FILM, GRAMOPHONE, AND NATIONAL CINEMA: *DIE DREIGROSCHENOPER* AND *L'OPERA DE QUAT'SOUS*

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This paper centers on the German- and French-language film adaptations of *Die Dreigroschenoper* directed by G. W. Pabst.[1] The central question concerns how the numerous gramophone recordings of *Dreigroschenoper* songs – in both vocal and instrumental, dance-band versions – informed the production and reception of the two Pabst-directed films. In framing this question, I will explore the possibility that the films do not reproduce the play cinematically as much as they reflect upon the play's rapid commercialization wrought by multiple electric-sound media – including gramophone, radio and film itself. How might an analysis of Pabst's film as a mirror of sorts for the gramophone-industry's commodification of the Weill-Brecht songs serve to clarify the films' differences from one another, as well as the films' place within their respective national media cultures?

The analysis of the films' links to the gramophone recordings will proceed in two directions. One direction entails surveying differences in musical performance between *Die Dreigroschenoper* and *L'Opéra de quat' sous*. Building on the scholarship of Roberto Calabretto, who has identified precise musical differences between Pabst's film(s) and the Weill-Brecht play, my analysis explains such differences relative to the work of conductor Theo Mackeben, who had led the Lewis Ruth Band's performances of music for the original Berlin stage production of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, Pabst's film adaptations, and certain of the most significant of the *Dreigroschenoper* gramophone recordings. At the same time, in addition to examining how the Brecht-Weill songs function within the Pabst films, I outline how they functioned outside the films through their distribution via the gramophone, broadcast radio, and live performance. The aim overall is to situate both the film and stage versions of *Die Dreigroschenoper* within the media-cultural context that shaped their relations with one another.

From Stage to Film, Via the Gramophone

The German film version of *Die Dreigroschenoper* has long been understood relative to the original Brecht-Weill stage production. Such an understanding began to take form prior the film's production, in light of the extensive media coverage generated by Brecht and Weill's lawsuits against the production company Nero Film.[2] Further ensuring the centrality of the film-play relation for subsequent scholarship was Brecht's published account of Nero Film's alleged betrayal of his rights as author.[3] As far as I know, no investigation has been undertaken into the impact upon both the play and the films of the numerous *Dreigroschenoper*-related gramophone recordings produced between

the play's première in the fall of 1928 and the release of the films some two-and-a-half years later.[4] The neglect of the gramophone recordings as anything more than spin-off commodities from the play entails a significant gap in the scholarship, not only because these recordings contributed to the popularity of *Die Dreigroschenoper* but because, in certain regards, they helped condition the musical style of both the play and the films. In outlining the gramophone's role in mediating Pabst's filmic adaptation of the stage production, this paper places new emphasis on the contemporaneous media-cultural conditions and forces that had conditioned the aesthetic and industrial matrix within which the film/stage-production relation took form.

The play's popularity – manifest by 1930 in a variety of ancillary products, ranging from gramophone discs to clothing fashions, illustrated wallpaper, and a theme night-club – had evolved quickly.[5] In January 1929, only five months after the première, Weill's publisher, Universal Edition, under the headline "Triumph of the New Style," announced performances of *Die Dreigroschenoper* in nineteen German cities, as well as in Prague, Vienna, and Budapest.[6] According to a ledger kept by Universal Edition, by the summer of 1929, at the end of the year's theatre season, more than fifty new productions of *Die Dreigroschenoper* had opened across Europe, to yield a total of some 4,200 performances.

Enabling this rapid dissemination was the play's unusually high popular-culture profile, itself connected to the popularization of the play's songs via gramophone, radio, and dance-band performances.[7] According to one discography, between 1928 and continuing up through 1931, more than forty discs featuring songs from *Die Dreigroschenoper*, either in instrumental versions or with vocals in German, appeared on twenty different labels.[8] Other discographies reportedly list additional recordings with vocals in Danish, Czech, and Hebrew.[9] With respect to the French market specifically, a discography published by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France lists thirteen recordings of songs related to the 1931 release of Pabst's *L'Opéra de quat'sous*.[10]

Evidence of the gramophone's significance for composer Kurt Weill can be found in a letter Weill sent to Universal Edition on September 7, 1928, just one week after *Die Dreigroschenoper* opened at the Theater am Schiffbauerdam. Unable to finish the play's full score, Weill nonetheless enclosed charts for what he identified as three *Schlager*: the *Kanonensong*, the *Zuhälterballade*, and the *Liebeslied*, so that dance-band arrangements could be made immediately.[11] Commenting in a subsequent letter to Universal Edition on these charts, Weill was forthright: "The main object [of producing dance-band arrangements] is, after all, that the numbers should be played and sold as much as possible."[12] At the Karlplatz offices of Universal Edition, "no time was lost in exploiting these [successful songs] with all available 'commercial' means," according to music historian Christopher Hailey: "Individual hit songs from [...] *Die Dreigroschenoper* flooded the market, popular editions abounded, recording contracts were signed, and arrangements were prepared for dance band, jazz ensemble, movie house orchestras, even military band, and, of course, Universal Edition's publicity office was working at full capacity."[13]

