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# THE RHETORIC OF BUSINESS IN BRECHT'S *DREIGROSCHENROMAN*

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## ABSTRACT

This article takes Walter Benjamin's interpretation of the *Dreigroschenroman* as a point of departure and conclusion. It develops Benjamin's idea that the novel shows how language is used to exert political and economic influence. This article reads the *Dreigroschenroman* as an insightful example of *Sprachkritik*. The businesspeople in the novel use the rhetorical technique of paraphrase, thus drawing on Cicero's advice that the orator should exploit the ignorance of the audience. Neoliberal free market rhetoric (F.A. Hayek) tends to minimise the problem of monopoly formation, but Brecht's novel explores the coercive character of the market and its reliance on the deception that a transaction is mutually beneficial. Macheath emerges as an expert salesman who uses populist marketing techniques in order to extract the maximum profit from his audience. The focus on material interests can be seen as antidote to business rhetoric. As with Marx and Engels, the fundamental question here is that of property. In this way, the novel exemplifies the Brechtian use of crude thinking (*plumpes Denken*) in order to evade ideological manipulation.

Dieser Artikel bezieht sich auf Walter Benjamins Interpretation des *Dreigroschenromans*: dass der Roman zeigt, wie Sprache dazu verwendet wird, um politischen und wirtschaftlichen Einfluss auszuüben. *Dreigroschenroman* wird hier als ein einsichtsvolles Beispiel von Sprachkritik gelesen. Die Geschäftsleute im Roman benutzen die rhetorische Technik der Paraphrase, in Anlehnung an Cicero, der meinte, der Redner sollte die Unwissenheit des Publikums ausnutzen. Die liberale Rhetorik des freien Marktes (nach F.A. Hayek) neigt dazu, das Problem der Monopolbildung zu minimieren, aber Brechts Roman erforscht den Zwangscharakter des Marktes und seine Abhängigkeit von Täuschungen: der Tausch hängt von der Täuschung ab, dass beide Seiten davon profitieren. Macheath tritt als Marketing-Experte in Erscheinung, der populistische Marketing-Techniken anwendet, um aus seinem Publikum den maximalen Profit zu extrahieren. Der Blick auf materielle Interessen kann als Gegenmittel gegen die Rhetorik des Geschäfts betrachtet werden. Wie bei Marx und Engels ist die Grundfrage die des Eigentums. Auf diese Weise veranschaulicht der Roman das Brechtsche Prinzip des plumpen Denkens, wodurch man ideologischen Manipulationen entgehen kann.

## INTRODUCTION

In *Die Literarische Welt* of 21 May 1926, German authors were asked to respond to the following question: ‘Welche stilistische Phrase hassen Sie am meisten?’ Brecht’s response was as follows: ‘Die Phrasen, die hassenswert sind, sind Legion. Es wäre falsch, eine beliebige herauszufischen. Man müßte eine Enzyklopädie, ein Schwarzbuch der Phrase herausgeben’ (BFA 21, p. 136).<sup>1</sup> Eight years later, in 1934, Brecht published the *Dreigroschenroman*, which can be read as precisely that: an encyclopaedia, a ‘black book of clichés’. David Bathrick has noted that Brecht’s works often consider the problem of manipulation in mass society.<sup>2</sup> This is especially true of the *Dreigroschenroman*. As a refugee from Hitler from 1933 onwards, Brecht developed an acute diagnosis of the ideological manipulations of the Nazi party in his plays, poetry and prose writings. *Dreigroschenroman*, produced in the winter of 1933-34 with the assistance of Margarete Steffin, is the first major work which Brecht produced in exile. It explores the connections between language and power, analysing linguistic strategies used by economic and political actors alike in order to influence the public.

In August 1934 Brecht instructed his Amsterdam-based publisher Allert de Lange to print certain passages of the *Dreigroschenroman* in italics, in order to convey the impression that certain phrases were being quoted and exhibited.<sup>3</sup> Walter Benjamin, in his 1935 review of the novel, emphasised Brecht’s use of italics in order to highlight certain phrases, ‘so daß sie sich aus dem erzählenden Text herausheben. Er [Brecht] hat damit eine Sammlung von Ansprachen und Sentenzen, Bekenntnissen und Plädoyers geschaffen, die einzig zu nennen ist.’<sup>4</sup> This article will argue that the *Dreigroschenroman* is a novel which *exhibits* certain types of discourse in order to show how language is used to exert political and economic influence. George Orwell made a similar point in the essay ‘Politics and the English

Language' (1946), where he argues that language is often used 'as an instrument' in order to 'conceal or prevent thought.' Orwell adds: 'Political language [...] is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.'<sup>5</sup> Most research on the *Dreigroschenroman* makes a similar point: Bernd Auerochs interprets the style of the novel as a means to understand a social system; Wolfgang Jeske states that the characters' speeches create a 'Scheinwelt' or pseudo-world which is clearly refuted by their actions.<sup>6</sup> Most critics agree that we can read the *Dreigroschenroman* as a critique of political ideology, a corporate thriller with fascism as a subtext. Unfortunately, most West German research on the *Dreigroschenroman* has focused on politically neutral questions of genre, for example the use of satire (Claßen),<sup>7</sup> the connection with the detective novel (Goebel),<sup>8</sup> or the categorisation of the novel as anti-Aristotelian (Müller).<sup>9</sup> More recently, Devin Fore has shown how the novel traces the evolution of capital 'from the assembly line to the multi-national corporation and, eventually, to a quasi-state.'<sup>10</sup> This article, in contrast, will focus on the economic and political uses of language in the *Dreigroschenroman*. The analysis will draw in part on Cornelia Ladd's interpretation of the *Dreigroschenroman*, which considers language as a source of power which largely supersedes physical force.<sup>11</sup> Of interest too is Steve Giles's comparison of the two different versions of the *Dreigroschenoper*, which shows that, in the later version of 1931, there is an increased discontinuity between words and actions as the figures of the drama self-consciously distance themselves from their own verbal behaviour patterns.<sup>12</sup> This tendency towards discontinuity is even stronger in the novel. In the *Dreigroschenroman*, the figures adopt certain forms of verbal habitus like costumes. They put on and shed their linguistic attitudes as easily as a person changes clothes. William Coax's suits are 'off-the-peg' ('von der Stange'); his business associates are 'off-the-peg'; the shipyard where he buys his rotten ships is 'off-the-peg' (BFA 16, pp. 35-36). And Coax's *phrases* are off-the-peg too, they are 'made-to-measure' commercial pitches

designed to suit the widest possible audience. In Macheath's view, even a coherent personality is a luxury that the businessman cannot afford: 'Es hat heutzutage nur noch wenig Sinn, sich eine Persönlichkeit zuzulegen.' (BFA 16, p. 283)

