

Example of mother courage and her children essay

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



In “ Mother Courage and Her Children”, Bertolt Brecht gives a clear image of two commonnesses — pace and war. Play’s action takes place between 1624 and 1634. In the beginning, Mother Courage is self-confident and full of strength. Her work is to sell different things to soldiers: from drinks to ammunition. Also, Courage’s children help her doing that. She has two sons — Eilif and Feyos —and a daughter — Kattrin. Gradually, the heroine loses everything. Her sons become soldiers and then die. Her daughter is killed when she tries to wake citizens of Halle that are threatened with Catholics’ troops. At the end of the play, Mother Courage is beggar and exhausted. However, she again harnesses herself to her almost empty van. She again drags herself and follows the army.

The first thing that needs to be said is that Brecht pays attention to common details, food that people eat, shoes and clothes that they wear. Soldiers are hungry and barefoot, cooks cook soups with leather belts. Thistle is the only thing that grows. People exchange things for foodstuffs. In Pomerania, people eat each other. Votaries rob people. Soldiers do not want to fight because of the lack of ammunition, clothes, and food. With the help of songs, dramatist explains Canteen’s place in the war. She keeps trading and promotes the continuation of the war. The author shows how much cruelty the wartime brings. In the play, appears an idea that war and cruelty are not accidental digressions from a common life. Brecht makes it clear that all human race suffers from the inclination to violence. Its inclination always become apparent.

Undoubtedly, the war is cruel. However, for Brecht cruelty is not the only trait of war. The war perverts usual, natural relationships between people.

The author pays attention to the image of common, mass for the wartime events: Courage's son is recruited to the army; for the heavy price, she sells a capon, buys goods and becomes a beggar woman. Cruelty of war becomes a common thing. Moreover, it is saluted. One of the Courage's sons takes away bullocks from farmers so that they are doomed to the death. Reverse side of the every feat of arms is people's suffering. The war changes human's consciousness and people stop being ashamed of their crimes. Brecht develops a thought about the absurdity of war and repeats the episode of robbery. For the first time, Eilif gets an approval from the commander-in-chief. However, for the second time — in peacetime — Eilif's act leads himself to the gallows. Civilian residents are not the only victims of war. Soldiers also suffer. In the war, any triumph is accidental. Resoluteness, bravery, and contempt to the death do not save human in the war because the death is still the strongest. In "Mother Courage and Her Children", the war has clear traits of unnatural order. This thought may be noticed in the dialog of sergeant major and recruiter, who are succeeded in taking away Courage's older son Eilif.

One should, however, not forget that Courage is the central and the most important character in the play. She is a mother and she is a canteen-keeper, who thinks that she must to trade in any case. Courage loves her children. She does not want them to become victims of the war. Mrs. Canteen tries to save her family, to keep it far from the war but alas. Further, Feyos also becomes a soldier. He takes up a post of the regimental cashier and get to the enemy's hands. Mother Courage is able to save her son. She must pay for him. Nevertheless, she has not got enough money so she needs

to sell the van. Episode of a haggle for the van is one of the most tragic episodes in the play. Mother Courage fails and her son was executed. With the help of two characters, Mother Courage, and her daughter Katrin Brecht opposes two commonnesses that give an explanation that the war is absolute nonsense. Courage sees the sense of war. She lives with it. Katrin is an antipode of Mother Courage. Katrin most of all wants a peace. She hates war. A sense of the motherhood fights with the thirst for money in at Courage's heart. On other hand, Katrin's maternal feelings become apparent in a clear way, even in the very tragic moments. It would be unfair not to mention that fact that while showing the collision of two worlds, Brecht says that the war begins and continuous because both " great" and " little" people accepted war. They see in it the spring of profit and the method to escape a poverty. The war is evil that is a child of the certain world order. It encourages predatory instincts in people or makes them beggars. The war may be removed in case if that world order is replaced with another one that is just. Katrin's example and positive inclinations of Mother Courage show that this Brecht's idea is not baseless.