That extent of the dissemination of the *Dreigroschenoper* songs, the market saturation through multiple forms of media distribution, raises a question regarding the potential causal impact of the recordings on the style of the play, and ultimately on the films, too. By virtue of the mass-marketed recordings, many of those familiar with the *Dreigroschenoper* songs hadn't attended a stage performance of the Weill-Brecht opera;

instead they knew the songs through the gramophone, radio, and live performance. In addition, the theatre-goers who saw *Die Dreigroschenoper*, whether in Berlin or in the dozens of other European cities where it was staged, were increasingly already familiar with the music. The latter, distributed through the new electric-sound media, could be heard in a great variety of places – from the domestic space of the home or apartment to cafés, bars, and other public or quasi-public sites and venues. To regard the gramophone discs as a commercial by-product of the original Weill-Brecht production is correct in the limited sense that the recordings wouldn't have existed without the stage production; but it is also misleading insofar as it implies a causal relation that flowed in a single direction, from original play to derivative recorded music. In fact, evidence suggests a more complex causality, whereby the recordings, in certain respects, conditioned the musical performances for certain of the play's stagings.[14]

Here the work of the Lewis Ruth Band, led by conductor Theo Mackeben, can be distinguished from that of the many other jazz orchestras and dance bands that had recorded *Dreigroschenoper* songs. Commercially significant examples of the latter include discs by the Marek Weber Orchestra, whose light-music versions of *Dreigroschenoper* songs evolved through weekly performances of the songs in the tea-room of Berlin's famed Adlon Hotel. What distinguished the Lewis Ruth Band in this context was its role in accompanying the play during its inaugural season at Berlin's Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, where the Ruth Band, led by Mackeben, logged some 250 performances with the play's original cast.[15] Barely two months after the Schiffbauerdamm première, the Ruth Band, again under Mackeben's direction, cut the first recorded versions of the play's songs on November 22, 1928: instrumental versions of the *Kanonensong*, and the *Zuhälterballade* for the Odéon company (Odéon O-2703).[16] Another notable recording session by the Ruth Band occurred some seven months later, in May 1929, when the *Morität* and *Ballade von der Unzulänglichkeit* were produced for the Orchestrola label (2131), with Bertolt Brecht himself performing the vocals. The Ruth Band continued producing such recordings up through its participation in the making of the Pabst film versions exactly two years later, when, in November 1930, stars of both versions entered the Ultraphon studio during a break in the shooting to cut eight sides of *Dreigroschenoper* music. Ultraphon was linked contractually to the music division of Warner Bros., which appears to have allowed for some distribution of these discs in North America, where they drew the interest of "a limited circle of aficionados," including composers George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein.[17]

Conductor Theo Mackeben's role in shaping the music for these discs merits consideration in light of his similar role with respect to other media. Besides directing certain key *Dreigroschenoper* gramophone releases, Mackeben also collaborated with Weill in arranging the play's music, and he directed the music for the film adaptations. For the disc-recording sessions, as well as for Pabst's *Dreigroschenoper* soundtrack, Mackeben used the same handwritten charts he had used for performances of *Die Dreigroschenoper* at the Schiffbauerdamm. In an analysis of these charts, musician Geoffrey Abbott identifies numerous alterations to the score in light of Mackeben's assessment of the technical demands of recording.[18] Further cuts and changes were made in Weill's score in preparing the music tracks for the two film versions – changes significant enough to enable Weill's victorious legal action against Nero Film for its failure to have consulted him regarding the changes. Mackeben's use of the same charts on

stage and in the recording studio suggests a complex, dialectical causality between play and recordings, whereby the latter not only derived from but shaped the former.[19] A specific example of the impact of the recordings on the play's music concerns a key element of what Abbott refers to as the "*Dreigroschen* sound:" Mackeben's practice of doubling a song's bass line, played either on a grand piano, double bass, or trombone, with a tuba. This practice was common in the music industry prior to the introduction of electric recording in 1925, when it was used to correct the poor bass response of the acoustic technology, "as well as being the typical bass instrument of the twenties dance band."[20] Contributing to the stage production's evident modernity was this use of a musical technique associated not with the traditional concert hall but with recorded pop music.