#### A SPRACHKRITIKER IN EXILE

The *Dreigroschenroman* is a brilliant example of *Sprachkritik*. Most authors associated with *Sprachkritik* are Austrian, such as Mauthner, Hofmannsthal, Rilke, Wittgenstein, Bachmann, Handke, and, perhaps in consequence, Brecht's contribution to this tradition, and his interest in the *Wiener Kreis*, often goes unnoticed.<sup>13</sup> Around 1930 Brecht remarks: 'Erkenntnistheorie muß vor allem Sprachkritik sein.' (BFA 21, p. 413). At this time (1930-1932) Brecht was engaging with the logical empiricism of the *Wiener Kreis*; the Brecht archive contains his annotated copies of *Erkenntnis*, the chief journal of the group. This aspect of Brecht's work has received remarkably little attention. Wolfgang Fritz Haug notes intellectual affinities between Brecht and Wittgenstein but does not comment on their shared interest in the *Wiener Kreis*.<sup>14</sup> A much fuller picture is provided by Herbert Claas and Steve Giles who survey Brecht's reception of *Wiener Kreis* thinkers such as Rudolf Carnap, Hans Reichenbach and Otto Neurath.<sup>15</sup> Giles comments that Brecht was 'not uncritical' of these authors, and finds that Brecht's position on truth and language is closer to the pragmatism of C.S. Peirce.<sup>16</sup> As we might expect, Brecht considers language in terms of its use value as an instrument of manipulation or distraction, i.e. as a *gesture*. In a note of 1931, Brecht observes: 'Die auftretenden [...] Sätze müssen da gefaßt werde, wo sie als ein Verhalten wirken, also nicht nur einseitig als Spiegelungen, Ausdrücke, Reflexe.' (BFA 21, p. 525) This suggests that sentences 'appear' on the scene as actions or interventions in their own right; each phrase has

its own identifiable behavioural, gestural form ('Verhalten'). Brecht alludes to Clausewitz's dictum that 'Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln'<sup>17</sup> in the *Dreigroschenroman* when Hale describes politics as the continuation of business by other means: 'Politik ist die Fortführung der Geschäfte mit anderen Mitteln' (BFA 16, p. 173). War, politics and business all involve the pursuit of material interests. In the *Dreigroschenroman*, the principal means of doing business is via *language*: protagonists use speech in order to outmanoeuvre opponents. In this respect, the *Dreigroschenroman* draws upon the modernist tradition of *Sprachkritik* initiated by Friedrich Nietzsche and Fritz Mauthner and developed by Wittgenstein and the *Wiener Kreis*. In the famous essay 'Ueber Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne' (1873, published posthumously in 1903), Nietzsche states that truth is a mobile army of metaphors ('ein bewegliches Heer von Metaphern') and other rhetorical devices.<sup>18</sup> Schooled in the tradition of classical oratory, Nietzsche sees language as an arsenal of persuasive techniques, as a form of weaponry. Brecht's early reading of Nietzsche leads him to similar conclusions.<sup>19</sup> Brecht's diary entry of 6 September 1920 describes words as potential weapons: 'Das Schlimmste, wenn die Dinge sich verkrusten in Wörtern, hart werden, weh tun beim Schmeißen, tot herumliegen. Sie müssen aufgestachelt werden, enthäutet, böß gemacht, man muß sie füttern und [...] abrichten' (GBA 26, p. 158).

Brecht's writings of 1933-34 onwards continue these reflections on language with specific reference to Nazi propaganda. Upon completion of the *Dreigroschenroman* in the summer of 1934, Brecht began work on *Buch der Wendungen*, a series of parables drawing on the work of the Chinese philosopher Mo Di (Mozi) – known in Alfred Forke's German translation of 1922, which Brecht possessed, as Mê Ti.<sup>20</sup> Many of the texts in *Buch der Wendungen* reflect on Hitler's use of language, e.g. 'Aussprüche des Anstreichers' (1934), which dissects Hitler's slogan 'Gemeinnutz geht vor Eigennutz' (BFA 18, pp. 49-50).

Another text, 'Katalog der Begriffe' (possibly written in the late thirties) reflects on ideological terms used by the Nazis: 'Natur', 'Boden' and 'volkstümlich' – although the term 'volkstümlich' was also used by the Popular Front organised by the Soviet Union (BFA 18, pp. 116-7).<sup>21</sup> This idea of a 'catalogue of concepts' recalls the idea of an 'encyclopaedia of clichés' which Brecht mooted in 1926. In *Buch der Wendungen* we are told that it is important to study the ruling classes in order to see how they rule so effectively (BFA 18, p. 127). In this text, as in the *Dreigroschenroman*, Brecht is weighing up the ideological techniques of his opponents. One of Brecht's alter egos in *Buch der Wendungen* is the poet Ken-jeh. When Ken-jeh sees a forest, he complains about how it will be used to make newspapers intended to stupefy the people: 'Wenn er einen Wald sieht, jammert er sofort über die Zeitungen, die aus dem Holz gemacht werden und das Volk ver dummen' (BFA 18, p. 117). This implies a critique of the mass media as propaganda. In *Buch der Wendungen* Brecht affirms once again that language is a practical tool, perhaps even a weapon: 'Der Dichter Kin erkannte die Sprache als ein Werkzeug des Handelns' (BFA 18, p. 79). Certain sentences can even be viewed as allies in the struggle against fascism: 'Wir stellen allerhand Sätze zusammen, wie man Verbündete wählt für den Kampf' (BFA 18, p. 89). And if some sentences are allies, other sentences tend to associate with one another rather like gangs of criminals: 'Sätze von Systemen hängen aneinander wie Mitglieder von Verbrecherbanden' (BFA 18, p. 95). Given that the first composition phase of *Buch der Wendungen* was 1934, the same year as the *Dreigroschenroman*, it is plausible to think that the two texts share some concerns.

If we apply the linguistic scepticism of *Buch der Wendungen* to the *Dreigroschenroman*, this suggests that Macheath employs his sentences like trusted tools, or like 'Mitglieder von Verbrecherbanden', members of an organised crime ring. The Macheath of the *Dreigroschenroman* is no longer the small time hoodlum of the *Dreigroschenoper*; he

is busily reinventing himself as a ‘respectable businessman’. Instead of crudely breaking and entering with a burglar’s tools, he employs populist slogans, corporate acronyms and weasel words. He launches a charm offensive intended to seduce the bank directors Miller and Hawthorne (BFA 16, pp. 84-5); he invites them to his wedding which is staged for their benefit, and he gets himself invited to their house for tea in a wealthy Western suburb of the city (BFA 16, pp. 132-8). An important subtext here is Hitler’s rise to power. Of course, Macheath is a businessman, not a fascist dictator. But there is a certain family resemblance between the two. Like Hitler, Macheath is a ruthless opportunist who succeeds by infiltrating the highest levels of the establishment. Macheath describes himself as suitable to lead his country because he is a hard-working businessman and therefore free of the taint of ‘politics’ defined as vested interests:

Meiner Meinung nach, es ist die Meinung eines ernsthaft arbeitenden Geschäftsmannes, haben wir nicht die richtigen Leute an der Spitze des Staates. Sie gehören alle irgendwelchen Parteien an und Parteien sind selbstsüchtig. Ihr Standpunkt ist einseitig. Wir brauchen Männer, die über die Parteien stehen, so wie wir Geschäftsleute. Wir verkaufen unsere Ware an Arm und Reich. Wir verkaufen jedem ohne Ansehen der Person [...] (BFA 16, p. 340)

Macheath’s rhetoric anticipates the Hayekian neoliberalism of our own time, which claims that free markets are ‘fairer’ than politics because they function according to universal principles. Such rhetoric condemns politics *per se* as biased and corrupt because politics serves particular interest groups. Markets – so the argument goes – distribute goods ‘freely’ according to impartial general rules, unlike politics which is supposedly tainted by ideology. This leaves out the fact that markets offer an enormous advantage to those with capital at



their disposal, as Wolfgang Streeck points out.<sup>22</sup> In the *Dreigroschenroman*, the critique of economic manipulation and the critique of political manipulation are therefore intertwined, as they are in *Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui*.

