

# The Volatile Author

## Adaptation as Afterlife in Rainer Rubbert's *Kleist Oper*

---

HEIDI HART\*

Wir *sind* die Nachwelt.<sup>1</sup>

Christa Wolf

### INTRODUCTION

In Wolfgang Rihm's 2010 opera *Dionysos*, Nietzsche's flayed skin leaves his body and begins, in pieces, to sing. Similarly, Rainer Rubbert's 2008 *Kleist Oper* imagines a 19<sup>th</sup> century figure flying out of his ruptured biography and into a difficult-to-pin-down, singing skin. The opera draws on the fictional Kleist in Christa Wolf's 1979 novella *Kein Ort. Nirgends* (*No Place on Earth*), placing him among figures from his biography, from Wolf's version of it, and from his own fiction, which transforms itself further as the singers embody several roles at once. This operatic Kleist functions less as a biographical figure than as a corporealized *word*, his own name a code for poetic intensity among writers, actors, and theater directors in the former East Berlin, a phenomenon contemporary writer Barbara Honigmann recalls as a »parallel Kleist world.«<sup>2</sup> Part embryo, part effigy, this volatile body – to extend Elizabeth Grosz's corporeal-feminist term – enters our own time, as much defined by ongoing militarization and surveillance as Kleist's own epoch and the Cold War, revealing this author, and opera as an art form, to be historically adaptable agents of protest. Rubbert's opera combines the character-Kleist in Wolf's novella with the kind of ghostly, embryonic presence recalled in Honigmann's »autofiction« book *Bilder von A.* (published in 2011, three years after the opera's premiere), showing that this adaptable authorial presence has taken on a life of its own in post-Cold War Germany.

---

\* | Open Access Copyright License: cb Creative Commons Attribution 4.0; E-Mail: heidi.hart@duke.edu.

1 | Christa Wolf: Rede, daß ich sehe: Essays, Reden, Gespräche. Berlin 2012, p. 93.

2 | Barbara Honigmann: Seminar discussion. Duke University, 25 February 2013.

## BIO-AUTO-FICTIONAL AFTERLIVES

The first chapter of Robert Helbling's 1975 survey of Kleist's works, written several years before Wolf's novella, is titled *A Peripatetic Writer without a Biography*, a view not uncommon among Germanists at the time.<sup>3</sup> More recent Kleist surveys note not only the lack of witnesses and documents but also the danger of interpreting the writer's self-descriptions as documents.<sup>4</sup> From his arguable birthdate and the single miniature image of him (looking more like a twelve-year-old at twenty-four<sup>5</sup>) to a post-suicide death mask that might belong to someone else, Kleist »was in quest of an elusive certainty about himself and the world that lent his personality a restless, protean quality which defies complete analysis.«<sup>6</sup> His famous »Kant crisis« in 1801, in which he experienced epistemological uncertainty as a kind of existential wound, plays out in the knowledge-gaps in his own work – also, famously, the Marquise von O.'s mysterious pregnancy in a text as marked by dashes as it is by suggestive initials.

In her novella *Kein Ort. Nirgends*, Christa Wolf enters Kleist's biographical lacunae to imagine a meeting between him and the early Romantic poet Karoline von Günderrode. Like Kleist, she felt alien to her socio-political world and took her own life. Written in the wake of activist singer Wolf Biermann's expulsion from East Germany, when Wolf felt »her back against the wall,« under pressure from Heinrich Böll and others to flee to the West,<sup>7</sup> the book enacts an equally pressurized conversation between the 19<sup>th</sup> century writer and poet. Clipped sentence fragments (e. g. »Die niedergehaltenen Leidenschaften.« [»The suppressed passions.«<sup>8</sup>]) and eerie movement between the protagonists' minds lend the text its own palpable tension. Günderrode wears a dagger under her dress, her pragmatic strategy for release from the class and marriage conventions that thwart her relational life. She, with her grand »Apocalyptic Fragment« and androgynous pseudonym Tian, and Kleist, with his unease in German military and intellectual culture, both appear as beings who fail to fit their assigned gender roles, who see through the petty posturing of the generals and jurists

**3** | Robert E. Helbling: *The Major Works of Heinrich von Kleist*. New York 1975, p. 3. This assessment draws on Günter Blöcker: *Heinrich von Kleist oder Das absolute Ich*. Berlin 1960.