The French Recordings and *L'Opéra de quat'sous*

An assessment of the relevance for Pabst's filmic adaptations of *Die Dreigroschenoper* of the film-gramophone relation during the early 1930s requires a consideration of national differences in the configuration of electric-sound media. In France, for instance, the gramophone played an important role in stimulating the popularity of the Brecht-Weill songs, and hence in preparing French filmgoers for the French-language version of Pabst's film. In a letter from Weill to Universal Edition, dating from the summer of 1931, the composer wrote: "Friends of mine have just come back from Paris and confirm the spontaneous success of my songs there. All the world is clamouring for the printed music and records, and the Mackie Messer song is sung on the streets."[21] This letter appears to have been written several months prior to the Paris première of *L'Opéra de quat'sous*, and suggests the extent to which the gramophone recordings served to condition the expectations of French film-goers. In a brief account of the Parisian reception of Pabst's *L'Opéra de quat'sous*, Weill scholar Stephen Hinton claims that "the music in particular met with considerable critical acclaim."[22]

The relatively large number of French-language recordings of *Dreigroschenoper* songs indicates the significance during the early 1930s of the French gramophone market for the German film industry. Just as Ufa, Tobis, and other companies made foreign-language films for French distribution, they also, through their recorded-music divisions, made and marketed film-related discs. French-language recordings of *Dreigroschenoper* songs directly relevant to the French version of the Pabst film include four sides by the Ruth Band on the Ultraphon label featuring Albert Préjean, Margo Lion, and Jacques Henley, all of whom appear in *L'Opéra de quat'sous*.[23] Among other *Dreigroschenoper* recordings released in France ahead of the film's première was a *Pirate Jenny* on the Columbia label (DF-873) with vocal by Lys Gauty, for whom Weill three years later would write music for a popular cabaret act. Additional releases included further versions by Florelle of *La Fiancée du pirate*, *Chant des canons*, and *Complainte de Mackie*, released on Polydor (522-172 and 522-171); Marianne Oswald's *Chant des canons*, on Columbia (DF-1115); and Damia's *Complainte de Mackie*, also on Columbia (DF-568).

An investigation into the role of the French recordings in conditioning the reception in France of *L'Opéra de quat'sous* will require further research into the French media culture of 1931. In the meantime, it can be noted that the situation in France regarding

film and gramophone appears to have differed significantly from that in Germany. Most fundamentally, radio, according to broadcasting historian Christian Brochard, developed relatively late in France, becoming a national mass medium there only beginning in 1929, and at a level well below that for Germany.[24] For instance, in 1929 radio ownership in France was estimated by *Radio-Magazine* at roughly 600,000, whereas the figure for Germany has been estimated at 2,400,000. Figures available for 1932 likewise indicate a four-to-one ratio, with radio ownership in France having climbed to one million with that in Germany reaching 4.3 million. The four-to-one difference is significant in light of the two countries' film industries' similarities in size. According to U.S. Department of Commerce statistics on movie theatres worldwide, France in 1931 possessed 3,300 theatres, 1,450 of which were wired for sound, whereas Germany had 5,057, 2,500 of which were sound-ready.[25] In short, while Germany had less than twice as many sound-film theatres as France, it had four times as many radios.[26] Also marking network radio's slow development was the relatively high cost of radio sets in France, where even a minimal three-tube model cost up to 1,000 francs, and a superior, seven-tube unit cost some ten times as much, a figure amounting to roughly half the cost of a four-cylinder Citroën.[27]

The high cost of radios in France during the early 1930s, together with the relatively weak transmitting power of even the largest stations, had important implications for the national media culture. For one, it allowed the gramophone to enjoy an unusually long period of growth in France, and hence to play an unusually close role there relative to film. According to gramophone-industry historians Pekka Gronow and Ilpo Saunio, sales of gramophone discs peaked in Germany, Britain, and numerous other European countries in 1929, and then fell steadily during the next eight to ten years.[28] In the U.S., the country estimated to possess nearly half of the world's radio sets, gramophone sales topped out even earlier, in 1926, at 128 million; sales figures for discs and players in the U.S. then began plummeting, year-by-year, to reach a mere six million in 1932. The gramophone situation in France is more difficult to determine, given the sparseness of French record-industry documentation. Nonetheless, the documentation that does exist suggests that in contrast to the situation in the U.S., Britain, the Netherlands, and Germany, the gramophone industry did well in France during the early 1930s.[29] According to a research team at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, gramophone sales in France may, in fact, have moved upward during the early 1930s – in contrast to the pronounced downward movement in Germany, the U.S., England, and elsewhere.[30] In short, the "gramophone fever" that had peaked throughout the Western world circa 1929 seems to have had a longer life in France, just as entertainment radio during the early 1930s played a less pivotal role in France than in Germany, Britain, or the United States.