## FROM ORATORY TO PROPAGANDA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

In an unfortunately neglected PhD thesis of 1991 entitled *Fictions of Power*, Cornelia Ladd has shown how Brecht's *Dreigroschenroman* draws on the classical tradition of rhetoric and oratory as exemplified by Cicero.<sup>23</sup> Brecht's library contained several works by Cicero, suggesting that Brecht had an interest in Ciceronian oratory.<sup>24</sup> According to Ladd, the *Dreigroschenroman* raises the question of why Macheath and Peachum are so successful in their use of rhetoric, and suggests that the answer lies in the way they exploit the expectations of their audience (as represented in the novel by George Fewkoombey). When Macheath stands accused of murder, and when Peachum stands accused of selling damaged ships to the government for use as troop carriers, both of them use forensic oratory in order to elude justice: they evade justice 'by means of the very discourse that is responsible for allocating it.'<sup>25</sup> When Peachum is questioned by the police about the sinking of the 'Optimist', he presents them with two possible explanations for the disaster: *either* the ship sank as a result of criminal negligence on the part of the authorities and the suppliers, *or*, given the excellence of the authorities and British firms, it was an accident (BFA 16, pp. 326-27). The key strategies are misdirection and implying that the audience is involved in the alleged crime: there are few audiences or juries who would be willing to find themselves guilty.

The most direct allusion to Cicero in the *Dreigroschenroman* is arguably the moment when Macheath insists that the salesman must be a teacher: 'Verkäufer sein [...] ist: Lehrer

*sein. Verkaufen heißt: die Unwissenheit, die erschütternde Unwissenheit des Publikums bekämpfen.*' (BFA 16, p. 136) But the role of pedagogue is only a disguise. Macheath is not a pedagogue but a demagogue. Ladd emphasizes the agonistic quality of the verb 'bekämpfen' here, and points out: 'Macheath compares his economic strategy to war. This same agonistic quality is present in Macheath's definition of the salesman, where he speaks of 'battling' the ignorance of the consumer. Like the salesperson, Macheath indeed fights with the ignorance of those who listen to him: their ignorance is his weapon.'<sup>26</sup> When Macheath describes himself as a teacher, he is alluding to Cicero's definition of oratory in *De oratore* (*On the Ideal Orator*):<sup>27</sup>

Knowing, then, that oratory is a subject that relies on falsehood, that seldom reaches the level of real knowledge, that is out to take advantage of people's opinions and often their delusions, I shall speak about it. [...]<sup>28</sup>

Cicero's orator must carefully target the ignorance of the audience. The audience's own ignorance is turned against them as a weapon. The allusion to Cicero highlights the irony of Macheath's statement. Macheath does not want to reduce the ignorance of his customers, but to increase it, in order to make profit. The same applies to Peachum's idea of selling 'Bildung' to the working classes (BFA 16, p. 373). When Peachum and Macheath finally join forces at the end, Peachum explains this is because they both wish to serve the working classes: 'Ich sah, daß es sein Prinzip war, den unteren Schichten zu dienen. Das ließ in mir sogleich eine verwandte Saite klingen' (BFA 16, p. 372). This is double-talk since Peachum and Macheath do not intend to serve, but to exploit their customers.

Brecht reflects on the political uses of ignorance in 'Ein Problem für die Marxisten' (written in the summer of 1938). This short text raises a question for Marxists: how can they

persuade members of the petit-bourgeoisie (a class which, according to Ernst Bloch,<sup>29</sup> tended to be pro-fascist) that Hitler does not represent their interests? Much of Hitler's rhetoric was directed at the German *Mittelstand*, the petty bourgeois business people whose livelihoods were threatened by large-scale commercialization; Macheath too presents himself as championing the rights of German shopkeepers.<sup>30</sup> 'Ein Problem für die Marxisten' suggests a Ciceronian solution to the problem of how to address the petty bourgeoisie:

Ein Problem für die Marxisten ist es, zu den Kleinbürgern zu sprechen. [...] Gegen den Faschismus muß man sich ihrer Vorurteile bedienen, ihren Glauben an den Führer könnte man am besten bekämpfen, wenn man an ihren Aberglauben appellierte. Da wir das nicht können, haben wir es schwer. (BFA 22.1, pp. 416-7)

Like Cicero, Brecht would like to appeal to the prejudices of the German petty bourgeoisie. But he adds that exiled opponents of Hitler cannot do this because, as exiles, they can have little access to this audience. At the same time Brecht recognises that the Nazis used a classical rhetorical strategy in order to manipulate the prejudices of their voters: by blaming Jews for the consequences of capitalism, they were able to misdirect people's attention:

Alle Lösungen, die aus dieser Ecke kommen, sind Lösungen auf dem Papier. Da wird eine Brieftasche bei einem Mann mit krummer Nase gefunden, und von nun an wird auf krumme Nasen Jagd gemacht [...] Daher kommt der klassische Vorschlag, das Wort *Börse* durch ein anderes, „sauberes“ Wort zu ersetzen, da dem *Wort* Börse ein schlechter Geruch anhaftet. (BFA 22.1, p. 417)

Here once again is the Ciceronian tactic, namely, to play on the ignorance of the audience by using *paraphrasis*. Instead of blaming the stock market for the world economic collapse, the Nazis blamed the Jews and then found new, more harmless-sounding *words* to disguise capitalist exploitation, such as *Volksgemeinschaft*.