**4** | See Hans Joachim Kreutzer: *Heinrich von Kleist*. Munich 2011, p. 9.

**5** | Barbara Honigmann: *Das Schiefe, das Ungraziöse, das Unmögliche, das Unstimme: Rede zur Verleihung des Kleist-Preises*. In: Idem: *Das Gesicht wiederfinden: Über Schreiben, Schriftsteller und Judentum*. Munich 2006, p. 151.

**6** | Helbling, *The Major Works of Heinrich von Kleist*, p. 3.

**7** | Wolf, *Rede, daß ich sehe*, p. 169.

**8** | Christa Wolf: *Kein Ort. Nirgends*. Frankfurt a.M. 2006, p. 92. Translations the author unless otherwise noted.

who surround them, and who play out their »unliveable lives«<sup>9</sup> for as long as they can. For Wolf, the book's genesis amid the post-Biermann polarization was her way of coping with a situation in which Socialist writers felt that the work for which they could be responsible, work that had larger political meaning, was no longer tenable.<sup>10</sup>

Wolf's novella is not the only »Kleist book« to reflect on creative artists' struggles in the former East Berlin. German-Jewish writer Barbara Honigmann's 2011 work of »Autofiktion,« *Bilder von A.*, appeared after Rubbert's opera but confirms Kleist's significance as a voice adapted for political protest in the after-world of the GDR. In the novel, Honigmann recounts her long-term relationship with a well-known theater director before she left East Berlin in 1984. Her own directing projects during these years included several Kleist-inspired works in Brandenburg and Berlin, one of them canceled by state censors, a quiet but decisive ending to her career in the East. Honigmann continues to think of Kleist as a quintessential »DDR-Autor,« despite this fraught history.<sup>11</sup> In her 2000 Kleist Prize acceptance speech, Honigmann recalls her complex relationship to the 19<sup>th</sup> century writer, acknowledging the difficulty of enacting dramatic freedom with no audience, in a text that is only written, to paraphrase the Swiss director Luc Bondy, »in the air.«<sup>12</sup> The very name »Kleist« was itself a charged presence »in the air« of Honigmann's theater world in 1970s Berlin. In *Bilder von A.*, Honigmann describes the name as a code word for the lovers' own »sphere of poetry« (Novalis' term), for all that was »*stärker, größer, schöner, leidenschaftlicher, dunkler*« (»stronger, greater, more beautiful, more passionate, darker«)<sup>13</sup> than their ordinary lives. »Nur kein Alltag, sondern nur Poesie! Nur Kleist!« (»Only nothing everyday, only poetry! Only Kleist!«)<sup>14</sup> is the rule in a love affair that scrupulously avoids any discussion of such banalities as »cheese and marmalade.«<sup>15</sup> This Kleist-coded aesthetic of intensity also enters the couple's theater circle, a key to a liminal space in which theatrical improvisation is possible, if only to a point. Ultimately the door is locked from the outside. After finding her efforts shut down in the East and moving to Strasbourg, Honigmann paints an oil portrait of Kleist as she imagines him, adding mysteriously, »sein

9 | Ibid., p. 90.

10 | Christa Wolf: *Essays/Gespräche/Reden/Briefe 1975-1986*. Ed. by Sonja Hilzinger. Munich 1999, p. 236.

11 | Honigmann, *Das Schiefe, das Ungraziöse, das Unmögliche, das Unstimmige*, p. 153.

12 | Ibid.

13 | Barbara Honigmann: *Bilder von A.* Munich 2011, p. 18.

14 | Ibid., p. 17.

15 | Ibid.