My research into national-media differences during the early 1930s is still in its early stages. Much more work pertaining both to radio, film and gramophone must be undertaken to document the differences in question. Nonetheless, the evidence as it stands now suggests that the sound-era French cinema links with the gramophone were less mediated by radio than was the case in Germany, the United States, and Great Britain. This proximity may have carried important implications for the national film style. In Germany, where public radio stations in Berlin, Frankfurt, and Königsberg pursued highly innovative musical and dramatic programming – including the commissioning of *funkeigene* compositions from Weill and Brecht – radio may well have provided the

principal model in Germany for sound-film style, as film historian Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus has suggested.[31] A related technological factor was the German film industry's nearly exclusive reliance on sound-on-film systems, which further diminished the relevance to German film practice of disc-derived, gramophone-industry recording norms. Far more so than in France, where sound filmmaking, in a manner familiar to the gramophone industry, was conceived in terms of the recording of performances, German sound-film production – in a manner analogous to radio drama – often treated the soundtrack as a construction, an assemblage of separate components.[32] Also conditioning the constructed nature of the German film soundtrack were the demands of large-scale multiple-version production, which necessitated what might be called a modular approach to film technique, whereby specific elements of sound and image can be extracted from a film and replaced so as to create versions for particular export markets.[33]

Musical Differences between the Two Films

For an inquiry into the effects of the export cinema's technical modularity on the Pabst-directed films, Roberto Calabretto's careful analysis of similarities and differences between the two films' music tracks provides an essential base of reference.[34] As Calabretto details, of the fifteen pieces of music featured in the films, nine exhibit notable differences from one another. Although certain songs raise unique questions, the music tracks for the two films display a general difference in tone. Whereas the German version features the aggressive attack and angular rhythms familiar to the Lewis Ruth Band's earlier *Dreigroschenoper* recordings, the French version often exhibits a lighter and more uniform playing style. In short, the German version preserves the Brecht-Weill-Mackeben style familiar to the German public, while the French film – in more than half of its musical passages – inclines in a different direction stylistically, toward the light music characteristic of French boulevard comedy and music hall.[35]

Enabling musical differences between the two films were the technical conditions of the production. The two film versions were made simultaneously, in the manner common in German multiple-version production, whereby actors for each version rotated through the sets, one shot set-up at a time.[36] For scenes featuring musical numbers, the Lewis Ruth Band played offscreen while the cameras ran. With the music captured in two separate takes, simultaneously with the two sets of images, each of the film versions features its own unique recording of the songs, a circumstance that allowed Mackeben to modify certain of the songs for the French version, in light of his assessment of the singers' vocal characteristics, as well as national differences in musical taste. Regarding such differences, a telling case is provided by Florelle's performance of the *Barbara Song*. As Calabretto suggests, the French version effaces the dialectical tension, the calculated clash in tone, between music and lyrics essential to Weill and Brecht's conception of the songs, to thus render straightforwardly the lyrical-opera movement that the German film had parodied.[37]

A particularly complex and fascinating example of film-musical difference concerns the bordello scene featuring the song *Pirate-Jenny*. In the French version, singer Margo Lion's vocal delivery involves a rapid and highly varied succession of styles, attitudes,

and tones. Further, despite the framing of Lion in a manner virtually identical to Lenya, with the mise-en-scène of the French version amounting to virtually a shot-for-shot copy of the German, the heterogeneity of Lion's vocal style is paralleled by considerable diversity in physical gesture. In contrast to Lenya's series of static poses, Lion projects a mood of agitation. While remaining in roughly the same position on the set, Lion periodically widens and narrows her eyes, shifts the weight of her body, leans slightly forward and back, and, during one moment, gazes slowly from left to right, as if addressing not only Mackie but additional unseen auditors.

Margo Lion's differentiated repertoire of gestures and vocal mannerisms is appropriate in light of the narrative situation, which makes the singer's volatility interpretable in terms of Jenny's struggle to suppress her jealous anger over Mackie's recent wedding. This sort of performance may seem at odds with the deliberately a-psychological, "epic" stance commonly attributed to the Weill-Brecht play, but it finds justification in a decisive alteration of the script made by Pabst.[38] In the Schiffbauerdamm production, the song *Pirate Jenny* was sung by the character Polly rather than by Jenny. Thus, as with other important songs in the play – like the *Barbara Song* or the *Kanonen Song* – *Pirate Jenny* refers to the life of a character other than that of the singer herself. This displacement from the first- to the third-person facilitated Weill and Brecht's injunction that the play's singers "adopt attitudes" rather than disclose the characters' emotions.[39] In this context, the great significance of Pabst's alteration, whereby it is Jenny who now sings *Pirate Jenny*, is to open the way for the merger of singer into character, and hence for the sort of emotive dramatic performance characteristic of the *chanteuse réaliste* familiar to the contemporaneous French cinema.[40] It is this sort of performance that Lion's performance so brilliantly suggests, and that Brecht claimed he had wanted to foreclose.[41]

