

Abstract

The textual history of the opera libretto *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (*Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*) by Bertolt Brecht and composer Kurt Weill has until now not been thoroughly examined and analysed. This dissertation describes and systematizes the full material of the libretto, including some important text carriers hitherto unknown to Brecht and Weill criticism, and it also interprets the textual history of the work.

Chapter 1 and 2 give the background and develop the theoretical framework of the dissertation. In Section 1.3., editorial theory and theories of intertextuality are presented with special emphasis on their intersections. Textual identity is used as a central criterion for the definition of the term 'work'. Chapter 2 discusses questions connected to the authors and their working practice as well as general features of the opera libretto as a literary genre.

Chapter 3 delimits the body of the *Mahagonny* libretto as a literary work as well as the total historical text material to this libretto. The total material also includes the pre-texts, i.e. earlier written poems by Brecht quoted in the opera libretto. Chapter 4 gives in-depth descriptions of all the text carriers (printings, manuscripts, typescripts, galleys, etc.) belonging to the body of the work and it also lists the text carriers for the pre-texts. In Chapter 5 the facts presented in Chapter 4 are systematized, and the relations between the text carriers are illustrated graphically in a *stemma* according to editorial methodology. The quotations of pre-texts are also illustrated graphically, in this case in a developmental scheme ("Entwicklungsschema").

Chapters 6 and 7 utilize the conclusions made so far for analysing and interpreting the textual history of the *Mahagonny* libretto, Chapter 6 through case studies of certain scenes or certain quotations of pre-texts, Chapter 7 through studies of overall aspects of the textual history. Among the case studies in Chapter 6, there are for example analyses of the gradual changes towards more "decency" in the brothel scene (XIV), the functional changes that certain pre-texts (*Tahiti* and *Benares Song* are among the subjects of case studies) undergo in the libretto, and the complicated process of revisions in the final scenes (XX-XXII). Chapter 7 focuses on overall phenomena like Brecht's self-quotations in *Mahagonny*, the influence of Weill's composition on the literary text, the naming of characters and dramatic locations in different versions, and finally the main tendencies in the reworking process: the increased accentuation of the financial issues and criticism of capitalism on the one hand, and the "self-cleansing" censorship of "offensive" elements on the other. It is shown, that these two tendencies in fact share the same goal: to make the libretto acceptable and receivable to as many people as possible regardless of political or religious leanings.

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