Bild im Buch, das Buch verdeckt einen Brief« (»his picture in a book, the book conceals a letter«).<sup>16</sup>

Like this letter left undeciphered, Kleist's presence in the folds of German literature remains. Commenting on Christa Wolf's choice of Kleist and Günderröde as voices for her own time, poet Günter Kunert finds that these characters' imagined conversation does not function as a look backwards into history but as a kind of anticipation or »Vorausgreifen«, a search for ground on which creative artists can stand against the machinery of their culture.<sup>17</sup> In the case of Honigmann's *Bilder von A.*, the »parallel world« that Kleist's name signaled in East Berlin takes a form both elegiac and embryonic, a vanished presence that remains a half-realized dream. The book includes a passage on this lost potential as an embryo that could never find its place in the world, as if »in ein falsches Organ, wo es nicht hingehörte« (»in a false organ, where it didn't belong«),<sup>18</sup> or as »Schlangen, [die] noch in abgetrennten Stücken ihres Körpers weiterschlingeln« (»snakes [that] still slither along in their cut-off body parts«).<sup>19</sup> Noting that contemporariness carries the archaic within it, as a ghost-image of the Twin Towers hovers in view for travelers arriving in New York, Giorgio Agamben uses this same metaphor: »[the origin] is contemporary within historical becoming and does not cease to operate within it, just as the embryo continues to be active in the tissues of the mature organism.«<sup>20</sup>

Residues of Kleist's post-biographical presence have continued to outlive 1970s Berlin. Christa Wolf's husband Gerhard adapted her novella into a radio play in 1981, and East and West German stage adaptations followed throughout the 1980s. After the fall of the Wall, productions continued in Berlin in 1991 and Münster in 2004.<sup>21</sup> Rainer Rubbert's *Kleist Oper*, with a libretto by German novelist Tanja Langer, premiered in Brandenburg in 2008, with a cluster of performances following in Frankfurt an der Oder, Potsdam, and Berlin. The opera both adapts and expands Wolf's novella to include characters from Kleist's own works. Notes to the score include this unattributed quote from a real or imagined critic: »eine verrückte oper für junge leute« (»a crazy opera for young people«).<sup>22</sup> The work's intense instrumental and vocal timbres, its Alban Berg-influenced *Klangfarbenmusik*, its quarter-tones and unstable rhythm, and its doubling of

**16** | Honigmann, *Das Schiefe, das Ungraziöse, das Unmögliche, das Unstimmige*, p. 158.

**17** | Günter Kunert: *Zweige vom selben Stamm* (1979), cited in Wolf, *Kein Ort. Nirgends*, commentary, p. 124.

**18** | Honigmann, *Bilder von A.*, p. 56.

**19** | *Ibid.*, p. 107.

**20** | Giorgio Agamben: *What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*. Trans. by David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella. Stanford (CA) 2009, p. 50.

**21** | Wolf, *Kein Ort. Nirgends*, commentary, p. 124.

**22** | Rainer Rubbert/Tanja Langer: *Kleist Oper*. Heilbronn 2008, back matter.

roles within single bodies (for example, Günderrode and Kleist's Penthesilea inhabit a single contralto), might be enough to warrant this description. On closer hearing, or reading as score, the opera works as a vehicle for Kleist to resurface, not only as a remnant of several lost times, but more potently as an embodied code for human dignity and creativity under threat. Like the ancient Egyptian *ka* »used to indicate a copy of the human body,« what Elizabeth Grosz describes as »a ghostlike icon of the subject,«<sup>23</sup> this adapted and re-adapted Kleist will not go away, even as he floats through his various incarnations, as difficult to positively identify as his own death mask. Perhaps he resembles what Agamben calls a figure »consecrated to death« in the classical world, separated from life and yet still living as a »larva.«<sup>24</sup> In Wolf's novella, Kleist appears as a troubled human character caught in the wrong story; Honigmann's autofiction transforms him into a disembodied cipher for such socio-political unease. Without the direct influence of Honigmann's book, Rubbert's opera brings these two manifestations of Kleist together in one singing body, humanly performed onstage but also functioning as a code-name invoked repeatedly by the characters around him.

## VOICING KLEIST

Rubbert's adaptation of Kleist's biography and fictionalization moves from a painful lakeshore meeting between the writer and his former comrade-at-arms, their dialogue infiltrated with singing characters from Kleist's own fiction, to a second act titled »A salon/Dance on the volcano.« This masked-ball scene is set in Bettine von Arnim's literary salon, just as war has been declared between Prussia and France. Here Kleist meets Günderrode/Penthesilea, with the dagger hidden under her dress. After a cameo appearance by Napoleon, the action shifts to Act 3, titled »One writes.« Kleist now appears as a political prisoner; his only companion is a former Dominican slave who, like Honigmann, tries to capture his traces in a portrait. The final act is set in present time, in an Eastern European junkyard where terrorists are building a car bomb. Radio static and snatches of recorded news surround Kleist, abandoned by his friends and without material support in the wake of the Prussian defeat. After a shattering explosion, Kleist and his suicide partner Henriette Vogel face each other on the