In this context, Lenya's performance as Jenny in the German version cuts sharply against the grain of possibilities opened by Pabst's alteration of the script. Rather than convey emotions, Lenya's mannered posing suggests radical disconnection from whatever might be regarded as the character's emotional state. The stylization is evident in the peculiar positioning of Lenya's hands in many of the scene's shots, which often conclude with Lenya enacting statue-like gestures that are not replicated in Lion's performance for the French version. Contributing further to the uncanniness of Lenya's performance are the song's calculated downward shifts in tempo. The norm in the recorded-music industry of the time was to accelerate the tempo in the course of the performance, by virtue of the need to fit songs into the limited duration of the 78-rpm disc, as recorded-music historian Robert Philips explains.[42] In this respect, the song *Pirate Jenny*, whose tempo noticeably slows down after each of the three choruses, unfolds in a manner contrary to contemporaneous expectation. Of course, Weill wrote the song this way; thus similar drops in tempo occur in the French version, although, as Calabretto suggests, the effect of these drops seems less pronounced than in the German. Indicative of the German film's singularity is a curious moment that occurs just after the first repetition of the song's chorus. The band, after having slowed its tempo, plays the song's jagged groove, while Lenya, for a brief moment prior to the continuation of her singing, bobs her head silently to the musical rhythm. It's hard to pinpoint exactly what is going on here – although the novelty is imposing. Long on affect and short on emotion, Lenya's rather vacant, de-psychologized performance differs greatly not only from Margo Lion's performance of the same number in the French version but from that of

any other filmed singing performance of the period that I know of. Far from exemplify the dance music of the early 1930s, Lenya's performance seems instead to point ahead to a style of "cool" associated with popular music since the 1950s.[43]

Fashions, Musical and Otherwise

A critical attention to acts of posing and self-display is central to an important analysis of the German version of the Pabst film by Thomas Elsaesser, who notes the extent to which Rudolf Forster, in the role of Mackie, appears conscious of the impact of his appearance on other characters.[44] Framed throughout the film in proscenium-like doorways and windows, Forster, Elsaesser suggests, functions for the film's viewer as something of a model of successful consumer behaviour. An ideal-typical consumer, the stylish Mackie knows how to dress, and how to enter a room so as to make exactly the right impression – an impression, one can add, whose impact often entails popular-song accompaniment. The pop song's utility in this context is signaled from the opening moments of the Pabst film, when, as Elsaesser observes, it is the playing of the Mackie Messer ballad that draws Mackie through the crowded, winding streets and into the portrait-like frame of a stationary medium close-up.

Themes of vanity and self display can be traced back to the Brecht-Weill play, in which posing figures as something of a core theme (think of the character Peachum – the beggar's haberdasher).[45] According to an anecdote regarding the play's production, lead performer Harald Paulsen is said to have insisted on a crucial costume modification. As theatre historian Foster Hirsch puts it, "Paulsen agreed to remain only if he could be allowed to wear a blue necktie, which he felt gave him the key to playing MacHeath as a bourgeois gentlemen who just happened to make his living as a highway man."[46] A member of the production team for the two film versions, sound editor Hans Oser, commented on *Dreigroschenoper* fashion circa 1930 by noting the extent to which Mackie and Polly attracted the emulation of the numerous young couples who seemed to imitate their dress.[47] Pinpointing the status of *Die Dreigroschenoper* as a cultural watershed, Oser saw the opera's style as displacing that of the preceding landmark stage- and film-musical, Franz Lehar's 1907 operetta *The Merry Widow*. As Oser observed, the young men who used to imagine themselves as Count Danilo now struck the pose of Mack the Knife.

Oser's popular-music analogy is appropriate to the consumer culture of the early 1930s, when acts of fashion-conscious self-display increasingly occurred against the background of electrically amplified popular songs, and when the young consumers of the time, while mimicking the dress of Mackie and Polly, also purchased discs, players, and radios. In examining multiple version films such as Pabst's adaptations of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, it may prove illuminating to situate them relative to other new electric sound media productions of the time, such as the thousands of film-related gramophone discs. The latter also circulated in multiple versions, and helped shape the making of the films, as well as their reception, both inside and outside the cinema theatre.

1 I wish to thank Hans-Michael Bock, Peppino Ortoleva, Nataša Ďurovičová, and other members of the 2005 Gradisca Spring School audience for their helpful comments on this paper. I

also wish to thank the students who attended my workshop on the Pabst films for helping me see, and hear, the films in new ways. Any flaws in the paper remain solely the author's responsibility.

2 Regarding the lawsuit against Nero Film, and the latter's effects upon the status of *Die Dreigroschenoper* in film historiography, see the illuminating discussion in Thomas Elsaesser, "Transparent Duplicities: Pabst's *The Threepenny Opera*," in *Weimar Cinema and After: Germany's Historical Imaginary* (London-New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 311-329.

3 Brief extracts from Brecht's lengthy text appear in "The Film, the Novel and Epic Theatre," in Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, ed. and trans. John Willett (London: Methuen, 1964), pp. 47-51. A full-length facsimile reproduction of *Der Dreigroschenprozeß: Ein sociologisches Experiment* can be found in Hans-Michael Bock, Jürgen Berger, with Gero Gandert (eds.), *Photo Casparius* (Berlin: Staatliche Kunsthalle, 1978).