What does this have to do with the rhetoric of business? Well, businesspeople need to know how to use paraphrase and euphemism effectively if they wish to cover up the more unsightly aspects of their business. They need to develop ornamental, self-serving fictions in order to help them pursue their business agendas. As Brecht noted laconically in the margin of Forke's translation of *Mê Ti*: 'das gasthaus ist nicht / gastlich der gastlichkeit / wegen, sondern des verdienstes / wegen.'<sup>31</sup>

## ECONOMIC RHETORIC, ECONOMIC REALITIES

Much neoliberal economic theory today derives from the work of Friedrich August von Hayek (1899-1992). Hayek argues that governments should guarantee the rule of law, but avoid direct intervention in the economy, e.g. through price controls, because such controls would not 'allow the market to function adequately'.<sup>32</sup> He warns against the pursuit of distributive justice, claiming that it will lead to a command economy.<sup>33</sup> Hayek's neoliberal successors since the 1970s have taken this to mean that free markets distribute goods more fairly than elected governments, and that markets should be freed from state intervention. Recent decades have seen the growth of multinational corporations and a return to the monopoly capitalism of the 1920s. Hayek himself dismisses private enterprise monopolies as a problem 'of little importance' and warns against any government action against private monopolies.<sup>34</sup> Although Hayek considers monopolies to be a 'minor' problem, they were a

major problem in Brecht's lifetime. They repeatedly threatened the stability of Weimar democracy. In 1920 the brinkmanship of industrialist Hugo Stinnes almost provoked the Allies to occupy the Ruhr; as a result Stinnes became a nationalist hero (he died in 1924).<sup>35</sup> In 1927 Hermann Bücher, the general manager of the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* (RDI) declared that the weakness of the German state was a welcome opportunity 'zu einer unternehmerischen Revisionspolitik' (a code-word for the restoration of an autocratic regime).<sup>36</sup> In 1931 large donations from German industrialists boosted the NSDAP substantially.<sup>37</sup> In November 1932 several German business leaders wrote to Hindenburg asking him to appoint Hitler as chancellor.<sup>38</sup> During World War Two, IG Farben equipped the gas chambers at Auschwitz.<sup>39</sup> Brecht's journal entry of 13 April 1948 reads: 'Die Vergasungslager des IG-Farben-Trusts sind Monumente der bürgerlichen Kultur dieser Jahrzehnte'. (BFA 27, p. 268)

*Pace* Hayek, the reality of how markets work is that they tend to form monopolies, as the big fish eat the little fish. Brecht's Herr Keuner story 'Wenn die Haifische Menschen wären' (BFA 18, pp. 446-8) illustrates this point. Indeed, the *Dreigroschenroman* even reflects on this tendency, with specific reference to the Biblical parable of the talents in Matthew 25. The Matthew Effect, as it has become known, was coined in 1968 by the sociologist Robert K. Merton and it takes its name from the Biblical Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:29: 'For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath.'<sup>40</sup> Merton used the term to describe how eminent scientists tended to accrue more credit than lesser known colleagues. The phenomenon means that the more resources and connections you have, the more you get. In the field of economics it is known as cumulative advantage.<sup>41</sup> The conclusion of the *Dreigroschenroman* delivers an analysis of the Matthew Effect. Fewkoombey dreams that he is a judge. The defendant is Jesus Christ. The case for the prosecution is based on Matthew

25. The prosecution argues that the Biblical parable has been used to justify inequality, and that it is false because it implies that everyone is given a talent – everyone has a fair chance. The judge declares this to be unproven: ‘Daß aber alle Menschen ein Pfund mitbekämen, das erklärte das Gericht als nicht erwiesen.’ (BFA 16, p. 385). This dream sequence implies that the market is not free and fair, because the odds are always weighted in favour of those who start off with greater resources. And if some people have nothing except their bodies, then they are forced to make their own bodies available for exploitation. Fewkoombey realises that ‘Der Mensch [ist] des Menschen Pfund!’ (BFA 16, p. 391). Human beings exploit each other, and themselves, as capital.

This is the reality which liberal rhetoric of the free market either conceals, or describes as regrettable but inevitable. In order to justify the free market as the natural order of things, various authorities tend to be invoked, including the Bible, Adam Smith and Charles Darwin. Adam Smith’s notion of an ‘invisible hand’ is often taken out of context and used to present the market as a self-correcting mechanism, one which functions according to the laws of supply and demand.<sup>42</sup> Decisions by the market are then described as natural or inevitable, in contrast to political decisions which can be ascribed to specific actors, as Streeck puts it:

Auch sind *politische Entscheidungen* bestimmten Entscheidern oder Institutionen zurechenbar [...] während *Marktentscheidungen* scheinbar ohne menschliches Zutun vom Himmel fallen – besonders wenn der Markt als Naturzustand vorausgesetzt wird – und als Schicksal, hinter dem sich womöglich ein nur Experten zugänglicher höherer Sinn verbirgt, hingenommen werden müssen.<sup>43</sup>

In this way, economic events are regarded as analogous to the functioning of physical laws which only the experts can comprehend. This rhetoric of the self-governing market provides a screen for the decisions of big business. If thousands of people are rendered destitute, the rhetoric implies that no one can be held personally responsible, because it is only the self-correcting operation of the market. In the *Dreigroschenroman*, Macheath's lawyer Withe ascribes the shopkeeper Mary Swayer's death to general economic laws. The fact that her employer bled her dry is conveniently ignored:

Die kleinen Geschäftsleute hätten keine besonders genaue Kenntnis der Gesetze, die den Handel beherrschten. Sie schoben für gewöhnlich einfach den größeren Geschäftsleuten die Schuld zu, wenn Krisenzeiten kämen. Daß diese Großen auch von ganz bestimmten, gesetzmäßigen, übrigens wenig berechenbaren Prozessen ökonomischer Art abhingen, ahnten die Kleinen nicht. Es sei eben eine Krise ausgebrochen und die kleinen, schwachen Unternehmen gehen zugrunde. (BFA 16, p. 266)

Translated into the language of Brecht's Herr Keuner, this means that sharks eat little fish, but little fish should allow themselves to be eaten, because it is a law of nature for sharks to eat little fish. Or, as Macheath puts it: 'Der kranke Mann sterbe und der starke Mann fechte. So sei es immer gewesen und werde es immer sein'. (BFA 16, p. 194)

## LANGUAGE AS THE KEY TO ECONOMIC SUCCESS

Why is language so important in a free market economy? In a capitalist system, the essential rule is to maximise profits. In a world of limited resources, this can only happen if someone else loses out. If someone makes a ‘good deal’ it is usually at the expense of someone else. Thus for capitalism to work effectively, large numbers of people are required to act as dupes. Markets divide people into winners and losers. In the *Dreigroschenroman* we read: ‘Wohlstand [war] nur die andere Seite der Armut. Was war der Wohlstand der einen anderes als die Armut der andern?’ (BFA 16, p. 309). Language performs the essential function of disguising the exploitative relationship between partners in an exchange. The key fiction presents a transaction as mutually beneficial. The narrative of ‘fair trade’ is essential to the smooth operation of the market. In every exchange, the exploitative relation between buyer and seller must always be denied. The rhetoric of ‘free’ and ‘fair’ is therefore indispensable to the working of the market; the drive to maximize profit must be scrupulously denied. Business people do not want to be perceived as exploiters or swindlers, they want to appear hard-working and self-sacrificing. Macheath takes great pains to emphasise his respectability:

Wie alle Begüterten mußte er einen ausgezeichneten moralischen Ruf haben. Er brauchte ihn, damit man ihm gestattete, die Eigentümer der B.-Läden zu betrügen. (BFA 16, p. 141)<sup>44</sup>

The figures in the *Dreigroschenroman* adopt linguistic strategies in order to give themselves the appearance of solidity. Only those who are considered to be ‘respectable’ can attract investors, or charge top rates for their services (i.e. only the big fish are allowed to eat the little fish). Macheath wants to reinvent himself as a businessman. For this, he knows he needs



*solidity*: 'Ein wahrer Durst nach Solidität befiel ihn. Ein gewisses Maß [...] von menschlicher Verlässlichkeit, war eben doch unentbehrlich, wenn es sich um größere Geschäfte handelte!' (BFA 16, p. 222). A businessman, then, needs an *aura* of respectability. At the beginning of Book Two, Miller of the National Deposit Bank tells the story of Nathanael Rothschild, who introduced the concept of honesty (*Ehrlichkeit*) into the world of finance. This concept is described as a new 'trick' (BFA 16, pp. 133-4).<sup>45</sup> Whether or not one is considered 'decent' is a decisive factor when it comes to doing business. In this way, the figures in the novel seek to influence the framework in which economic decisions are made, by manipulating the opinions of others.

In the *Dreigroschenroman*, language is used in an Orwellian way as a means for concealing or preventing thought: language is designed not to communicate, but to distract, disguise or camouflage. It serves to disavow and to draw a veil over the facts. Behind this linguistic veil, the *real* battles are carried out in secret. Macheath must maintain around himself the 'Halbdämmer, in dem man fett werden konnte' (BFA 16, p. 219). As a legitimated form of robbery according to Brecht, business deals are best concluded in half-darkness. As the Latin phrase *caveat emptor*, 'let the buyer beware', implies, buyers often have less information about what they are purchasing than the seller. At the beginning of the novel, the characters meet in a restaurant called the 'Tintenfisch'; the 'squid' or 'cuttlefish'. This is an animal which shoots ink at its opponents during combat in order to blind them. In this economic struggle in which human beings behave like animals, the squid is an appropriate symbol for the capitalists who use words in order to conceal their true intentions. Dialogue here is not a means of communication, but a defence mechanism to conceal aggression. For example, Peachum claims he is doing 'everything' for his daughter, but then prostitutes her to the broker William Coax.

The novel deploys several means of linguistic estrangement. Italics draw attention to key speeches, the characters' actions often contradict their verbal gestures and the third-person narrator highlights the artificiality of the characters' spoken language by inserting comments such as: 'Hätte er [Fewkoombey] sich Gedanken gemacht, wären ungefähr dies seine Gedanken gewesen: [...]' (BFA 16, p. 73); 'Wäre er [Peachum] gebildet gewesen, hätte er ausrufen können: [...]' (BFA 16, p. 97). Then there is the comparison of language to an ink cloud emitted by a squid and the portrayal of language as a force of nature when Macheath gives a speech to the owners of his B-Stores. This eloquent speech affects Mary Swayer much like a blizzard or a storm at sea: 'Für sie war Macs Redekunst ungefähr dasselbe, wie die Schneikunst der Wolken im Winter, das, was die Zerschmetterkunst der Sturmwoogen für das Schiff ist.' (BFA 16, p. 200). Here, words are likened to an eruption of nature: the victim is attacked by a blizzard of words, a swell of words, a crashing wave of words. Words have their own physical momentum which wears down Mary Swayer's resistance. 'Redekunst' appears as a potentially deadly weapon.

Peachum's lawyer Walley uses rhetoric as a source of income. The floor of his office is covered with expensive carpets which his eloquence has won him: 'die dicken Teppiche, die seine Beredsamkeit ihm eingebracht hatte' (BFA 16, p. 312). Efficient rhetoric translates into power, influence and ultimately, money. However, rhetoric and oratory can only take you so far. They are most effective when the listener is weak, vulnerable or confused. Mary Swayer falls prey to Macheath's eloquence because she does not understand how business works, and she is near to exhaustion (BFA 16, p. 199). A clever or powerful opponent cannot be swayed by eloquence alone. This is when 'leverage' by bribery, blackmail, extortion or violence becomes necessary, as can be seen when Peachum wants to force Macheath to divorce Polly. Peachum racks his brains for hours trying to think of what

he might say to persuade Macheath to divorce Polly but cannot think of any forceful argument. Then he suddenly realises that in this case, only violence will work:

Er begriff, daß es nichts, schlechterdings nichts gab, was einen halbwegs vernünftigen Menschen hätte veranlassen können, etwas, was er hatte, herauszugeben, außer tatsächlicher Gewalt. (BFA 16, p. 230)

When combat gets deadly serious, then words will not suffice. Both Macheath and Peachum are prepared to use violence if necessary. But words can still serve as traps for the unwary.

#### POPULIST MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Macheath has developed his own populist brand of public relations in pursuit of his interests. He recognises that many small traders wish to preserve their 'Selbständigkeit'. He gives newspaper interviews in which he claims that his entire business is based on the principle of self-sufficiency. He even calls 'Selbständigkeit' a fundamental drive of human nature, suggesting that modern man has a particular need to prove that he is capable (BFA 16, p. 51). He claims that his B-shops are all independent. But this is a deception. In fact, the shops still belong to Macheath as part of his franchise of chain stores. The B-shop owners *think* that they are self-sufficient, but effectively they are employees with no fixed wages, who receive only commissions as payment. Their so-called 'Selbständigkeit' works in favour of Macheath. If the shop makes a profit, then the franchise rates ensure that most of the profit goes to Macheath. But if the shopkeeper goes bankrupt, he or she loses everything, and the

shop reverts to Macheath who simply leases it to a new 'owner'. Macheath's claim that his system is in the interests of the 'little man' (BFA 16, p. 52) is only a trap for the little man.

Macheath wants to squeeze the maximum profit out of the B-store owners, but he does not want to be the target of their resentment. Accordingly Macheath uses ideological manipulation in order to *steer* his employees' perceptions of their own situation. He makes them believe that independence is in their own interest and offers them a scapegoat when things go wrong: the Jewish-owned department stores. In one scene, Macheath and Polly visit a B-store in Liverpool, where the shopkeeper and his wife look utterly miserable and undernourished. When the man tells Macheath he cannot settle his rates this month, Macheath starts blaming his Jewish competitors (BFA 16, p. 100). Macheath misdirects the man's resentment towards his Jewish rivals, so that he does not blame his own employer for his dire situation. Here, the novel alludes to the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis. Exploiting the fact that most of the major department stores were owned by Jews, Nazi propaganda presented the party as the champion of the *Mittelstand*. The National Socialist manifesto of May 1920 demanded special protection for the *Mittelstand* and immediate nationalisation of larger (Jewish) department stores.<sup>46</sup> Like Hitler, Macheath exploits existing resentments in order to gain political mastery over the petty bourgeois shopkeepers he exploits.