**23** | Elizabeth Grosz: *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington (IN) 1994, p. 62 f. *Ka* as human »copy« relates to Roman and medieval European practices of creating a wax effigy of a dead ruler; Giorgio Agamben calls this the »liminal effigy,« which stands for »the perpetuity of royal dignity,« and thereby yields up the very sovereignty it represents to enter a »darker« conflation with »the body of homo sacer.« See Giorgio Agamben: *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford (CA) 1995, pp. 91–99.

**24** | Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 99.

shore of Wannsee outside Berlin, where they repeat to each other, »Ich sehe Dich an« (»I'm looking at you«).<sup>25</sup>

Kleist's vocal presence is as elusive as his biographical »self.« The opera begins with Kleist's friend Ernst von Pfuel pursuing him like a lover, calling his name as the musical meter lurches from 5/4 to 4/4 to 3/4 time. Pfuel switches pronouns and genders when referring to his friend, noting that Kleist has no passport, only a pistol, this »girl« who may already be dead: »Gute Nacht, mein lieber Kleist, er hat keinen Paß! gute Nacht, hat nur das Pistol! vielleicht ist er schon tot. Mein Mädchen, mein Mädchen, mein Kleist!«<sup>26</sup> This line requires the bass Pfuel to sing several quarter-tone pitches, marked by reverse-flat and half-sharp signs [cf. fig. 1]. A slippery, dissonant nuns' chorus from Kleist's story »St. Cecilia, or the Power of Music« enters the scene, as Pfuel steps into water on the stage. When the »lost« Kleist finally appears, his voice is hardly authoritative. He sings almost in a falsetto, over a contrabass drone, »Der See der Stille, die Sprache wird, breitet sich aus« (»The lake of silence that turns into speech spreads out«).<sup>27</sup> Throughout the opera Kleist stutters, and his vocal line is scored at such a high a tessitura, or dominant range, it stretches the baritone voice almost to impossibility. This »perhaps already dead« figure without government identification, whose music requires him to sing in a voice as light as a child's, embodies both the marginalized artist in Wolf's novella and the ghost-embryo Kleist's name signals in Honigsmann's autobiographical novel. His floating voice haunts the opera, vulnerable and, depending on the singer, perhaps also painfully strained.

Extensions of Kleist's singing body permeate the stage, from the sound of his pen scratching on sandpaper, the act of writing scored into the musical text [cf. fig. 2],<sup>28</sup> to his iteration of his own fictional characters' speech, as in this fugal duet with Günderröde/Penthesilea: »Das Feuer ist mein Freund, der Bergstrom mein Bruder, die Erde ist mir keine Heimat, drum bleib' ich stets die Fremde« (»The fire is my friend, the mountain stream my brother, the earth is no homeland, I remain here anyway, estranged«).<sup>29</sup> Later in the opera, Kleist echoes Pfuel's words and melodic line (»Überall such' ich dich« [»I search for you everywhere«]),<sup>30</sup> even as the stage directions indicate the two men's inability to see each other, »als wäre eine unsichtbare Spiegelwand zwischen ihnen« (»as if there were an invisible mirror-wall between them«).<sup>31</sup> As David Womersley has noted in his study of iteration in Shakespeare's *Othello*, »the fragmentary utter-