4 Invaluable partial exceptions include the work of Jürgen Schebera and Geoffrey Abbott, listed in the notes below.

5 Concerning these and other expressions of *Dreigroschen*-fever, see Stephen Hinton, "The Première and After," in Stephen Hinton (ed.), *Kurt Weill: The Threepenny Opera* (Cambridge, England-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), especially pp. 56-59.

6 See S. Hinton, "The Première and After," cit., p. 50; and also Jürgen Schebera, "Old *Dreigroschenoper* Records," in *Kurt Weill, Die Dreigroschenoper, Historische Originalaufnahmen, 1928-1931*, compact disc, Capriccio, 10-346, 1990, Delta Music Gmbh.

7 The play's association with the gramophone endured into the Nazi era. According to Weill scholar Schebera, "*Die Dreigroschenoper* constantly stood in the forefront of the Nazi's abuse: at the notorious 1938 exhibition of 'Entartete Musik' in Düsseldorf, the old shellac discs were exhibited as fearful examples." In J. Schebera, *op. cit.*, n.p.

8 See Jürgen Schebera, "Neue Entdeckungen auf Schellack," *Notate*, Vol. 11, no. 3 (1988), p. 24; and J. Schebera, "Old *Dreigroschenoper* Records," cit., n.p.

9 See here the introductory remarks to Stephen Hinton, "Discography," in S. Hinton (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 218.

10 In Giusy Basile, Chantal Gavouyère (eds.), *La Chanson française dans le cinéma des années trentes: discographie* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1996), p. 74. The thirteen songs in question were released on eight separate discs.

11 See Geoffrey Abbott, "The '*Dreigroschen*' Sound," in S. Hinton (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 164.

12 In an October 1929 letter to Universal Edition, Weill stated, "That my music to *Die Dreigroschenoper* has been industrialized does not argue against our standpoint but for it." Quoted in J. Schebera, "Old *Dreigroschenoper* Records," cit. In a September 6, 1928 letter to Universal Edition, Weill explained the delay in submitting the full score in a manner that may point to Mackeben's role in contributing to the music: "I'm still busy at the moment completing the score following the experiences of the current production." Quoted in Stephen Hinton, "'Matters of Intellectual Property': The Sources and Genesis of *Die Dreigroschenoper*," in S. Hinton (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 33.

13 Christopher Hailey, "Creating a Public, Addressing a Market: Kurt Weill and Universal Edition," in Kim Kowalke (ed.), *A New Orpheus: Essays on Kurt Weill* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 24.

14 Critics today concerned with the Schiffbauerdamm première often rely on period recordings to reconstruct the event, which sometimes leads to mistakes, such as the attribution of *Pirate Jenny* to Lenya, who performed the song in the Pabst film, on disc, and ultimately on stage, but *not* for the Schiffbauerdamm opening. See S. Hinton, "The Première and After," cit., pp. 51-52.

15 A list of gramophone releases featuring the Lewis Ruth Band can be found in S. Hinton, "Discography", cit., pp. 218-219.

16 The Odeon recordings were released in January 1929. In an interview conducted in Paris in 1934 Weill stated his preference for these recordings on the grounds that, unlike other recorded versions of the plays' songs, the Odeon releases featured arrangements that he had approved. In Ole Windung, "Kurt Weill I Exil," *Aften-Avisen* (June 21, 1934), quoted in G. Abbott, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

17 See Kim Kowalke, "*The Threepenny Opera* in America," in S. Hinton (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 80, 201n. These Ultraphon recordings, which feature Lenya in the female roles, were also released on the Telefunken and Capitol labels. Upon emigrating from Germany, Weill and Lenya came to expect that people in certain countries might know their work through specific gramophone discs, or one of the Pabst-directed film versions. According to Kowalke, Gershwin "told Weill and Lenya at a party shortly after their arrival in New York in 1935 how very fond he had become of the Telefunken recordings, except that he had never liked the 'squitchadickeh' voice of the leading lady; Lenya never forgave the remark", *Ibid.* Bernstein first heard the *Dreigroschenoper* recordings while a college student in New York.

18 See G. Abbott, *op.cit.* Abbott's analysis is based upon a copy of the piano-conductor score, published by Universal Edition in November 1928, with handwritten parts added by Mackeben.

19 By the time of the stage production of *Die Dreigroschenoper* Mackeben was known as one of Berlin's most skilled and professional popular musicians. The owner of the Theatre am Schiffbauerdamm, Ernst Josef Aufricht, later claimed that he was prepared to turn the musical aspect of the project over to Mackeben if Weill's work had proved unsatisfactory: "I [...] found Weill's music too atonal for a theatre piece and asked Theo Mackeben, whom I had engaged as musical director, to get hold of the original music of the 'Beggar's Opera' by Pepusch so as to have a replacement ready." Ernst Josef Aufricht, *Erzähle, damit du dein Recht erweist* (Berlin: Propyläen 1966), quoted in S. Hinton, "'Matters of Intellectual Property': The Sources and Genesis of *Die Dreigroschenoper*," cit., p. 17.