At one point, Macheath makes a speech to the B-store owners in which he announces his new collaboration with Aaron, the Jewish department store owner. Macheath presents Aaron as a powerful Jewish capitalist who is out to exploit the 'little people', German shopkeepers with blue eyes: '*Warum sollte der mächtige Aaronkonzern mit uns kleinen Geschäftsleuten künftig zusammenarbeiten wollen? [...] nicht wegen der blauen Augen der Billigkeitsläden!*' (BFA 16, p. 163). Macheath warns his audience against Aaron and claims that he will fight to defend their interests because he believes in an 'idea'. In this way, Macheath presents himself as the champion of a Germanic *Volksgemeinschaft* against an

enemy identified as a Jew. This act of misdirection obscures the fact that Macheath plans to extract maximum profit from ‘his’ shopkeepers, as he has just told his bankers (BFA 16, p. 159). Macheath accuses his competitor Aaron of being motivated by purely material interests: *‘Wohin wir blicken in der Natur, geschieht nichts ohne materielle Interessen! Wo immer einer zu dem andern sagt: ich meine es gut mit dir, wir wollen zusammen... usw., da heißt es aufgepaßt! Denn die Menschen sind eben menschlich und keine Engel und sorgen vor allem erst einmal für sich selber.’* (BFA 16, p. 163) Here Macheath presents himself as a canny businessman who can see through Aaron’s tactics. But at the same time, Macheath is admitting his own business technique to his audience. Macheath proclaims his decision to devote himself entirely to the service of the B-store owners: *‘Und darum habe auch ich mich entschlossen, in Zukunft meine ganze Kraft Ihnen und den B.-Läden zu widmen, nicht aus materiellem Interesse heraus, sondern weil ich an die Idee glaube’* (BFA 16, p. 163). Macheath’s claim that he is not pursuing material interests contradicts his previous statement that *every* action is motivated by material interests. What counts is that Macheath assures his audience that he is united with them against a Jewish competitor. His warning that *every* action is motivated by material interests is soon forgotten, because the audience assume he will champion their collective interests. Soon after telling the shopkeepers that he is sacrificing himself for their benefit, Macheath increases the rates they have to pay him because it is time for them to show *what they are made of* (‘was in ihnen stecke’, BFA 16, p. 194).

Businessmen in the *Dreigroschenroman* use mystification in order to promote their interests, and the media helpfully obliges by circulating their claims. For example, newspapers reproduce the lie that successful businesspeople are not motivated by money, but by something more profound:

wie die meisten erfolgreichen Industriellen [...] usw. las er [Macheath] am liebsten in der Zeitung, daß er seine Taten ohne eigentliches materielles Interesse, eher aus einer Art Sport oder Schaffensfreudigkeit verübe, wenn nicht aus einem unerklärlichen dämonischen Trieb heraus. (BFA 16, p. 129)

Such claims, that capitalists are motivated by the love of sport, or by a daemonic drive, serve as a smokescreen. At the beginning of Book Two we are told that rulers often falsify history, carefully shrouding themselves in legends (BFA 16, p. 127). This could well be an allusion to the legends which formed in the 1920s around industrialists such as Hugo Stinnes and Friedrich Flick. Hugo Stinnes achieved an iconic status in the Weimar Republic, as Bernd Widdig has shown.<sup>47</sup> There was a legend that Stinnes only ever ate an egg for breakfast, and the *Dreigroschenroman* refers to this when Macheath eats an egg for breakfast with great care (BFA 16, pp. 348-9). Brecht's interest in the myths surrounding industrialists is confirmed by his copy of Fritz Kaufmann's *Erfolgreiche deutsche Wirtschaftsführer* (1931).<sup>48</sup> Such myth-making directs attention away from material transactions towards a putative higher plane. The banker Jacques Oppen even claims that: '*Die eigentliche Triebkraft der Menschheit ist das Bedürfnis, sich auszudrücken, das heißt seine Persönlichkeit zu verewigen.*' (BFA 16, p. 158). The two key words 'dämonisch' and 'Persönlichkeit' are highlighted by means of extra spacing, in order to draw attention to the fact that they are forms of self-mythologizing.<sup>49</sup>

Another way to deny one's own self-interest is to claim that one is merely acting as a trustee for someone else. Peachum likes to say that he is doing everything for his daughter. Miller and Hawthorne of the National Deposit Bank stress that the bank does not belong to them, but to a seven-year-old girl: 'Die Bank gehört nicht uns, sondern der kleinen Talk, übrigens ein ausnehmend reizendes kleines Mädchen!' (BFA 16, p. 138).<sup>50</sup> Macheath even

imagines a conversation with his future son, in which he tells him that he built the firm up for his sake (BFA 16, pp. 165, 280-1). This is untrue, since immediately afterwards, Macheath writes a note to Polly telling her that she should agree to an abortion if necessary. The corrupt civil servant Hale claims that his primary motivation is to serve his country (BFA 16, p. 172). A director of a company can always point out that he has a responsibility to his shareholders. Capitalists like to appear in the role of guardians or trustees who enrich others, not themselves.

The most effective fiction, though, is that of a mutually beneficial transaction. Macheath's favourite lie is that he always works for the benefit of the consumer. He spreads this lie through public speeches and newspaper interviews. In one interview with the journalist Gawn, Macheath claims that he will defeat his competitors thanks to his tireless efforts in the service of his customers (BFA 16, p. 213). He likes to pretend that he is merely the servant of the consumer. His business is to provide a service to the public: 'dem Publikum immer dankenswerte Dienste zu erweisen' (BFA 16, p. 237). Here is a particularly flagrant example of Macheath's doublespeak, one in which he appears in the guise of a martyr to his work:

In dem unaufhörlichen Bestreben, dem Publikum zu dienen, legen wir uns Beschränkungen auf, die nur die Stärksten von uns aushalten. Wir sind zu billig. Unsere Gewinne sind so winzig, daß wir selber darben. Wir sind vielleicht zu fanatisch darauf aus, dem kleinen Käufer gute Waren zu erschwinglichen Preisen zu bieten. [...] Vielleicht müssen wir mit den Preisen doch wieder herauf. Glauben Sie mir ruhig, daß mich der Tod meiner Mitarbeiterin tief getroffen hat. (BFA 16, p. 267)

Macheath claims that he shares the misery of his colleagues (in fact, he is the principal cause of their misery). Occasionally though, he lets the mask slip: when he describes himself as one of the *strongest* traders, he presents himself not a servant, but a master. And his talk of self-martyrdom is a justification for the price rises which he is going to announce.