**25** | Rubbert/Langer, Kleist Oper, p. 534 f.

**26** | Ibid. 11.

**27** | Ibid., p. 22 f.

**28** | Ibid., p. 286.

**29** | Ibid., p. 192 f.

**30** | Ibid., p. 402.

**31** | Ibid.

rances of Iago and Othello blend and run, to the point where it becomes hard to say where one character begins and the other ends.<sup>32</sup> At one point in the opera, Rubbert creates a sense of self-iteration, splitting Kleist's own vocal line into two staves, one in Shakespearean English and the other in German translation, the two melodies moving from counterpoint to unison [cf. fig. 3].<sup>33</sup> The »ossia« line in German, marked »(Kleist)« in parentheses, lends a mysterious unheard thread to the ensemble scene, like the »innere Stimme« melody scored but not to be played in Schumann's piano piece »Humoreske.« Before their double suicide, the soprano Henriette goes so far as to call Kleist »Du, meine Stimme, Du« (»you, my voice, you«)<sup>34</sup> in an extended melismatic passage. Kleist's singing body becomes an open circuit, its »borders, edges, contours [as] »osmotic«<sup>35</sup> as Karoline von Günderode's boundary-assaulting lyrics. This vocal polymorphism does not blur identity into vague »human-ness«<sup>36</sup> but rather gives voice to a particular »parallel world,« in Honigmann's sense, of creative intensity and connectivity, pressed up against socio-political convention.

## WALLS AND BOMBS

Among the voices that move through various bodies in *Kleist Oper* is Bertolt Brecht's, his »An die Nachgeborenen« (»To those Who Come After«) elegy from 1939 ventriloquized through the contralto Günderode/Penthesilea: »Was sind das für Zeiten?« (»What times are these?«)<sup>37</sup> While carrying Brecht's political stance against fascism implicitly, the line then changes to refer to socio-sexual restrictions: »Ein Mann darf nicht lieben wie eine Frau, eine Frau darf nicht sein wie ein Mann« (»A man may not love like a woman, a woman may not be like a man«),<sup>38</sup> plunging to an E below middle C, near the female voice's lowest limit. Rubbert's opera builds a wall of prescriptive ideologies through

**32** | David Womersley: What Is Tragic in Othello. English Department Lecture, Duke University, March 1, 2013.

**33** | Rubbert/Langer, *Kleist Oper*, p. 102 f.

**34** | *Ibid.*, p. 542.

**35** | See »Social Extensions of the Body.« In: Grosz, *Volatile Bodies*, pp. 79–85.

**36** | See Lawrence Kramer: Fin-de-siècle Fantasies: »Elektra,« Degeneration and Sexual Science. In: *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5 (1993), No. 2 (July), p. 148. Kramer notes, in Strauss' case, the misogynistic aspect of such polymorphism into a slippery, objectified femininity.

**37** | Rubbert/Langer, *Kleist Oper*, p. 354 f. Brecht's original text reads: »Was sind das für Zeiten, wo / ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist« (»What times are these, when a conversation about trees is almost a crime«), in: Bertolt Brecht: *Gesammelte Gedichte*. Vol. 2. Frankfurt a.M. 1976, p. 723.

**38** | *Ibid.*

which the Kleistian body attempts to move and ultimately fails. In a scene that splits Penthesilea's voice-body from Günderrode's, the Amazon sings the word »Vaterland« in canon with Kleist and Bettine/Käthchen von Heilbronn, who then announces, echoing Pfuel's words from the first act, »Du hast doch keinen Paß« (»but you have no passport«) as Kleist paces alongside a physical wall specified in the stage directions.<sup>39</sup> The word »Mauer« inevitably bears associations with the Berlin Wall, and in the context of the opera's precursor, also the »wall« against which Christa Wolf felt her back as she was writing *Kein Ort. Nirgends*. Imprisoned in a cell, his feather-pen scratching along in 5/4 time, Kleist hears voices singing »Revolution!« and »Freiheit!« and then in French, »C'est absolument interdit!« (»It is absolutely forbidden!«).<sup>40</sup>