20 In G. Abbott, *op. cit.*, p. 167. According to recorded-music historian Robert Philip, the use of a tuba to double the bass line was standard acoustic-era recording practice but became less common following the recording industry's changeover to electric sound circa 1925. Philip cites recordings by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra as examples of the move during the late 1920s away from the tuba-boosted bass line. Robert Philip, *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 65. But while Philip claims that symphony orchestras began abandoning the doubled bass line during the electric era, Abbott's account suggests that the practice endured in the dance-band field. Further evidence for the endurance into the electric era of the "vexing question of strengthening the basses" can be found in the discussion of the doubled bass line in Jerzy Fitelberg, "Aspects of Instrumentation Today," *Modern Music*, Vol. 9, no. 1 (November-December 1931), pp. 28-30.

21 Quoted in J. Schebera, "Old *Dreigroschenoper* Records," cit., n.p.

22 S. Hinton, "The Première and After," cit., p. 63. Much additional work will be required for a thorough study of the Parisian reception of the film and gramophone recordings.

23 The French-language Ultraphon discs were recorded in November 1930, simultaneously with the production of the film, and were released the following January. Préjean, with Henley, sings the *Chant des canons* and the *Ballade de la vie agréable* (AP114) while Lion sings *Polly's Love Song* and the *Tango Ballad* (AP113).

24 See Christian Brochand, *Histoire générale de la radio et de la télévision en France* (Paris: Documentation française, 1994).

25 These figures are cited in James Trumpbour, *Selling Hollywood to the World: U.S. and European Struggles for Mastery of the Global Film Industry, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, England-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 5. With respect to the situation in other countries, England was reported to have 4,850 theatres, 4,100 of which were sound-ready; and the U.S. was estimated to have 20,000 theatres, with 13,500 wired for sound.

26 Annual radio-ownership figures for Germany during 1923-1932 are as follows: 1,580 (1923); 548,749 (1924); 1,022,299 (1925); 1,376,564 (1926); 2,009,842 (1927); 2,635,567 (1928); 3,066,682 (1929); 3,509,509 (1930); 3,980,852 (1931); 4,307,722 (1932). The figures refer to the situation as of January 1, for each of the years cited. They appear in Heinz Vollmann, *Rechtlich-wirtschaftlich- soziologische Grundlagen der deutschen Rundfunkentwicklung* (Borna: Noske, 1936), and are reproduced and discussed in Karl Christian Führer, "A Medium of Modernity? Broadcasting in Weimar Germany, 1923-1932," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 69, no. 4 (December 1997), p. 731.

27 My claims here are based on prices quoted in advertisements for these products that had appeared in the entertainment daily *Comœdia* during the weeks prior to the Paris première of *L'Opéra de quat'sous* in November 1931. Participants in the 2005 Gradisca Spring School may also recall the scene in the Pathé-Natan production *Je t'adore... mais pourquoi?* (Pierre Colombier, 1931), in which the young gigolo's wealth is signaled through his ownership of a six-tube radio.

28 Pekka Gronow, Ilpo Saunio, *An International History of the Recording Industry* (London-New York: Cassell, 1998), pp. 37-4.

29 See G. Basile, C. Gavouyère (eds.), *op. cit.*, and Marc Monneraye, Giusy Basile, "Le cinéma qui chante et le disc," in Emmanuelle Toulet (ed.), *Le Cinéma au rendez-vous des arts: France, années 20 et 30* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1995), pp. 146-161.

30 In G. Basile, C. Gavouyère (eds.), *op. cit.* One historian proposes that "temporary reductions in the numbers of records pressed and sold" in the depression-era U.S. made jazz records hard to obtain in Paris, where the demand for such records was still strong. See Jeffrey Jackson, "Making Enemies: Jazz in Interwar Paris," *French Cultural Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 29 (1999), p. 198. Also felt in Paris was the depression's impact on "the major British companies [e.g., HMV and Columbia, which reformed as EMI in 1931], whose combined profits declined by 90 percent in 1930-1931, and which "provided many recordings to the continent", *Ibid.*

31 See Wolfgang Mühl-Benninghaus, *Das Ringen um den Tonfilm: Strategien der Electro- und der Filmindustrie in den 20er und 30er Jahren* (Düseldorf: Droste, 1999). Regarding German radio programming, see Christopher Hailey, "Rethinking Sound: Music and Radio in Weimar Germany," in Bryan Gilliam (ed.), *Music and Performance during the Weimar Republic* (Cambridge, England-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 26. Hailey examines how radio in Germany, beginning in 1928, when stations began commissioning works from composers, didn't simply broadcast a pre-existing repertoire, but created one of its own. Examples include the Weill-Brecht-Hindemith collaboration *Der Flug der Lindberghs*, which was broadcast in July 1929, when it became "the most talked-about [music-radio] work of the era."