#### CONCLUSION: PLUMPES DENKEN

What conclusions can be drawn from this? In the *Dreigroschenroman*, economic and political interests are shown to be closely connected. Macheath and Peachum make political gestures in order to further their business interests. But they refrain from explicitly stating that there is any connection between their political statements and their own personal interests. Instead they ensnare their listeners with stock phrases that imply a collective identity.<sup>51</sup> These gestures to shared identity are hooks for the audience. What they disguise is the *absence* of shared material interests. The rhetoric of business emphasises the mutual benefits for the listeners, in order to obscure the fact that *opposing* interests are at stake. It is no coincidence that the penultimate chapter of the novel is called 'Nebel', since the ruling elite in this novel is adept at clouding the understanding of the public with decorative phrases. References to abstract principles (as in the bishop's eulogy in 'Nebel') act as a smokescreen, they distract from the actual manoeuvres. There are double standards operating here. The leaders of society want to spread confusion; at the same time they take information-gathering very seriously in respect of their material interests. They read newspapers, they send out scouts, they reconnoitre the terrain (e.g. the scene when Macheath goes to the barbers' shop, BFA 16, p. 214). The *Dreigroschenroman* shows that precise information-gathering is essential for business; but it is equally important to prevent one's competitors from learning about one's



own actions. We have a situation in which each figure tries to get the maximum information about the others, whilst simultaneously obscuring their own activities as much as possible. If they discover that others are trying to find out about their affairs, they are outraged. For example, police commissioner Brown gets annoyed about communists who talk about corruption in the ministries, and even claim that the police force is not impartial. Brown tries to ridicule the communists – blinded by their ideology, they see everything in terms of black and white:

*„Solche Schwarzweißmalerei macht alles, was diese Schmutzaufwirbler vorbringen, einfach unglaubwürdig.“*

„Wenn jetzt einer mitschriebe, was du daherredest“, sagte Macheath bedächtig, „wäre es auch Schwarzweißmalerei.“ (BFA 16, p. 339)

Macheath's answer here can be understood as a form of *Verfremdung* or meta-commentary. The text reflects on its own activity, its own exposure of corrupt verbal, political and economic practices. Brown and Macheath, the profiteers, try to present the communists' attempts to expose corruption as ridiculous, as 'Schwarzweißmalerei'. The communists are supposed to be blinded by their ideology. These communists, says Brown, are so naive that they view everything in terms of material interests. Here he alludes to the 'Eigentumsfrage' which Marx and Engels describe as the principal question of the Communist movement.<sup>52</sup> In this respect, 'Schwarzweißmalerei' could be seen as a variant of Brechtian 'plumpes Denken'.<sup>53</sup> This concept is mentioned in the novel by Hale in discussion with Coax:

*Als der deutsche Kaiser an den Präsidenten Krüger telegrafierte, welche Aktien stiegen da und welche fielen? Natürlich fragen das nur die Kommunisten. Aber unter*

*uns, doch nicht nur sie: die Diplomaten auch. Es ist freilich plump gedacht, aber der Wirklichkeit ist dieses Denken sehr nahe. Die Hauptsache ist, plump denken lernen. Plumpe Denken, das ist das Denken der Großen.* (GBA 16, pp. 172-3)

It is not only the communists who focus on the question of property, it is also the ruling elite. Walter Benjamin interprets this passage as Brecht's commentary on his own method.<sup>54</sup> Benjamin argues that crude thinking is useful because it applies theory to practice: 'Ein Gedanke muss plump sein, um im Handeln zu seinem Recht zu kommen.'<sup>55</sup> According to Benjamin, Brecht's crude thinking is another form of useful thinking, i.e., Marxist thinking. Benjamin points out that Marx was the first to illuminate the relations between human beings under capitalism, relations which had previously been *obscured*. Marx was a great teacher of satire because he was the thinker 'der es zuerst unternahm, die Verhältnisse zwischen Menschen aus ihrer Erniedrigung und Vernebelung in der kapitalistischen Wirtschaft wieder ans Licht der Kritik zu ziehen'.<sup>56</sup> To summarize: crude Marxist thinking can work as an antidote to hot air. Or, as Cicero put it: *Cui bono?*<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> References are to Bertolt Brecht, *Werke. Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausgabe*, ed. Werner Hecht, Jan Knopf, Werner Mittenzwei and Klaus-Detlef Müller, 31 vols, Berlin, Weimar and Frankfurt a.M. 1989-98. References will be given in the form BFA, volume number and page number.

<sup>2</sup> David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech: The Politics of Culture in the GDR*, Lincoln 1995, pp. 156-8.

<sup>3</sup> 'Die neue Kursivschrift find ich nicht gut [...] Es entsteht nicht so der Eindruck, daß hier etwas *zitiert* wird, daß hier bestimmte Sprüche und Redensarten *ausgestellt* werden' (BFA 28, p. 433).

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Benjamin, 'Brechts Dreigroschenroman', in Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, 7 vols, Frankfurt a.M. 1972, III, pp. 440-9 (pp. 445-6).

<sup>5</sup> George Orwell, 'Politics and the English Language', in Orwell, *Why I Write*, London 2004, pp. 102-20 (p. 120).

<sup>6</sup> Bernd Auerochs, *Erzählte Gesellschaft. Theorie und Praxis des Gesellschaftsromans bei Balzac, Brecht und Uwe Johnson*, Munich 1994, p. 172; Wolfgang Jeske, 'Dreigroschenroman', in *Brecht-Handbuch*, ed. Jan Knopf, 5 vols, Metzler 2001-2003, III, p. 210.

<sup>7</sup> Ludger Claßen, *Satirisches Erzählen im 20. Jahrhundert: Heinrich Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Martin Walser, F.C. Delius*, Munich 1985.

<sup>8</sup> Rolf J. Goebel, 'Brechts *Dreigroschenroman* und die Tradition des Kriminalromans', *Brecht-Jahrbuch* (1979), 67-81. Cf. also Peter Bekes, 'Detektion als Ideologiekritik. Zur Rezeption von Kriminalliteratur in Brechts *Dreigroschenroman*', in *Experimente mit dem Kriminalroman. Ein Erzählmodell in der deutschsprachigen Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Wolfgang Düsing, Frankfurt a.M. 1993, pp. 77-95.

<sup>9</sup> Klaus-Detlef Müller, 'Der antiaristotelische Roman: Brechts Beitrag zum Roman der klassischen Moderne', in *Verwisch die Spuren. Bertolt Brecht's Work and Legacy: A Reassessment*, ed. Robert Gillett and Godela Weiss-Sussex, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 13-32.

<sup>10</sup> Devin Fore, *Realism after Modernism: The Rehumanization of Art and Literature*, Cambridge MA 2012, p. 119.

<sup>11</sup> Cornelia Ladd, *Fictions of Power, Powers of Fiction: Critical Representations of European Thought by Marx, Conrad and Brecht*, PhD Dissertation, Columbia University (1991).

<sup>12</sup> Steve Giles, 'Rewriting Brecht: *Die Dreigroschenoper* 1928-1931', *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 30 (1989), 249-79 (p. 257).

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<sup>13</sup> See for example Dirk Göttsche, *Die Produktivität der Sprachkrise in der modernen Prosa*, Frankfurt a.M. 1984, although this study does include a chapter on Martin Walser.