At the end of the opera, when the terrorists (»four brothers«) build their bomb in the junkyard, they are not identified by affiliation. They seem to function as further extensions of the Kleistian body, in Arnold Mindell's sense of the terrorist as a »ghost role ... a spirit of the times when there is need of cultural change but it is blocked.«<sup>41</sup> Rubbert scores this shadow presence with crashing steel plates and a shuddering flexatone (a metal sheet that can create glissando effects like a saw) [cf. fig. 4],<sup>42</sup> as motor and radio sounds turn on and off. Eventually the »four brothers« join in a radio chorale echoing the nuns' *Gloria* from the first act,<sup>43</sup> hardly a Chorus in the Schillerian sense of encouraging civic order, but rather a collective voicing of whatever cultural materials are at hand, musical scrap metal, simply for the sake of being heard. Over this chorus, and as the radio plays news fragments in several languages, Bettine/Käthchen's coloratura soprano rises and falls, singing the words »Zensur, Verhaftung, Überwachung!« (»Censorship, detention, surveillance!«) [cf. fig. 5].<sup>44</sup> When Kleist's voice enters, again in an almost painfully high tessitura, he sings, »Mein Vaterland, es siecht dahin« (»My homeland, it wastes away there«),<sup>45</sup> as does his own physical being, near vocal exhaustion in repeated high notes or difficult chromatic runs, as the percussion-heavy orchestra swerves in and out of irregular meters, 5/4, 7/8, 11/8 and builds at double tempo, until Kleist »embraces himself« as if gathering all his strength before dispersal, which comes as a »powerful explosion« marked by a gong, a thick chord cluster spanning four octaves, flute and piccolo trills at the instruments' upper limits, and radio static marked with a giant fermata<sup>46</sup>

39 | Ibid., pp. 309–311.

40 | Ibid., p. 322 f.

41 | Arnold Mindell: *Sitting in the Fire: Large group transformation using conflict and diversity*. Portland (OR) 1995), p. 89 f.

42 | Rubbert/Langer, *Kleist Oper*, p. 394 f.

43 | Ibid., p. 427.

44 | Ibid., pp. 425–427.

45 | Ibid., p. 433 f.

46 | Ibid., p. 496 f.



[cf. fig. 6]. This musical halting of time, visually striking in the score, reflects in two media the *Kleistian Gedankenstrich*, the dash or narrative caesura that frequently opens up his prose in moments of epistemological faltering. In this formal echo, the very idea of homeland is at once shattered and suspended – as the Kleistian body is, too, at the opera's end.

Before his double suicide with Henriette, Kleist has a last chance to be heard, in a quiet, slithering line at the top of his range, with ellipses scored into his text: »Ich wär' so gern ein gesungener Gedanke ... eine Musik!« (»I would so like to be a sung thought ... a music!«)<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile he is writing these words in blood, like a projection onto the sky: »DIE MUSIK ... IST ... DAS HERZ ... ALLER DICHTUNG« (»MUSIC ... IS ... THE HEART ... OF ALL POETRY«).<sup>48</sup> More than a truism of 19<sup>th</sup> century aesthetics, this line »speaks« helplessly against military-industrial society in its various guises through time. Could such an aesthetic of intensity actually reach across cultural-political divides and change attitudes, as East German »applied music« once set out to do? Perhaps this is possible, if not through classic Brechtian *Verfremdung*, simply through the cumulative discomfort the music may cause its listeners. To apply Carl Dahlhaus' observation, »When opera figures in politics ... it does so not by virtue of its subject matter but because of the tone that it strikes.«<sup>49</sup> The tone of Rubbert's opera, inextricably linked to its subject, is one of painful vulnerability and clangorous protest, of bodies hounded relentlessly to the edge of what they can voice. Its continued adaptation into chamber-opera form since 2008 is no less disturbing for its more intimate scale. That Barbara Honigmann was working on her novel *Bilder von A.* at the same time as the opera's completion, without any explicit connection between the two, indicates the power of the »embryonic,« ghostlike Kleist as a politically adaptable cipher in the East German afterworld.

## CONCLUSION

In Rubbert's *Kleist Oper*, extreme vocal range, intense instrumental timbre, rhythmic instability, vocal polymorphism, and textual iteration create a multidimensional sound-world through which the figure of Kleist floats as a historically adaptable, if vulnerable, voice for artistic freedom under socio-political pressure. »[C]ross-reading« the opera in dialogue with both Wolf's and Honigmann's Kleist-books, as Jørgen Bruhn has suggested in novel-to-film adaptation, does reveal the literary and musical texts »results of« and even »secondary to each

47 | Ibid., p. 508.

48 | Ibid., p. 507 f.

