), Beaumarchais's Figaro vestuvės (The Marriage of Figaro), Wilde's Ledi Windermer veduoklė (Lady Windermere's Fan), Pirandello's Šaip arba taip (Right You Are-- If You Think You Are), Gozzi's Turandot, Gogol's Revizorius (The Inspector General), O'Neill's Marko milijonai (Marko Millions), and Beecher-Stowe's Dėdės Tomo lūšnelė (Uncle Tom's Cabin). Plays were also produced by Calderon, Gorki, Maeterlinck, Rolland, Berger, and others.

In addition to the translated works between 1920 and 1939 the Lithuanian National Theatre of Drama produced a number of plays by native playwrights. The plays included Krėvė-Mickevičius's Skirgaila, Šarūnas, Likimo keliais (On the Roads of Fate), Žentas (The Son-in-Law), Milžino paunksmė (The Shadow of the Giant), V. Mykolaitis-Putinās's Valdovas (The Ruler), P. Vaičiūnas's Tusčios pastangos (The Futile Endeavors), Patriotai (The Patriots), Nuodėmingas angelas (The Sinful Angel), Stabai ir žmonės (Idols and Men), Sulaužyta priesaika (The Broken Oath), and others, J. Grušas's Tėvas (The Father), V. Alantas's Užtvanka (The Embankment), Gaisras Lietuvoje (Conflagration in Lithuania), S. Santvaras's Žvejai (The Fishermen), Kaimynai (The Neighbors), K. Inčiūra's Vincas Kudirka (Vincas Kudirka), Gimtojoj žemėj (In the Native Land), J. Petrulis's Prieš sriovę (Against the Current), and others ("Valst. Dramos Teatro repertuaras 1920-1940" 1971:15).

APPENDIX C

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR FIVE POSTS IN A MARKET PLACE

William Packard in his review of Five Posts in a Market Place referring to the historical background of the play states the following (1968:62-63):

There is a dramatic history behind this play, which is told in GUERILLA WARFARE ON THE AMBER COAST, by K. V. Tauras. Lithuania was torn between Germany and Russia, and yet the Lithuanian resistance movement refused to let either great power demoralize the citizens or erode the traditions of the country. And this unpublicized resistance movement is one of the truly heroic stories of our time.

The Lithuanian Activist Front was formed in 1940, to resist Soviet attempts to impose the Kremlin's will on the Lithuanian people. Swiftly and secretly, the entire country was covered with co-ordinated five man groups, to work guerilla warfare on the Kremlin's hated NKVD. And after the second world war, in 1947, Lithuania's Freedom Army (LFA) was formed to strike back at the renewed terrorism of the Soviets--mass deportations, exploitation of the Lithuanian workers, rape, pillage, and mass importation of Russian colonists.

The Lithuanians believed that if the LFA could keep up its resistance efforts, sooner or later the West would come to their assistance. But unaccountably, the Western Powers did not come to the aid of the Baltic states, and so they remain a part of the Soviet Union. And as the Lithuanians began to realize that they were not going to receive any outside help, they decided to disband the LFA, and by 1955 it was completely demobilized. And so it must remain simply a glorious chapter in the fight for freedom, but one which has not yet reached its conclusion.

Landsbergis' play is written about the LFA freedom fighters. In fact, part of the play is based on documented fact--for example, the third act wedding party actually happened. LFA freedom fighters staged a mock marriage so they could lure the NKVD Prosecutor to the party and kill him. And this is a tragic

irony, for the Lithuanian who has such a strong sense of tradition, for whom marriage itself is the climax of an important courtship. For in the strategy of guerilla warfare, marriage and the wedding party has to be used as a subterfuge for murder. And this is one more example of the inversion of values which the Cold War has pressed on us.

Other parts of the play are also factual--the five posts in the market place were actually used. The NKVD would bring in the corpses of LFA guerilla fighters--sometimes horribly disfigured by grenade explosions--and then these corpses would be sewn back together, and they would then be placed on the posts, and they would sometimes be desecrated with dung stuffed in the mouths and rosaries twisted around the necks, and then the townspeople would have to file by and identify the bodies. It was a barbaric procedure, but it was also a symbol of the commitment of the Lithuanians to freedom. And the townspeople would sometimes respond by leaving flowers on the posts during the night--like Antigone, who was so determined to provide a decent burial for her brother Polyneices.

Landsbergis has given us the Cold War psychology which motivates these events, and he has also provided an argumentative basis for the LFA--the discussion in the play between the intellectual and the man of action may remind us of the demonic reasoning in Koestler's DARKNESS AT NOON, or the existential reasoning in Malraux' MAN'S FATE, or it may even take us back to the shattering discussion in the Grand Inquisitor scene in Dostoyevsky's THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV. Because it is the groping, tortuous attempt to provide some realm of personal value and meaning in a world that has turned its back on all meaning and all value.

APPENDIX D

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF FIVE POSTS
IN A MARKET PLACE BY ALGIRDAS LANDSBERGIS

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DESIGN
19 January 1961

1. Since the forest, the tree, the flower occupy such an important part in the metaphoric and symbolic structure of the play, it might be useful to consider wood (rough planks showing the grain of wood, tall branches, tree stumps, sticks) as main components of the unit set.
2. The set should not intimate the mountains, as mountains do not figure either in the language or in the contents of the play (guerilla hideouts and fighting technique would be quite different in the mountains). It is definitely a forest of the plains, "dense, impenetrable," made additionally safe by swamps.
3. Since a table will be used in several scenes and different settings, the tablecloth could serve as part of the design and, in being changed for each occasion, denote atmosphere and symbolic values. Thus, the tablecloth should be black (or absent) in the Prosecutor's room; white in Aldona's room; white with large stylized folk designs (tulip, or sun, etc.) in the room of Grashina's [Gražina's] parents.
4. A spinning-wheel might be an eloquent prop in the room of Grashina's parents. Being made of wood it would fit into the overall wood structure; it would denote old-fashioned manual labor; it would give a touch of archaism, old age. It would be used, of course, by Grashina's mother.
5. Paper ribbons along the ceiling might be effective for the wedding party scene; they could be used for dramatic effect in being torn down at a certain moment, etc.

A. Landsbergis

APPENDIX E

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