<sup>14</sup> W.F. Haug, *Philosophieren mit Brecht und Gramsci*, Hamburg 2006, pp. 69-70, 75-7. Cf. also Helmut Fahrenbach, *Brecht zur Einführung*, Hamburg 1986, p. 48.

<sup>15</sup> Herbert Claas, *Die politische Ästhetik Bertolt Brechts vom Baal zum Caesar* (Frankfurt a.M. 1977), pp. 51-54; Steve Giles, *Bertolt Brecht and Critical Theory: Marxism, Modernity and the Threepenny Lawsuit* (Berne 1997), pp. 66-72.

<sup>16</sup> Giles, *Bertolt Brecht and Critical Theory*, p. 67.

<sup>17</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege*, 3 vols, Berlin 1832-34, I, 1, p. 24.

<sup>18</sup> Nietzsche, *Kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, Berlin and New York 1967ff., III/2, pp. 367-84 (p. 374).

<sup>19</sup> For studies on Brecht's reception of Nietzsche, see Reinhold Grimm, *Brecht und Nietzsche. Geständnisse eines Dichters*, Frankfurt a.M. 1979; Christof Subik, *Einverständnis, Verfremdung und Produktivität. Versuche über die Philosophie Bertolt Brechts*, Vienna 1982; Jürgen Hillesheim, 'Zwischen „kalten Himmeln“ und „schnellen Toden“. Brechts Nietzsche-Rezeption', in *Der Philosoph Bertolt Brecht*, ed. Mathias Mayer, Würzburg 2011, pp. 175-97.

<sup>20</sup> For details of the 1922 Alfred Forke translation of *Mê Ti* owned by Brecht, see Erdmut Wizisla, Helgrid Streidt and Heidrun Loeper, *Die Bibliothek Bertolt Brechts. Ein kommentiertes Verzeichnis*, Frankfurt a.M. 2007, pp. 333-4. The new standard translation in English is *The Mozi: A Complete Translation*, trans. Ian Johnston, Hong Kong 2010.

<sup>21</sup> The discussion of 'volkstümlich' in 'Katalog der Begriffe' may possibly refer to the so-called 'Realism debate' or 'Expressionism debate' which took place between Ernst Bloch and Georg Lukács in 1938. If so, then this would date this text fragment to 1938-40.

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<sup>22</sup> Wolfgang Streeck, *Gekaufte Zeit. Die vertagte Krise des demokratischen Kapitalismus*, Berlin 2013, p. 97.

<sup>23</sup> Ladd, *Fictions of Power* (as in note 11).

<sup>24</sup> Wizisla et al., *Die Bibliothek Bertolt Brechts*, pp. 297, 309. For a study of connections between classical rhetoric and modern political oratory, see Karl-Heinz Göttert, *Mythos Redemacht. Eine andere Geschichte der Rhetorik*, Frankfurt a.M. 2015.

<sup>25</sup> Ladd, *Fictions of Power*, p. 260.

<sup>26</sup> Ladd, *Fictions of Power*, p. 250.

<sup>27</sup> Ladd, *Fictions of Power*, p. 259.

<sup>28</sup> Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)*, trans. by James M. May and Jakob Wisse (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 132 [= Book 2, § 30]. This admission by Cicero has done much to influence the negative reception of Cicero in Germany, as exemplified by Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte* (1854-1885), which cast Cicero in the role of a shady politician without any principles.

<sup>29</sup> Ernst Bloch, 'Künstliche Mitte (1929). Zu Kracauer: "Die Angestellten"', in Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit*, Frankfurt a.M. 1977, pp. 33-35.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Janet Ward, *Weimar Surfaces: Urban Visual Culture in 1920s Germany*, Berkeley 2001, pp. 206-07; Wolfgang Jeske (ed.), *Brechts Romane*, Frankfurt a.M. 1984, pp. 138-41.

<sup>31</sup> Wizisla et al., *Die Bibliothek Bertolt Brechts*, p. 334.

<sup>32</sup> F.A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* [1960], Abingdon 2006, p. 200.

<sup>33</sup> Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*, p. 203.

<sup>34</sup> Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*, p. 231.

<sup>35</sup> Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866-1945*, Oxford 1987, pp. 438-9.

<sup>36</sup> Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, 5 vols, Munich 2003, IV, p. 374.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Parker, *Bertolt Brecht: A Literary Life*, London and New York 2014, p. 291.

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<sup>38</sup> F. C. Delius, *Unsere Siemens-Welt. Eine Festschrift zum 125jährigen Bestehen des Hauses S.*, Berlin 1972, p. 25.

<sup>39</sup> Diarmuid Jeffreys, *Hell's Cartel: IG Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine*, London 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Robert K. Merton, 'The Matthew Effect in Science', *Science*, 159/3810 (1968), 56-63.

<sup>41</sup> Wolfgang Streeck, 'How Will Capitalism End?', *New Left Review*, 87 (2014), 35-64 (37). Cf. also Streeck, *Gekaufte Zeit*, p. 94.

<sup>42</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776], ed. Kathryn Sutherland, Oxford 1993, Book IV, Chapter II, p. 292. The mechanisms of supply and demand are described in Book I, Chapter VII.

<sup>43</sup> Streeck, *Gekaufte Zeit*, p. 97.

<sup>44</sup> Hale makes the same point: 'wir müssen sehen, daß kein Schatten auf unsere persönliche Ehre fällt' (BFA 16, p. 173).

<sup>45</sup> The Rothschild story comes from H. G. Wells (BFA 16, p. 450).

<sup>46</sup> Cited in Jeske (ed.), *Brechts Romane*, p. 138.

<sup>47</sup> Bernd Widdig, *Culture and Inflation in Weimar Germany*, Berkeley 2001, pp. 135-59.

<sup>48</sup> Wizisla et al., *Die Bibliothek Bertolt Brechts*, p. 415.

<sup>49</sup> The word 'Persönlichkeit' had great currency in the Wilhelmine period and was often used to describe Kaiser Wilhelm II, e.g. in Heinrich Mann, *Der Untertan*, Frankfurt a.M. 1991, p. 155. In contrast, Macheath considers the concept of 'personality' to be outmoded: 'Es hat heutzutage nur noch wenig Sinn, sich eine Persönlichkeit zuzulegen.' (BFA 16, p. 283).

<sup>50</sup> When Macheath becomes the director of the National Deposit Bank, he uses the same expression: 'Vergessen Sie nicht [...] die Bank gehört einem Kind' (BFA 16, p. 283).

<sup>51</sup> Ladd, *Fictions of Power*, p. 255.

<sup>52</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifest der kommunistischen Partei*, Berlin 1989, p. 76.

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. Detlev Schöttker, *Bertolt Brechts Ästhetik des Naiven*, Stuttgart 1989, p. 293.

<sup>54</sup> Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, p. 446.

<sup>55</sup> Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, p. 446.

<sup>56</sup> Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, p. 449.

<sup>57</sup> Cicero, *Pro Roscio Amerino*, section 84:

<http://thelatinlibrary.com/cicero/sex.rosc.shtml> (accessed 9 November 2015).