49 | Carl Dahlhaus: *Nineteenth-Century Music*. Trans. by J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley (CA) 1989, p. 122.

other.«<sup>50</sup> In the opera, Kleist's almost impossibly high vocal scoring embodies, in different form, the »embryo« Honigmann's *Bilder von A.* would describe three years after the opera's premiere. Rubbert's doubling of Karoline von Günderrode and Kleist's Penthesilea in the same singing body deepens a reading of Wolf's *Kein Ort. Nirgends*, in which the poet now appears not only as a woman suffering from social and gender restrictions but also as a larger-than-life presence who may not be fully aware of her own fierce capacity. In light of the novella's continuing popularity since the fall of the Berlin Wall, something of Wolf's pressurized Kleist-character survives, just as Honigmann's residual, still-writhing »embryo« Kleist-cipher speaks to our own time, haunted by militarism and surveillance. As if looking far beyond the political climate of the mid-1970s, Wolf's novella ends with these words: »Wir wissen, was kommt« (»We know what's coming«).<sup>51</sup>

**50** | Jørgen Bruhn: Dialogizing adaptation studies: From one-way transport to a dialogic two-way process. In: Idem and Eirik Frisvold Hanssen (Eds.): *Adaptation Studies: New Challenges, New Directions*. London 2013, p. 83.

**51** | Wolf, *Kein Ort. Nirgends*, p. 99.

APPENDIX: MUSICAL EXAMPLES<sup>52</sup>

Fig. 1

senza tempo

scorrevole ♩ = 76

Pfue! leicht ist er schon tot. Mein Mäd-chen, mein Mäd-chen, mein Kleist !

Str. *p*

Fl. *mp*

Vc. Klar. *mf*

Fig. 2

(schreibt mit kratzender Feder auf Sandpapier)

Kleist (Feder) *(f)*

(portraitiert Kleist)

Maler

Trp. c.s. *p*

Vla. c.l.

Fl.

Trp. c.s. *pp*

Vc.

(Ten)

Fig. 3

The musical score is divided into two systems. The top system features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in 4/4 time, with lyrics in German: "Let us sit" and "ossia: Laßt uns auf die". The piano accompaniment is in 4/4 time, with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The bottom system features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in 4/4 time, with lyrics in English: "on the ground, and let's talk of kings" and in German: "Er - de set - zen und re - den wer drin". The piano accompaniment is in 4/4 time, with dynamic markings of *p* and *mp*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Let us sit  
ossia: Laßt uns auf die

B.-Klar.  
r.H.

*mf*

Kleist  
on the ground, and let's talk of kings

(Kleist)  
Er - de set - zen und re - den wer drin

*p* *mp*

Fig. 4

The musical score for Figure 4 is divided into two systems, each containing staves for different instruments and sections. The first system includes staves for a 1st horn (1. Br.), 4th horn (4. Br.), Ulr./Aufs., and piano (Klar./Via., Fag. mph., Kb. pizz., Pos.). The second system includes staves for a 4th horn (4. Br.), piano (Kl.Tr., Crashbecken, Hrn., Vc., Pk., Kb.), and percussion (Kl.Tr., Becken). The score is marked with various dynamics such as *poco f*, *f*, *mf*, *mp*, and *p*, as well as performance instructions like *(flieht)*, *(-)*, and *(-)*. The notation includes notes, rests, and various musical symbols.

Fig. 5

The musical score is written for a church service, featuring vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The tempo is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

**Vocal Parts:**

- Radio (Zuspiel):** The first vocal part, likely a radio introduction, with lyrics: "mus te, a-do-ra-mus te, lau-da-mus te." and "Gra-ti-as a-gi-mus".
- Bett./Kath.:** The second vocal part, likely a choir or soloist, with lyrics: "ci-mus te, glo-ri-fi-ca-mus te." and "Gra-ti-as a-gi-mus".
- Ü-ber - wa - chung!** (Überwachung!) - A short vocal phrase.

**Piano Accompaniment:**

- The piano part begins with a **Pos. p** (Piano) marking.
- It features a **mf** (mezzo-forte) section.
- The score includes a **Pk. (Wirbel)** (Piano, Wirbel) marking, indicating a trill or whirl.
- The piano part concludes with a **pp** (pianissimo) marking.

**Lyrics:**

mus te, a-do-ra-mus te, lau-da-mus te.  
Gra-ti-as a-gi-mus  
ci-mus te, glo-ri-fi-ca-mus te.  
Gra-ti-as a-gi-mus  
Ü-ber - wa - chung!  
Pos. p  
mf  
Pk. (Wirbel)  
pp