32 Regarding the centrality of a recording-based conception of the scene in French film practice, see Charles O'Brien, *Cinema's Conversion to Sound: Technology and Film Style in France and the U.S.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

33 See, for instance, Nataša Ďurovičová, "Local Ghosts: Dubbing Bodies in Early Sound Cinema," in Anna Antonini (ed.), *Film and Its Multiples / Il film e i suoi multipli* (Udine: Forum, 2003), pp. 83-98.

34 Roberto Calabretto, "Due versioni musicali a confronto: *Die Dreigroschenoper* e *L'Opéra de quat' sous* di Georg Wilhelm Pabst," *Cinéma& Cie*, no. 4, Nataša Ďurovičová, in collaboration with Hans-Michael Bock (eds.), *Multiple and Multiple-language Versions / Versions multiples* (Spring 2004), pp. 30-47.

35 During November 1931, the month of the Paris première of *L'Opéra de quat'sous* at the Ursulines, Albert Préjean performed a music-hall routine on stage at the nearby Alhambra music hall.

36 My research into the production circumstances regarding Pabst's adaptation of *Die Dreigroschenoper* is in its early stages. The claim regarding the simultaneous making of the two versions is based partly on the existence of production stills that show the two versions' pairs of male and female stars in costume during pauses in shooting. For further information on the making of the films, see H.-M. Bock, J. Berger, with G. Gandert (eds.), *op. cit.*, which, among other documents, includes a copy of the film's script, materials related to Brecht's and Weill's lawsuits against the production company, censorship decisions, and the films' critical reception. Unfortunately I obtained a copy of this rich resource too late to work out fully its implications for the argument presented in this paper.

37 The departure from theoretical doctrine didn't count as a defect for Weill, who admired Florelle's performance and sought to work with her again, and did so upon emigrating to France in 1933. See here Lys Symonette, Kim Kowalke (eds. and trans.), *Speak Low (When You Speak Love): The Letters of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 143-144, 166.

38 The change evidently was made sometime after July-August 1930, and completion of the first version of the script, written by Leo Lania and Ladislaus Vajda. A facsimile copy of this version, with handwritten notes by Pabst, is included in H.-M. Bock, J. Berger, with G. Gandert (eds.), *op. cit.* The typed script stipulating that Jenny is to sing the *Tango Ballad* for the bordello scene between Mackie and Jenny has been crossed out in pen, presumably by Pabst, and replaced by the handwritten phrase "Ballade das Schiff mit den 50 Kanonen." In H.-M. Bock, J. Berger, with G. Gandert (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 346.

39 The quote is from S. Hinton, "'Matters of Intellectual Property': The Sources and Genesis of *Die Dreigroschenoper*," cit., p. 46.

40 Lion herself was not French but German, although she pursued her singing career in Paris as well as in Berlin. On the topic of the existential authenticity embodied by the French realist singers, see Kelley Conway, *Chanteuse in the City* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

41 On the staging of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, see, for example, Bertolt Brecht, "The Literalization of the Theatre," in B. Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, cit., pp. 43-47. This short piece includes the famous injunction that "[t]he actor must not only sing but show a man singing. His aim is not so much to bring out the emotional content of his song [...] but to show gestures that are so to speak the habits and usage of the body". B. Brecht, "The Literalization of the Theatre," cit., pp. 44-45.

42 On gramophone-industry norms during the interwar years, see the discussion of "time limits and side joins" in R. Philip, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38.

43 On the distinction between affect and emotion, see Noël Carroll, "Film, Emotion, and Genre," in Carl Plantinga, Greg M. Smith (eds.), *Passionate Views: Film, Cognition, and Emotion* (Baltimore-London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 21-47. For Carroll, emotions are directed toward specific objects or people, and hence "require cognitions as causes and bodily states as effects," whereas manifestations of affect such as "kinesthetic turbulence,

moods, sexual arousal, and instinctual responses" seem "barely mediated by thought." From this standpoint, the evident vacancy of Lenya's performance lacks the object-directedness that would invite its characterization as emotional – in contrast to Lion's naturalistic, psychological approach.

44 Th. Elsaesser, *op. cit.*

45 See the discussion of the fashion theme in Daniel Albright, "Kurt Weill as Modernist," *Modernism/Modernity*, Vol. 7, no. 2 (2000), pp. 273-284.

46 Foster Hirsch, *Kurt Weill on Stage: From Berlin to Broadway* (New York: Limelight, 2002), p. 38. A rakish photo of the well-dressed Paulsen as Mackie can be found in J. Schebera, "Old *Dreigroschenoper* Records," cit., in a reproduction of Homocord ad for a recording of Paulsen as Mackie made in August 1930.

47 The interview appears in Roger Manvell, *Masterworks of the German Cinema* (London: Lorrimer, 1973) and is quoted in Th. Elsaesser, *op. cit.*, p. 326.